

The Week

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A news analysis for socialists

A Red Light for the Unions

THE realities behind Mr. Brown's declaration of intent on incomes policy took an ugly little peep at the world, last Friday, in the debate on Peter Shore's Bill on the Emoluments of Top Management (Disclosure and Regulation).

It is very much to be hoped that the leaders of the major unions were carefully watching the proceedings. They had cause to pay attention, for the financial press began to let out discreet moans a fortnight before the debate came due, and these agglomerated and fused into a sustained howl during the last few days. The *Financial Times* hoped that Mr. Shore would be able to drop his ill-conceived measure. Harsher words were used about it in some other papers. Clearly, the men of power were alarmed.

What, then, was it all about? Mr. Shore had put down a most moderate proposal, which would have enacted that a special Council be set up to investigate and regulate higher incomes, including expense accounts and 'perks.' We of *The Week* have for a long time stressed that this is a vital matter. An Incomes Policy in which the employers know every detail of the incomes of their workers, but in which top incomes, rentier rewards, and major perquisites which can eat up a significant part of the national revenue are completely concealed from the labour force, cannot possibly enforce the parity of treatment about which the TUC have been rightly concerned from the beginning. Our solution has been to advocate that the employers' accounts should be opened to their workpeople, who, in alliance with the inland revenue, could see to it that the top people did not make hay from the results of trade union abstinence. Mr. Shore's measure was considerably less radical than ours. Even so, it was a step in the right direction.

For this reason, his Tory opponents characterised it as a "nosey parkers' charter." The top twenty thousand, upon whose efforts everything depended, were under fierce menace, said their runners in the Conservative parliamentary party.

But what of the Government? It was from this quarter that the most alarming statement came. Mr. Darling, for the Board of Trade, said he "would have to be somewhat discouraging about the future progress of this bill." It would prejudice the incomes policy, he went on. Everything depended on the voluntary co-operation of the employers, who could hardly be expected to swallow such a severe measure, he implied. And so when the vote came to be taken only 53 Labour men went into the aye lobby, and although only one Tory presented himself to vote against, the motion failed to become effective because the total vote was less than one hundred.

Two questions occur to us. How did the Tories know that it was safe to abstain? And what excuses are on offer from those Labour men who did not support Mr. Shore's Bill? We earnestly hope that none of them have the gall to make speeches about the imperative need for sacrifices from the unions, in future.

Of course, the lesson of this little affair is that Mr. Brown is not prepared to bite the employers with his new policy. What we fear is that he may not always prove to be so squeamish when it is our own side whose interests are at stake.

The debate on Peter Shore's Bill should be compulsory reading for every trade unionist who has to cast a vote on the question of incomes policy in the next few crucial months. Its outcome is a serious portent. We should take notice.

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LABOUR PEACE FELLOWSHIP
 MEETING

**Where is
 Labour going in
 its Foreign
 Policy?**

ANY QUESTIONS?

Philip Noel Baker, M.P.
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**On Wednesday, March 17th
 in the House of Commons at 7.30.**

Two Vital Meetings

Workers' Control Seminar Reconvenes

IN April 1964 *Voice of the Unions* convened a seminar on industrial democracy in Nottingham. To the great surprise of the organisers, over 140 people turned up, including a most representative cross-section of trade unionists, academics and socialist activists. Undoubtedly this seminar was the most important conference on industrial democracy since the days when guild socialism was at its hey-day.

This year, a recall meeting will take place in new conditions. It will be dominated by the fact that we now have a Labour Government, and will accordingly focus its attention on problems which can only be dealt with while such a Government is in power. The need to develop measures of self-management in the public sector, in the nationalised industries, the co-ops and local authority employment, will take up the main energies of the meeting. Papers will be circulated in advance, and the seminar will divide into a number of study groups in order to close to grips with the essential difficulties which are being faced by workers in these different areas of public enterprise.

The conference will be held under the auspices of the London Co-operative Society, on Saturday, May 7th, and Sunday, May 8th, this year.

The joint convenors will be Richard Fletcher of the LCS and Tony Topham, who took the responsibility for organising the 1964 meeting. All those who would like further details are urged to write to them at 1 Plantation Drive, Anlaby Park, Hull.

A third conference is being scheduled for early June, in Manchester. This will probably take up questions of workers' control in the private sector, the problem of incomes policy, and similar matters. Details will be announced as soon as they are available.

Bertrand Russell to call Freedom Fighters' Conference

The following press statement was issued by Bertrand Russell on February 21st, 1965:

I AM calling an international conference, to be held in London at the end of May, to bring together prominent personalities of the world peace movement and leaders of national independence movements. The conference will be sponsored by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, and I expect about 100 people from five continents to attend. I am sending out invitations this week.

The present crisis concerning Vietnam threatens world peace. Even if we survive it, similar disasters are inevitable in the Congo, the Middle East, Thailand and much of Latin America. These crises will also involve the denial of self-determination by Great Powers. Africa, Asia and Latin America are being used increasingly as areas for East-West confrontation. Although these peoples urgently require food, economic development and national independence, they have become the victims of the Cold War. The United Nations has shown itself unable to act decisively in these fields because it is dominated by disputes between the Great Powers.

Our conference will consider these problems with a view to common action to prevent the Great Powers extending their spheres of influence and their battlefields. All those who are struggling for world peace, for national independence, for civil rights, for social justice and for the eradication of starvation and disease have a basic unity of interests. The establishment of a permanent link between them, and the formulation of immediate specific steps to be taken together, is overdue.

Top Management Stakes

AT a time when Peter Shore is drawing our attention to the bosses' pay and perks a recent news item in *The Manager* for February is of considerable interest. It reports the findings of two surveys not available to the general public: "Managerial earnings over the past four years have risen at a markedly higher rate than the earnings of wage earners. This is one of the principal findings of the recent *Survey of Executive Salaries, 1964* conducted by Associated Industrial Consultants, and on which accords broadly with the *BIM Survey into the Remuneration of Executives* . . .

