

The Week

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A MESSAGE TO BRITAIN FROM VIETNAM

Throughout 1965 the issue of Vietnam has dominated the headlines - and rightly so. In Vietnam we have on the one side a most heroic people who refuse to bow their heads, who by their defiance of imperialism are acting as the advance of all those who are fighting against oppression and for the liberation of mankind; on the other side we have the most powerful aggressive force the world has ever seen, armed to the teeth and full of determination to impose its will. No other issue is so important, indeed it can be said that one's attitude to Vietnam is a touchstone which indicates whether one is on the side of world progress or world reaction. In this spirit our last editorial for 1965 consists of an appeal from Vietnam. We give below the most important sections of the message from Professor Nguyen Van Hieu, spokesman on foreign affairs for the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front to the meeting held in London to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the N.L.F.:

"I have learned with great pleasure that, under your guidance, the Russell Foundation is holding a celebration of the 5th Anniversary of the birth of the N.L.F. of South Vietnam. This permits me to address you personally, and to the ^{other} Directors of the Russell Foundation as well as to all our friends in Great Britain, my warmest greetings and my heartfelt sentiments..." After outlining the history of the war, the Professor went on to show how sinister the American talk of peace really is. "To accept the American law of peace or submission to total destruction and massacre, that is the essence of the offers of negotiation of the United States....."

"However it is the Government of Mr. Wilson which has been charged to play the role of a fervent propagandist of this policy of war, blackmail and extortion...Co-President of the Geneva Conference, the British Government would have had the duty to fulfil correctly its mission. On the contrary it has failed its responsibilities in covering up the acts of sabotage of the American Government....and in encouraging US aggression against South Vietnam, as well as the criminal attacks against the North. I should add that the E.C. of the Labour Party has not shown itself any better inspired than Mr. Wilson ...In this respect, permit me...to express homage for your far-sightedness and strength when you took the decision of breaking with the Party of Mr. Wilson.....Therefore the conditions for a return to true peace in South Vietnam must entail a real independence for our people, such as the Front has proclaimed many times, that is to say:

The following report which appeared in the December 19th Sunday Times Business News is most instructive and should be studied by trade unionists concerned with the aircraft industry.

"A merger of the British Aircraft Corporation and Hawker Siddeley (Aviation) Ltd.; a cut of 50,000 workers in the 250,000 employed in the aircraft industry; the State purchase of a majority of the two airframe companies' shares; the end of Short's of Belfast as an aircraft building company; and an Anglo-French air bus in place of the projected 300-seat V C 10 airliners. These are the Government's principal decisions on the Plowden Report on the Aircraft Industry. The Government has already decided not only to implement the majority of the Plowden Committee's findings - including those which will involve big sha -ups in its own air-connected Ministries - but also to act on the three major questions left open by the Plowden findings. These were what size should the aircraft industry be; should B.A.C. and Hawker Siddeley be merged; and what proportion of their shares should be acquired by the Government?"

"Mr. Roy Jenkins, Minister of Aviation, now believes that both Cabinet and Parliamentary support for his post-Plowden plans can be gained without creating a political struggle on the scale and intensity which would normally be expected to surround an extension of State control. Before a major aircraft debate is held in the Commons, early in February, the preliminary moves for putting into effect the Plowden, and the post-Plowden belief, will have begun. It is probable that key men involved in the B.A.C.-Hawker Siddeley (Aviation) proposals will take part in unofficial discussions during the Christmas 'holiday' season. The Government's decisions not to back the proposed 300-seat development of the V C 10, represents a key policy decision. B.A.C. now appear to be in the position of having no hope of further major supplies of capital from its three owning companies, English Electric, Vickers and British Aeroplane.