In the area of fringe benefits, few executives are not covered by a

1960-64	Median Salary increase—%	For those in same job %	Theoretically desirable %
Works manager	32.0	28.0	18.5
Personnel manager	33.3	28.6	22.5
Sales manager	25.0	30.0	17.5
Head of work study	32.3	30.0	22.3

I think we can safely assume that the AIC criteria of "theoretically desirable" increases would not be harsh on the managers. R.B.

Building Training Cut

THE normal period of apprenticeships throughout the building industry is to be reduced from five to four years from April 5.

This move, which follows the introduction of a four-year apprenticeship in the Southern regions two years ago, was described by a building employers' spokesman as "one of the most important advances in the industry's recruitment and training drive since the national apprenticeship scheme was instituted at the end of the war."

It has been agreed by the National Joint Council for the Building Industry. The number of craft apprentices recruited into the industry last year was 12,745, the highest annual recruitment figure for ten years. It represented an increase of nine per cent. over the figure for 1963.

The total number of indentured apprentices on the Council's register at the end of 1964 was 43,011, compared with 39,211 a year before.

—Jill Westby

retirement pension. "Schemes based on half-salary and on two-thirds of salary are almost equally common, but both are a good deal less frequent than those based on fixed sums not related to salary . . . Holidays are growing longer and subsidised lunches are on the increase." Unfortunately the "full report" on which these statements are made "is available only to participating companies." However we are given some statistics which compare the actual increase of managers' salaries with the increase which would have theoretically desirable "if the relative position of management was to have been maintained.

Labour Affiliation

—from E.W.

THE National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shotfirers, which has a membership of 33,496, has affiliated to the Labour Party. The union has changed its rules and established a political fund and its application to affiliate was accepted by the national executive of the party.

Aircraft Workers' Conference

FOLLOWING on from the recent aircraft workers' demonstrations, the industry's shop stewards convened a national conference on the theme "The Present and Future of the Aircraft Industry," held in London, Saturday, February 27.

This event is clearly another development in the growing activity for workers' control in this industry.

In our next issue we will publish a full report of the conference by Alan Rooney, editor *Aviation Voice*.

Union Boom

TRADE UNION membership in Britain is nearing the ten-million mark. Recent figures from the Ministry of Labour show that membership went up by 44,000 in 1963. Following the post-war trend, the rate of growth is highest in women workers; for each new T.U. man there are three new women. If this rate of progress continues, by Christmas, 1965, there will be ten million; latest figures show a total of 9,917,170, of whom 2,068,070 are women.

Side by side with this increase in membership is the gradual diminution of the number of individual unions. There were 596 at the end of 1963, a reduction of 21 during the year. 18 of the 596 claim over two-thirds of total membership.

Details of union funds have also been published recently. Figures covering 90% of the membership show an increase of nearly £5½ million to a total of over £106 million, working out at £12 9s. 2d. per member. Contributions accounted for nearly £30½ millions compared with only £4,329,000 from other sources. An average of £3 11s. 4d. in contributions was paid — 2s. 11d. more than in the previous year. Spending by the unions was also up: by 3s. 6d. to £3 8s. 10d. per member on average.

T & GWU warn members on Incomes Policy

MR. BOB DAVIES, National Secretary of the General Workers' Group of the T.G.W.U. has warned in the current number of the Union magazine of accepting the Declaration of Intent as a policy statement from the Union. He envisages a situation where pressure may be put on workers and shop stewards, through company magazines, notice boards and in pay packets. He advises members not to think that the declaration has been finally accepted by the Union — "the final document did not receive our unqualified support."

One major concern has already issued its own interpretation of the declaration, and this warning is to ensure that trade unionists can see the possibility of some employers making this tentative agreement into a tool of their own policies.

—from Bob Gregory

RACE VIOLENCE ERUPTS

ROY SMITH, 17-year-old West Indian Schoolboy, of Portnall Road, Paddington, is lying critically ill in London's Whittington Hospital, fighting for his life. A victim of a cowardly attack by racials, this young boy is being treated for suspected brain injuries.

A member of the local Young Socialists in North Kensington, Roy was beaten up on Saturday evening, February 13th, when returning home from a YS dance in the local Barlby Road School. Roy and two of his friends were asked by three men to give them a light for their cigarette. Emerson Moore—another coloured boy—and a friend of Roy's, said: "Before we could answer one of the men shouted: 'lead' and then I was struck with an iron bar."

Suddenly out of the shadows other groups of men appeared, one of them swinging a milk bottle which he threw at 18-year-old Arthur Rollins who was trying to help Roy. All the attackers were white, all were armed with either iron bars, milk bottles, axes or a pick. Roy fell to the floor, bleeding profusely after being struck by one pick-wielding hooligan.

Another coloured boy, 15-year-old Brian Hayes, was taken later to St. Charles Hospital with a suspected fracture of the left arm.

Young Socialist members who were at the dance reported that during the evening cars were patrolling the area and the occupants asked people: "Has there been any trouble with the wogs." On the Sunday, Dave Greenberg, an active Young Socialist in that district, received three anonymous telephone calls telling him: "You'll get what we gave the wogs."

That there is no doubt that this attack was organized and that local Fascist hoodlums were involved. This is the area where negro Kelso Cochrane was murdered on a hot June night in 1959 and was also the scene of violent race battles in the autumn of 1958. To this day the murderers of Cochrane have never been arrested. After eight days, Roy's assailants are also still free.

The attack is not just made against coloured people. Its aims would appear to be to stop coloured youth associating with Left wing organizations and to intimidate YS branches from joining up with coloured youth.

—Bob Pennington

Oxford backs Kitson

A RESOLUTION protesting against the imprisonment of David Kitson, the Ruskin College educated trade union leader, Wilton Mitwayi "and others" in South Africa was passed at the February meeting of Oxford and District Trades Council.

It was moved by Mr. Joseph Richards, a Transport and General Workers' Union delegate, and seconded by Mr. Jack Crawley, of the Building Workers. It is to be sent to Dr. Verwoerd and other prominent members of the South African Government.

Mr. Crawley said such protests were effective. Had not such protests saved the life of Nelson Mandella? The South African Government, he said was Fascist in character.

A resolution in similar terms had been sent to the Trades Council, it was reported, by the Oxford No. 1 branch of the Amalgamated Engineering Union.

—Chris Arthur

Students demand Peace with Indonesia

AT a meeting of the Socialist Society of Nottingham Training College on Tuesday, 23rd of February, Pat Jordan gave a talk on Malaysia. He outlined most clearly the background of the formation of Malaysia, and gave an account of what is now happening in the dispute between Indonesia and Britain. He pointed out how closely Britain is involved and how near is a clash between the third world and our Government.

The meeting was especially topical in view of the recent resolution by the Socialist Society calling for a conference to end the dispute. This resolution read:

"The Socialist Society of this college is perturbed about the situation in the Far East. While much attention is being paid to the events in Vietnam very little has been paid to the fighting in Malaysia, which could easily escalate into a full-scale war. We call upon the Government to convene a conference between Malaysia and Indonesia to end the present tension."

—Jill Spivak

Boycott move in Birmingham

THE following motion has been put down for discussion at the March 9th half-yearly meeting of the Birmingham Co-operative Society:

"This meeting of members of the Birmingham Co-operative Society Limited stresses its repugnance at the racial discrimination and oppression now being carried out by the South African government and appeals to the Board of Management of the B.C.S. Ltd., to cease forthwith dealing in South African produce until the election of a democratic government in South Africa."

It is motion number six on the agenda and has been put down in the name of Mr. Brian Smith. We hope that all members of the Birmingham Co-op Society will turn up to register their votes on this vital question.

Anti-Apartheid in Bristol

THE Bristol group of Anti-Apartheid has produced a special leaflet. 5,000 copies have been produced and it is planned to circulate them to all industrial workers in the Bristol area. It has already been distributed to factory workers at the Hawker-Siddeley works. The leaflet emphasises the responsibility of white progressives to fight against apartheid and demonstrates how this system destroys human values and takes away elementary rights. It is hoped that local trade union support for Anti-Apartheid will show a big increase arising from this activity.

from Tom Nicholls

USE THE WEEK CO-OP NUMBER
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Behind the Balance of Payments Crisis

THE current number of the *E.F.T.A. Journal* carries a very enlightening article on the economic and historical background to the financial crisis which the economy is going through. The information is given by the official secretariat of the organisation. They stress most the need to take a long term view of the difficulties, as the monetary situation has gradually worsened over the last twelve years, that is during the decade of Conservative government; the figures they disclose ought to dispel any lingering idea that the Conservative administration is a businesslike and efficient one.

The crisis year of 1960, when Selwyn Lloyd put the brakes on production and began debating in earnest, was the result of a steady decline in the balance of trade from 1952. Sharp measures taken then reduced the acute downward swing, but they did not halt the trend, and the second crisis year of 1964 produced an overall deficit of £790m., nearly double the previous worst year.

Most important in the contributory causes to this massive loss was the dramatic rise in overseas spending. Under this umbrella term comes the old bogey of military bases in other countries. Half the rise on this account has been due to the military build-up since 1952. The amount spent on overseas forces in that year was £50m.; in 1964, the total cost was just over £400 million. This represents a rise from one pound per head of population to about four pounds, to keep up the military prestige of Britain abroad, and to maintain costly wars in Aden, Arabia, Malaysia, Cyprus, Kenya and so on. At the same time, foreign defence aid has declined. Shipping also figures as a major loss on the current account, and it is interesting to see the official reason:

"At the beginning of the fifties, Britain showed a net income of around £100m. a year on shipping. This surplus turned into a considerable deficit during 1956, following the Suez crisis, and although there has been a recovery since, Britain now spends fractionally more on shipping than is earned." So not only are we still paying out interest on the money borrowed to finance the Suez farce, but we are also losing ancillary, but highly

lucrative and vital industries, like shipping.

The capital account, which is the truest pointer of confidence in a capitalist economy, shows a similar picture. Foreign investment in Britain has slowed down over a long period of years, and much private British capital has been salted away in overseas investment markets. The only year of Tory administration when there was a net inflow of capital into the country was 1961. This was due to Ford of U.S.A. buying out Ford of the U.K., and though this deal received the blessing of the the Macmillan government, it can hardly be called a triumph of state planning. International confidence in the strength of the economy was not forthcoming, and this has a special interest for those who speculate about the unwillingness of world capital to give the Labour Government a fair try. In fact, capital is there to extend its own influence; not to 'do down' an administration, which would hardly be in its own interest.

1964, the bumper year, was indebted to 'special factors.' One of these was the "upswing phase of the stockbuilding cycle," which is just another way of saying that industry was laying up reserves of raw materials, and there was a consequent rise in bulk imports. The capital balance reveals that foreign investment has dropped off very sharply, and there was an increase in the amount of private British capital invested abroad. This is in part the normal course of an election year; and this particular year investors presumably realised a strong possibility of a Labour administration being returned to power. The article admits that "the pending general election may have affected the capital account"; there was a net loss of 380 million pounds on the account in question, by far the largest capital deficit since the Tories took office in 1951. This was the direct result of Tory economic policy of our present difficulties:

"A great deal of Britain's present economic difficulties, of which the crisis on the external balance is a symptom, are the result of the cumulative effects of recurring deflations of the economy which have been resorted to on four occasions since 1955 to maintain the ex-

ternal position of the pound when faced by speculative movements of capital."

Not only the short-term trade balance is affected by such a pronounced loss of international confidence. Sterling balances abroad and the familiar gold and dollar reserves are subject to huge losses too, and it is upon these capital holdings that the whole economy rests; upon the stability of finance. The Tory government pursued a policy which was bound to lead to this state, by persistently increasing spending abroad and deflating at home. By their own trading organisations, the E.F.T.A., they stand accused of this.