"At the same time the Government's determination to back the projected Anglo-French air bus (a jet-powered plane capable of carrying several hundred passengers on inter-European flights at near-train fares) reflects Plowden's 'into-Europe' recommendation. This means that they do intend to keep Britain active in the international air business. Mr. Jenkins may be able to give Parliament some further hints on future policy through accepting Plowden's advice - to review the Ministry of Aviation's own future, improve the practical research work of the Government research establishments, and to create a single central Government organisation for promoting aerospace exports. One political danger-point is raised by the new Government thinking. The decision to allow Short's, Belfast, itself controlled by the State, to move away from aircraft building will cause considerable resentment in Conservative circles."

"LABOUR RESEARCH" PRODUCES TWO VALUABLE PAMPHLETS from Pat Jordan

Living up to its reputation for producing high quality and timely pamphlets, Labour Research Department has brought out Tenant's Guide to the 1965 Rent Act and Short Guide to the Redundancy Payments Act, 1965. The former, written by T.A. Vernon, costs one shilling but can be obtained much cheaper in bulk. The "Short Guide..." is only 9d (in both cases add an extra 3d for postage on single copies) and is designed to "help trade unionists to understand this very complicated Act.." I am wure it will and recommend both to all active members of the Labour and trade union movement. Write LRD, 78, Blackfriars Rd., S.E.1

THE "ECONOMIST" CALLS FOR POWERS TO VETO ARBITRATION AWARDS

In its current issue the "Economist" advises the Government that it should opt dramatically for a tough incomes policy now. "The right course", it says, "would actually be to make the promised incomes legislation stronger than was proposed in September. One suitably dramatic move would be to give the prices and incomes board itself - on its own initiative - powers to impose a veto on arbitration awards with which it disagreed."

"The Government will say that this is impossible. Indeed, suggestions are being bruited about that even the legislation promised last September may prove too difficult to enact. The usual whinnies of retreat before the trade unions roll out in loud diapason. They will sound a funeral dirge for any hope that a progressive economic policy may eventually emerge from this Labour Government unless they are checked, and checked by the Prime Minister himself. Cannot Mr. Wilson remember that the main economic attraction he offered last year was that Labour would not solve Britain's external problems by resorting to excessive demand deflation, but would use its special relationship with the trade unions to enforce an incomes policy which would attack cost-inflation more directly? It is time for him to implement this latter policy, and fast."

PHILIPS TO LAY OFF 1,500 WORKERS by a Special Correspondent

Philips Electronic and Associated Industries last week announced its plans to cut its 30,000 strong labour force throughout the United Kingdom by 5% early in the New Year. The redundant 1,500 will involve "staff at all levels". Mr. Engels, the group's chairman, explained, "Our aim must be to do more with less. Rising costs and constant pressure on margins make these steps necessary we believe that this is the proper way for a company to shoulder its responsibilities."

The Ministry of Labour and the Department of Economic Affairs are likely to take a close interest in the Philips scheme, following Hoover's successful reduction of labour needs by 900. "A further success will help encourage other big enterprises to reassess their labour requirements and work out plans for getting more workers on the move", commented the 'Financial Times'.

IS THE COAL INDUSTRY CONTRACTING TOO QUICKLY?* by Will Whitehead

For some years now union members have been concerned - as have the leadership - with the continuing problem of a contracting industry. Pits have closed, compelling men to seek employment elsewhere. Side by side has gone the problem of voluntary contraction. No one doubts that the second is the child of the first. No one doubts either that chronic absenteeism, higher age levels, indiscipline and general demoralisation are the manifestations of this worsening situation. Since July, this year, suspicions about government policy have deepened. Now the cat is out of the bag. Pits without readily workable reserves and grossly uneconomic pits are to quickly close. The different government ministries have been instructed to assess the likely displacement of men and to make arrangements for (a) the transfer of able-bodied men from the pits due to close to the newer and re-organised pits, and (b) the establishment of alternative industry in areas where men cannot be accommodated in the mining industry.....the fight against premature pit closures and for the alternative industry will now proceed at national level where the national executive committee has asked for meetings with the government.

* from The Miner, the journal of the South Wales Area of the N.U.M. of which Mr. Whitehead is the president..

The Labour Government's policies have developed in the last few months into a blind adherence to old guard imperialist interests abroad, and the pursuit of wage control via the undermining of trade union freedoms, at home.