—Paul Routledge

POWER WORKERS DEMAND CONTROL OF OVERTIME

MAINTENANCE men at the Castle Donington power station walked out on February 24th. The men are to seek support from other maintenance workers in power stations throughout the country.

Pickets are out at the gates of the power station and the number now on strike is in the region of 250, a strike meeting at Castle Donington was told.

The men are protesting against the management's interpretation of the terms of an agreement, which states that the workers shall serve a five-day week.

They say that the management has put forward a rota for the week which does not give the best possible coverage. This means that the men would be liable to be called out to do overtime at any time.

Also, the management's suggestions offer a standard weekend work rate of 26 weekends per year.

This, say the men, is unfair. In previous years they have worked as many as 50 weekends and irregular overtime hours.

The strikers want a definite number of weekends laid down, but want it higher than 26, as weekend work, with time-and-a-half on Saturdays and double time on Sundays, constitutes a large portion of their pay.

—George Powe

THE FETISH AND THE

SINCE Labour returned to power the political landscape has changed dramatically. Two factors have been the main cause of this. Firstly, the economic crisis of November; second, the Government's already long, and growing, series of mistakes in the field of foreign and colonial policy.

According to some current political superstitions — not unknown even on the Left — these events are unrelated. One occurred in the inscrutable limbo where only experts dare set foot; it was a question of "economics", and worse still of the economics of international finance. Remoteness of another kind surrounds the second fact: the distance of marginal lands like British Guiana, Aden, Ascension Island, and the Malay Peninsula.

Such remoteness, and the unrelatedness of the two problems, are an optical illusion. They are parts of one reality. This reality is the air we breathe, the basic condition of British life, the substance of all the political and ideological upheavals of recent times, the true historical cause of the Labour Party's return to power last October. Only the long mutilation of our eyes and brains by this climate makes what is next the skin appear as distant and mysterious. The same mutilation renders the word describing the reality foreign and suspect: imperialism. The term that touches the heart of all our problems appears as abstract and arbitrary, the invention of cranks.

What was the real significance of the sterling crisis in November? Another level of our alienation persuades us that the past is always innocuous. We know that we are the most conservative nation in existence, we feel the past up to our ears like a bath of tepid water. Politely, nowadays, everyone acknowledges it was

time we got out of it. It occurs to few that we might be three-quarters drowned already, and have to rupture ourselves in order to escape.

Thus, we led world imperialism for two centuries, drawing sustenance from remote countries for our Industrial Revolution and then erecting on this foundation a global system of economic domination. The British ruling class reacted to this easy domination by turning definitively away from its own Industrial Revolution: the industrial accumulation of capital had become much slower and more difficult in the face of foreign competition, and at the same time the possibilities of rapid accumulation through financial mechanisms had multiplied enormously. From being the great producer of wealth, Britain became the great manipulator of the symbol of wealth, money.

The gentlemanly money-lender eclipsed the self-made manufacturer. The City and its complex of institutions for the financing of overseas trade and investment displaced the industrial North. The Pound sterling replaced the railway engine as the national fetish-object. The way had been found to make money reproduce itself without end. The secret of this magic lay in the labour of hordes of men in far-away lands; and its corollary was the decline of the British industrial economy. But what did these facts matter, to the high-priests of the Pound in London, or to the ruling elite and the nation blinded by the sorcery? Out of this possession, the final form of British imperial power, there arose a chronic disequilibrium of the British economy: the sacrifice of industrial capital to financial capital became a way of life. Now, under the utterly different conditions of the nineteen-sixties, it has become a way of death. The permanent distortion of the economy produced by imperialism is like a gigantic hump on the back of

the nation, cramping every movement; can such a deformity really be exorcised by the genteel exhortations on the theme of "backwardness", "inefficiency", "modernisation", and so on, filling the newspapers?

The November crisis showed the size and violence of the operation required. It did so, partly, because a Labour government was now in power, determined to solve Britain's economic problem. Against the force of this determination — as opposed to Conservative collusion in the reign of finance-capital — the anatomy of the problem stood out.

Given the relative backwardness of many industrial sectors, and the consequent increasing demand for foreign products (as well as the more traditional imports of food and raw materials), any considerable movement of economic growth is liable to lead to a flood of imports. Given the permanent burden constituted by foreign military-political expenditure, this flood provokes a crisis in the national balance of payments. Such a crisis threatens a forced reduction in the standard of living, if prolonged. But it also threatens, much more immediately and dramatically, all the structures and interests of financial capital built up and consolidated in the imperialist era. These are oriented primarily towards foreign dealing; they depend upon the continued use of the pound sterling in international exchange, and therefore upon the stable value of sterling in relation to all other currencies. Since a devaluation of sterling would almost inevitably result from an unresolved payments deficit, the latter is a kind of time-bomb menacing the foundations of the City. Up till now, this consideration has governed all reactions to these economic crises. In the mystique inherited from imperialism, the great weakness of the

MENACE - Labour's Moment of Choice

by Tom Nairn

modern British economy is apprehended as its peculiar strength, the virtue to be defended above all others, at any cost. Part of the cost has always been — economic growth itself, which beyond a certain point precipitated the balance of payments crises. It had to be put a stop to, to preserve the pound-fetish. When — as even the most ignorant City office boy realises — the real preservation of the sterling currency can only depend in the long run upon the re-animation of the productive economy. That is, upon growth, and the more successful affirmation of British capitalism on the international market. Such was the incredible contradiction bequeathed by imperialism. All attempts to foster economic growth produced a slowing-down of growth and stagnation; each attempt to "save the pound" in reality weakened the pound; reality had to be sacrificed more and more savagely for the sake of the symbol, which itself grew weaker with each act of sacrifice.