Why then, do we recommend our readers to vote for, and work for, the return of the Labour candidate at the North Hull election? Would our position not be more logical if we supported the Radical Alliance candidate? Clearly, socialists must have every sympathy with the frustration and moral anger which has led the R.A. into opposing Labour on its Vietnam policy; though their candidate has said that he recognises that their intervention could bring down the Government. It is the R.A. (despite its weaknesses - and particularly its failure to recognise the importance of the trade union opposition to Government home policies) which is closer to the ideals of Keir Hardie, than are Wilson and his cabinet. The intervention of the R.A. and the threat this poses to Labour's majority, is the responsibility of the Government, and not of the Left. Let the R.A.'s election campaign be listened to with respect, therefore, by all humanists and socialists.

Our difference with the R.A. concerns strategy, and not principle. They attack us (on the Left of the Labour Party) for our impotence. But if they achieve any success, and bring down Labour, the only result will be to let in the Tories. There is no other alternative. The Tories would continue to endorse the Vietnam genocide by the United States, and would develop the inroads into democracy at home which Labour Ministers have initiated. Moreover, there are still substantial sections of the Labour movement who harbour hopes of a reversal of present Government policies; who see some crumbs dropping from the imperialist banquet also, in the shape of improved welfare benefits - who have not yet compared the meagre size of these crumbs with the Vietnam and "East of Suez" policies.

If the Labour Government goes now, the lessons will never be learnt. The long hard struggle to develop a viable socialist movement to challenge the pro-capitalist strategies of Labour's present leadership, would have to continue (for it has already started) against a background chorus of alibis from the Labour leadership - "We never had a chance!" It is rather like political assassination. Desperate and idealistic men, living under tyranny, were led to shoot the Tsar. Along came the Tsar's heir, assumed the throne, and nothing changed.

VOTE LABOUR - keep this Government in office, and give it no shadow of an alibi for its failure to carry out humanist or socialist policies: meanwhile, continue the work of exposing the nature of this leadership. In opposition many of these difficult and teasing dilemmas are avoided, but the present situation is genuinely full of possibilities, provided we don't return to square one. If there were a viable alternative, of course we should have to think again. We believe that alternative can only be built up out of lessons learnt, through the Labour movement, by the trade unions and the radical socialist left working together.

Regretfully, we say to the R.A., that there is no short cut to your admirable objective. We must, at the same time, acknowledge that they have introduced a new dimension of socialist strategy at this critical time.

* (Editorial in January's "Humberside Voice")

(Editorial note: this statement was drawn up by Martin Pressage of the Oldbury and Haleöwen Young Socialists as a contribution to the discussion of the future of the Young Socialists. We are aware that there are many controversial ideas in the draft and, accordingly, would welcome comment and further discussion.)

"The Labour Party Young Socialists is in danger of collapse for the following reasons:

- (1) The movement has never been consulted at any time with a view to solving its problems, and specifically was not consulted on the change in its constitution.
- (2) Due to the changes in constitution^{wt} recently agreed by the Labour Party Conference, active members of the movement see no political future in the Y.S. and will leave to devote their energies to the adult movement....
- (3) The movement has no paid permanent officials at regional level, Assistant Regional Organisers are too busy and often ill-equipped to act as organisers of a youth movement.
- (4) The lack of purpose of regional conferences, and the lack of power of regional committees of the movement, coupled with a non-existent area organisation, means that branches are forced to function merely as isolated units....
- (5) The average age of the movement is too low, and the Y.S. is often treated as a children's, rather than a youth movement.....

"We believe that the movement can be a successful organisation within the Labour Party, provided that..the Party"(recognises)" that the movement must, in the main, be responsible for its own organisation, and by the Y.S. that participation in a privileged section of the Labour Party" (presupposes) "certain responsibilities.