Labour was resolved 'to break away from this vicious circle. The logic of its programme and its new ideological stance rendered it, in effect, the champion of industrial capital; its task was the righting of this historical disequilibrium between industrial and financial capital which had turned into a stranglehold on all economic development (and hence, also, upon the social reforms Labour wanted to bring about). Its new, harder "radicalism" was in part the reflection of this objective, radical exigency — an exigency voiced, in different ways, by nearly every shade of opinion.

In the conditions of nascent crisis inherited from the Home government, Labour's first steps revealed two things: first — and far more nakedly than ever before — the great force and true character of the vicious spiral; second, Labour's lack of any aggressive strategy towards

the vital, regressive element within it, the gross impediment stuck in the path of all Labour's aspirations by the traditional structures of finance-capital, by the position and function of sterling and of the City in the international financial market. Labour's thought was oriented entirely towards the problems of stimulating industrial growth. Characteristically, it conceived of them as "national" problems soluble by good will on all sides. Its essential tactic in the face of the financial crisis was a negative one: the determination not to deal with it by sacrificing economic growth once again. This has been revealed, surely, as quite inadequate.

There have been many catalogues of the consequences of Labour's failure before this test. In spite of its wishes, the government was coerced into taking measures likely to have some depressive effect on the economy (like the 7% Bank Rate), and hence into compromising its main programmes; it has therefore also been forced to place an ever-increasing emphasis upon incomes policy, as the solution to all its problems, when it remains entirely doubtful whether such a policy can be formulated and whether — if it could — it would in fact resolve the basic economic problem; by putting the economy in pawn to international finance, it has in effect inhibited itself for some time from taking any of the necessary drastic measure to re-dimension the pretensions of the Pound and the City, and ensured the return of the crisis.

As regards what the government should have done, and must do in future to overcome the contradiction, debate is possible on the means. Should it have devalued the pound? This would have dealt a major blow at the City, at the "sterling area" and the world-wide use of sterling as a "reserve currency", and to that

extent would have been salutary; but it might also have affected the standard of life of the working class too greatly, as well as creating an immense political storm Labour might have found it hard to weather with its tiny parliamentary majority. Should it have opted for "concealed devaluation", by granting export subsidies as well as imposing its import surcharges? This might have avoided some of the political storm; but otherwise, would it not produce all the negative effects of devaluation (on living standards) without its positive ones (the official debacle of sterling)? Or should it have chosen to impose strict government controls on all capital movements and thereby — since the City's international role depends upon its freedom of operation — caused "the disintegration of the sterling area" (The Economist)?

As regards the end, no debate is necessary. Labour has to act with the deliberate purpose of destroying the incubus of high finance and its damning link to the general financial world. By universal consent, the British economy is not strong enough to bear the burden of this relationship. Up till now, the pious hope has been that if one waited just a little longer it might miraculously become strong enough to support it again, so that the best of both worlds would be obtained; the fruits of old-style imperialism together with a newly dynamic industrialism. The Labour government must recognise that this miracle will not happen; and that therefore the fulfilment of its industrial and social programme (and of any imaginable socialist programme) will depend upon boldly doing the opposite of what has been done by every government for half-a-century. That is, upon the sacrifice of finance-capital and its interests. That is, upon the liquidation of the major, and peculiarly British, heritage of imperialism. There can be no doubt

The Fetish and the Menace

-continued

that Wilson was wrong to refuse devaluation and accept the eventual solutions arrived for the reasons he advanced in his speech to the assembled bankers and their wives in the Guildhall — in order to “save the pound”, in order to keep sterling “riding high”, in traditional style. This was an abdication before the essential dilemma posed in the crisis. If followed through, this reasoning will imply another Labour government that tried to be all things to all men; and hence, a government that ends as the servant of the archaic system the country is saddled with; a government that attempts to extract progress from the pockets of the workers (through incomes policy) instead of through structural reforms (of which, in Britain, the first and most necessary is the de-throning of finance-capital).

Such was the Labour government's first bout with imperialism. The sinister appearance of the result is to a certain extent mitigated by a factor already indicated: Labour's lack of preparation for the contest. In part, what has happened arose out of ignorance and the absence of theoretical insight, in a situation where immediate action was indispensable. The Left, in and out of the Labour Party, shares in the responsibility for this. It can now help to repair the damage.

Similar mitigating circumstances cannot be found for Labour's other principal dealings with imperialism — on the hard ground of direct confrontation, so to speak, rather than in the shadows of the international exchange system. In Malaysia, Labour has plunged over the head into a ruinous war in defence of what the Indonesian government calls (correctly) “British neo-colonialism”. In British Guiana, the Labour Colonial Secretary has completed the suppression of the left-wing People's Progressive Party and installed the American candidate

securely in power. In South Arabia, Labour's solution to popular revolt envisages the preservation of Aden as an “indispensable Commonwealth link”, but not the recognition of the Yemen Republic. As regards South Africa, Labour has ended the export of arms; but only after allowing the final export of sixteen Buccaneer aircraft “for financial reasons” (at the same moment as it prepares to spend far greater sums in Malaysia), and with no hint of any more positive policy of opposition to the apartheid regime. In the Congo, Labour duly participated in the shameful Belgian-American expedition with the loan of Ascension Island as a base.

After all that has been said and written in recent years on colonialism and the problems of the Third World (by Labour Party spokesmen as well as by others), there can be no shadow of excuse for such actions. They represent unqualified Labour complicity in the maintenance of British neo-imperialism and western neo-imperialism more generally. This complicity has been proudly theorised by the Prime Minister, in the course of his speech on foreign affairs in the House of Commons (December 16th). “Britain,” he pointed out, is like the USA and the USSR in having an authentic “world role . . . which no-one in the House or in the country would wish to give up or call in question.” Of course not. Wilson rubbed the point in, nevertheless. “We should be abdicating from what I regard as our duty to the Commonwealth and world peace, and we should be abdicating from any hope of real influence in the world, if we were to think this world role could be abandoned . . .” Such a role, he continued, “depends on our having adequate bases for peace-keeping forces as an essential link in communications further afield . . . we need most of the bases we now hold . . . to be accepted in those bases . . . must

be one of the major priorities in our overseas policy.” Would Home have said this better, or differently?

How are Labour's attitudes towards these two sides of the great imperial inheritance related to one another? There is a direct and obvious link, in the sense that a policy of greater involvement in neo-colonial adventures will aggravate the permanent burden of military-political expense on the balance of payments; and, that extent, make a solution of the economic question and a confrontation with the City less likely. But beyond this, there does not appear to be any mechanical or necessary connection. The Guildhall speech did not **imply** the decisions made in Guiana or Arabia. Vice-versa, the government **might** have taken a tougher line with the pound at home, and still be plunged in the snares of the traditional “world role” East of Suez. The danger is, rather, that they will hang together in the context of a general governing inertia towards imperialism. The less of a challenge Labour makes to the City, the sterling zone, and the other paraphernalia of financial power, the less incentive it will have to alter its attitude on the ground, overseas, the less point there will be in such changes, the harder it will be for the Left to make an issue of them. And vice-versa.

In this way, one can see all too clearly the general political profile in formation: that of a subordination of Labour to imperialism in ever respect, to its archaic forms as well as to its new needs and drives. Surely there were some people “in the House” willing to see this menace and resist it? Beyond a doubt there are many “in the country” who will see it, and resist it.

TOM NAIRN

BERTRAND RUSSELL DENOUNCES CONGO INTERVENTION

KATANGA is incredibly rich in valuable minerals, especially cobalt. Cobalt would be necessary for the Doomsday Bomb. When the Congo became independent, the Western Powers, especially America and Belgium, made a determined effort to preserve for the West the products of Katanga. Lumumba, who was the Congo's choice as Prime Minister, was murdered, and Tshombe, under Western pressure, was made Prime Minister of the whole country. The country rose against this decision, and the Americans and Belgians sent a military expedition to enforce their will. This expedition, the British, under the leadership of the Labour Government, supported, and they allowed it to use Ascension Island as a convenient spot from which to conduct the invasion. There is, in consequence, a war of devastation in progress throughout the Congo. The likelihood is that this will degenerate into guerilla warfare which will continue without securing victory for the West. Perhaps an excerpt from the writing of one of those who was a mercenary fighting for the West in the Congo would bring home the sort of war we are supporting there. I quote this from *News of the World* for 22nd November, 1964:

"On the way to Stanleyville one of our vehicles broke down. We took our gear off it and retreated into the bush. Late in the afternoon we went back to the vehicle, but found it completely wrecked . . .

"The young English lieutenant was furious. 'We will give the bastards a real lesson.' He ordered us to move at once on the nearest village and take it apart.

"It was a familiar enough command. It seemed to me we had been taking villages apart, innocent villages and peaceful farming folk who did not want any part of this war, all the way along the track from far down in the south.

"We would turn up unexpectedly, open fire without warning, race through the place, burning every

pathetic shanty and shack to the ground regardless of who might be inside. The idea was to spread the image of our determination and ruthlessness; to terrorize the whole area; to give the rebels an example of what they were in for . . .

"It seemed almost certain that the villagers knew nothing about the activities of the rebels. I doubted they even knew the lorry had been destroyed.

"It was just before dusk when we came. Unsuspecting women were hustling around, carrying water and doing about the last of their day's chores. Children were playing in the dust, laughing and shouting to one another.

"We paused for a few minutes, and then came the order to fire. There was a great crackle of shots from machine guns and our deadly new Belgian rifles. Women screamed and fell. Little children just stood there, dazed, or cartwheeled hideously as bullets slammed into them.

"Then, as usual, we raced into the place, still firing as we went. Some of us pitched cans of petrol on to the homes before putting a match to them. Others threw phosphorous hand grenades, which turned human beings into blazing inextinguishable torches of fire.

"For a while, as we raced along, there was bedlam. Shrieks, moans, shrill cries for mercy. And, above all, the throaty, half-crazed bellowing of those commandoes among us who quite obviously utterly loved this sort of thing.

"Then, as we moved away beyond the village, the comparative silence, the distant, hardly distinguishable cries of the wounded, the acrid smell of burning flesh."

The account continues, but I do not think that I need pursue it to illustrate my point. The cardinal point in the training of these mercenaries—and again I quote—is "that never, in any circumstances, should prisoners be taken. 'Even if men, women and children come running to you,' I was told, 'even if they fall on

their knees before you, begging for mercy, don't hesitate. Just shoot. To kill.'"

I need hardly say that this young man was sickened of being a hired assassin and ceased to be one. But, in England, under the aegis of the Labour Government, we are continuing to support this slaughter. On November 20th, 1964, *The Times* announced that Mr. Thomson, our Minister of State at the Foreign Office, was informed during the previous week by the Belgian Government that they were engaged in contingency planning with the U.S. Government. Britain then gave her permission to use Ascension Island. *The Times* also announced that Belgian troops were flown to Ascension Island with British permission. *The Daily Express* of 30th November, 1964, reports: "At one stage the Cabinet considered sending British troops. Britain was the first to suggest armed intervention to Belgium. But officials in Whitehall now say that the terrain in rebel-held areas prevents large scale troop landings." And, on December 15th, 1964, Mr. George Thomson, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, stated: "We give outright support to Tshombe." Yet, two days later our Minister of Defence (one of them, anyway) "referred to 'primitive barbarism' in the Congo and said that we had to see that other parts of Africa and Asia were not plunged into 'a similar state of chaos.'" Does this mean that we are to uphold similar bloody and unjustified slaughter elsewhere in Africa, carried on with the permission and help of the Labour Government? The record is one of which I as an Englishman, cannot be proud. As a member of the Party responsible, I am sickened.

This item is extracted from an important speech which Bertrand Russell made recently at the London School of Economics.

The full text is to be published by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. We hope to carry further extracts in future.

McNamara's Nuclear Madness

by Dave Windsor

IT is not only on Vietnam that Robert McNamara, U.S. Defence Secretary, shows a complete disregard for reality and callousness over the loss of human life. The following report from the Washington correspondent of the **Financial Times** shows him speaking glibly of the death of 149,000,000 Americans:

Any lingering belief that in a nuclear war exchanges are likely to be confined to military targets on either side does not survive detailed study of the evidence given to Congress by Mr. Robert McNamara, U.S. Defence Secretary.

Mr. McNamara's exposition of current U.S. strategic doctrine makes it clear that American military planners are working mainly on the assumption that a Soviet surprise strike would be directed immediately at American urban centres as well as military targets.

The possibility that the Russians might delay their attack on urban targets for perhaps an hour after their initial military attack is discussed, but it is dismissed as "an unlikely contingency."

In either event the American initial response would not avoid Russian urban centres.

One of the ideas thrown out by Mr. McNamara in his famous speech in June, 1962, that attacks might be limited to exchanges between "forces" — has thus finally died.

1.—The primary object of U.S. strategic forces — ICBMs and manned bombers — is deterrent by "assured destruction" — that is, an infallible capability of destroying the enemy "as a viable society." This is defined as the destruction of at least one-quarter to one-third of the population and two-thirds of the industrial capacity.

This task is made easier by the concentration of three-quarters of the Russian population in 200 urban areas, and the concentration of skilled Chinese personnel in even fewer.

By the early 1970s, says the Defence Secretary, American calculations show that "our already authorised strategic missile force," if it were directed on the aggressor's urban areas could cause more than 100 million

fatalities and destroy about 80 per cent. of his industrial capacity. It is clear from the content that the "if" here is scarcely hypothetical.

2.—The secondary object of the strategic forces is "damage limitation." Mr. McNamara's argument is directed to show that unless the Russians delayed after an initial attack on military targets there would be very little damaging limiting role for ICBMs and manned bombers on which they are targeted would already be on their way to America.

As between one form of defence system and another, Mr. McNamara shows that the best value for money in terms of American lives saved comes from an increased fall-out shelter programme.

The calculation is based on an assessment that an early Russian attack on urban areas would cause 149m. American deaths. This figure could be reduced to 120m. by the expenditure of \$5,000m. on a full shelter programme.

Further reductions to a level of about 80m. could be made by expenditure of a further \$10,000m. on increased anti-missile defence systems. But Mr. McNamara warned that if the Soviets choose to frustrate this defensive attempt the extra cost to them would be substantially less than the extra cost to America.

A Message to The Week

THE United States has no conceivable justification for its mad and dangerous actions in Vietnam. President Johnson won an election with an overwhelming majority of the popular vote. He has a massive majority in the Congress. Eighty-one per cent. of Americans polled favour a negotiated end to the war in Vietnam. He has had two months to accept negotiations with China, Russia, North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front, all of whom are agreeable. His decision to bomb North Vietnam can only mean that the war councils in the United States are seeking to destroy China's industrial potential and wish to create a situation in which they will have an excuse to do so. This is the measure of the world crisis which has been imposed on us by America. We have little time to rally opinion everywhere to stop the United States and to expedite a united peace in South East Asia.

19/2/65

—BERTRAND RUSSELL

Hull MCF March for Vietnam Peace

from Dave Godman

HULL'S Saturday afternoon shopping crowds witnessed between 100 and 200 demonstrators, well equipped with placards and leaflets, who marched through the City centre to protest against the American aggression in Vietnam. The march was organised by the newly-formed Hull MCF branch, and included members of unions, Hull CND, Trades Council, Young Socialists, Communist Party, Labour Party, and University Socialist Society.

The MCF issued a press statement after the march, which calls for an independent initiative by the British

government, and demands that British policy should be based on an end to American aggression, withdrawal of all foreign troops and free elections. It calls on Hull's Labour MPs, particularly Jim Johnson and Henry Solomons, who are both sponsors of MCF, to join their parliamentary colleagues — the 54 who have signed the motion calling for a peaceful solution.

After the march, it was resolved that the organisations concerned should remain in peak preparedness against the need to mobilise further demonstrations at short notice, should the situation deteriorate.

VIETNAMESE SCHWEIKS TROUBLE U.S.

SOME of the more far-sighted Americans are coming to realise the hopelessness of the Vietnam situation. It is not merely the political instability, the way in which one grubby military despot follows another as head of the South Vietnamese Government and a fearless warrior for the "free world". But, also, that this instability is, in its turn, a product of the putrefaction of the whole society. South Vietnam is a decaying and decadent society.

Richard Keatley, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* (15.6.64) described the situation: "Long An province just south-west of Saigon, is a potentially rich area. Its fertile land produces quantities of rice and fruit, and large number of the white Peking ducks so highly favoured in Vietnamese cuisine are raised locally. But prosperity hasn't touched most of the province's 300,000 inhabitants. Many live on small plots of rented land and pay 50% to 75% of their crops to landlords.

"A hired field hand earns 70 cents a day, if he can get work. Two young girls spend a long day weaving three fibre mats on a crude handloom, dividing wages of only 50 cents between them. Vo Van Sang, a pork butcher here in Thau Dao, one of 290 hamlets in Long An province, broke his leg 17 months ago and has yet to receive adequate medical care; the injured leg still bends at the break six inches below the knee and the muscles are shrivelling."

Would you fight to maintain a society with conditions like these? Is it surprising many South Vietnamese are "rice soldiers", interested in being well-fed and well-clothed by the Americans — but in doing no fighting? From the U.S. Army standpoint it may be exasperating, yet the main concern of the "rice soldiers" is to remain alive. They deliberately avoid meeting the Vietcong or, when they do, try to arrive at some clandestine agreement not to fight each other.

As a result, the efforts of American military advisers are frequently wasted. Writing in *The New Republic* (4.3.63), Jerry Rose cites a typical instance: "the Vietnamese streamed into Plei Mrong and the surrounding jungles. An artillery unit came to flail wildly at the forests; so did T-28 fight bombers. Six companies of Vietnamese soldiers were parachuted in to block the path of the fleeing enemy. But they made no contact with the guerrillas. Why?

Perhaps an American helicopter pilot had the explanation. "Yesterday," he said, "I dropped a whole bunch of those Vietnamese troops into a field. Today I went back to the same field with another load and you know what I saw? That first group was still there in the field, tents up and cooking lunch. They hadn't moved a damned inch."

Who said the good soldier Schweik was a European?

—Raymond Challinor

Afro-Asian Strategy Against Neo-Colonialism

ON February 22nd President Ben Bella of Algeria opened a one-week Afro-Asian economic seminar, at which subjects ranging from agrarian reform to the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism will be debated.

The President said that new economic relation must be worked out by Afro-Asian countries. He accepted the fact that economies of many African states (including Algeria) were closely tied to Western Europe at present but said this was a situation which had to be changed.

The seminar has been organised by the Afro-Asian solidarity movement which has its headquarters in Cairo. Delegates from many parts of Africa and Asia are attending. Increased trade exchanges between the two continents will be discussed here, and joint industrial develop-

ment projects are another subject on the agenda.

Also down for discussion is the possibility of formulating a new, perhaps common, Afro-Asian policy towards the European Common Market, but observers here noted that some of the African countries chiefly interested in the Market, such as Nigeria, Senegal and most of the former French territories, are not represented at the seminar.

Apart from subjects with an intrinsically political background, the seminar will debate items of basic economic interest to both Asia and Africa, such as training schemes, the role of the public sector in national economies, economic planning, and how and under what conditions foreign financing of industrial projects can be acceptable.

—Pat Jordan

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MALCOLM X's Last Speech

NEW YORK, February 16

MALCOLM X described the bombing of his home to about 700 people at a Harlem meeting last night sponsored by the Organisation of Afro-American Unity. He said the bombing early on February 14 had been ordered by Black Muslim leader Elijah Muhammad.

Malcolm X charged that the attackers obviously knew the layout of his home, and had attempted to seal off both the front and the rear exits to the house with fire bombs. He said the lives of his wife and children and his own had been saved because the bomb meant to seal off the rear exit, glanced off the window — instead of breaking through — and burned harmlessly outside. The attackers broke the window of the living room and succeeded in throwing a fire bomb inside, he said.

The black nationalist leader described a series of attempted attacks on him by the Black Muslims in the past weeks: an attempt to jump him in front of his home on January 22; an automobile chase on Los Angeles expressways at 80 miles an hour, and two attempts to attack him — despite the presence of police — when he appeared at television broadcasts in Chicago and New York.

He charged that the police knew of the plans of the Black Muslims to attack him — since they had thoroughly infiltrated the Black Muslim movement — but had done nothing to prevent the attacks. This was despite the fact that Raymond Sharrieff, supreme captain of the Fruit of Islam, the Black Muslim defense guard, had threatened him in a public telegram.

The former follower of Elijah Muhammad declared that the Black Muslims had become “a criminal organisation — in the hands of a man who's senile.” He said he knew “how bad it makes me look” to attack an organisation he had been so closely connected with. But, he added, “I'm going to expose them — let the chips fall where they may.”

Malcolm X went on to accuse the Black Muslims of having friendly relations with the Ku Klux Klan and Lincoln Rockwell's Nazis, and of

getting money from the same sources which support those racist organisations.

He described a meeting in Georgia he attended in December, 1960, between the Black Muslims and the leaders of the Ku Klux Klan. At this meeting there were negotiations to give the Black Muslims a county-sized tract of land to be used by them as a showcase for their programme of a separate nation.

After this meeting, he said, he was never permitted to return to the South while he was in the Black Muslim organisation — and so he had no direct knowledge of the further relations between the organisations. He pointed out, however, that from then on the Black Muslims were allowed to organise in the South without interference from the Klan. He asserted that Jeremiah X, head of the Black Muslims in the South, attended Klan rallies and that **Muhammad Speaks**, the Black Muslim newspaper, refrained from attacking the Klan or American Nazi Party leader Rockwell.

Malcolm X declared that Rockwell corresponded regularly with Elijah Muhammad and was permitted to attend Black Muslim meetings despite the resentment of many Black Muslims about this.

Malcolm X had declared at an earlier meeting of the OAAU that, had it been up to him, the Klan would have been run out of the country by the Black Muslims—who, he said, were capable of doing so. Since his break with the Muslims, the black nationalist leader has denounced both the Klan and Rockwell.

Malcolm X charged that the Black Muslims had been ordered to attack any of their members who defected to Malcolm. He cited a series of beating and shootings that had taken place recently.

The speaker described his recent trip to Alabama. He spoke at Tuskegee Institute. Afterwards students there in SNCC had insisted he go with them to Selma. In Selma, he said, Martin Luther King's spokesman had not wanted him to address the children, but the children and SNCC students insisted that he speak. “I promised them I'll be back — we'll be back,” he said.

At a press conference in Selma,

Malcolm X recalled President Johnson's campaign promise to “take the sheet off the Ku Klux Klan.” Malcolm declared that the government would never do so, but that “we will.”

He also described his recent run-in with the French government which refused to let him land in France to address a meeting of Afro-Americans and Africans in Paris. He said that the French Communist-led trade unions had refused to rent a hall to the Afro-Americans for the meeting and had applied pressure to prevent others from leasing them a hall. The rally in France was to have been held in conjunction with the First Congress of the Council of African Organisations which Malcolm addressed in England last week.

The presentation of the OAAU's programme, which was to have taken place at this Harlem meeting, was postponed to a meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, February 21, at Audubon Ballroom, 166 Street and Broadway.

Editorial Note: It was at this meeting that Malcolm X was murdered.

—David Herman

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