"We believe that the following actions should be taken at the earliest possible moment by the Labour Party:

- (a) The age limit of the movement should be raised to 30, and the N.E.C. should use all its influence to induce members of the Labour Party to join the movement. This step would greatly increase the membership of the Y.S., bring in more politically mature members, and reduce the influence of political extremists in the younger Y.S. members.
- (b) A regional and national levy should be imposed on each branch, on the basis of membership. A minimum membership figure should be included in the constitution of Y.S. branches. This would give the Y.S. more responsibilities and a certain amount of financial freedom. 'Rotten branches' would be discouraged, and Annual Conference, and other conferences, would be more representative of the true membership of the Y.S.
- (c) Paid, permanent regional and national officials must be appointed to be responsible solely on the organisation of the youth movement.....
- (d) Regional committees of Young Socialists, should be made responsible, with the Regional Youth Officer, for all Y.S. organisation in the region, and should be given control of a fund created from the regional levy.
- (e) All branches should be required to register annually with the Regional Youth Officer, and to submit a report of their activities to him...
- (f) A national Young Socialists' newspaper should be set up under the editorship of a sub-committee of the Y.S. National Committee. The movement should accept financial responsibility for the running of the newspaper, and the sub-committee would accept responsibility for editorial policy.....
- (h) The right of a Y.S. branch to decide its own delegate to conference and right of conference to discuss all relevant resolutions must be restored.....

The BBC's decision not to show The War Game, a television documentary depicting conditions after a nuclear war, is yet a further indication of official reticence. They do not wish the British people to be aware of the very grave dangers inherent in the country's nuclear alliances, the risk of near-total annihilation that we run every day. That is why the Home Office brought pressure on to the BBC not to show this film. Moreover, it is a graphic illustration of the continuity on these matters between Tory and Labour Governments. Both, essentially had the same aims: to continue the charade of civil defence, a pretence of providing protection for the civilian population; to maintain and improve highly elaborate underground shelters for VIPs; and, finally, to suppress information about the real plans for a nuclear war.

It is only possible to guess what Peter Watson included in The War Game, the things that gave Home Office officials cold feet. But here are the points they would dearly like to keep secret:

(1) That, when nuclear war is imminent, hospital patients in what are designated likely target areas are written off as dead and left unattended. The medical staff are evacuated, sent to places that are considered safer, because their skill and knowledge must, if possible, be preserved. With a tremendous mass of suffering humanity, even if every doctor were alive it would be insufficient to cope with the immense number of casualties a nuclear war would inevitably cause. So, on the eve of destruction, the policy is "save the doctor, leave the patient."

(2) That places on the edge of conurbations and large towns, which can easily be dug by mechanical means, have already been earmarked as mass burial grounds. It must be remembered: megaton bombs result in megacorpse - millions of dead. The problem of disposing of bodies would be an urgent problem since they would constitute a health-hazard to the few survivors. For the same reason, the German firm that manufactured crematoria for Hitler's concentration camps, has continued, since the end of the war, to maintain full production for civil defence purposes. Ordinary crematoria, used in normal circumstances, can only cope with forty bodies a day, going flat out; whereas Hitler's, as we know, disposed six million Jews in a comparatively short space of time.

(3) That, in the immediate pre-nuclear attack period, soldiers with fixed bayonets will close certain roads to the public and shoot any unauthorised person using them. This arrangement is to assist VIPs scurrying to their deep underground shelters. It is assumed, probably realistically, that impending destruction will create panic among the general public. People in their millions will dash into their cars, rushing around the country to places they consider are likely to be safest. In this pandemonium, troops will shoot men who attempt to take their families to where they have most chance of survival - the deep underground shelters.

The "Spies for Peace" pamphlet, by publicising the location of Regional Seats of Government, created a problem for civil defence authorities. They saw that it increased the likelihood of large numbers of desperate men -- with no faith in buckets of water, sand, whitewash, and all the other panaceas for nuclear war, which C.D. promulgates for civilian population - struggling ferociously to gain admittance to the deep underground bunkers.

For this reason, the Labour Government, quietly and unobtrusively, has continued to make fresh underground shelters for VIPs and re-siting the Regional
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The BBC's war game continued/

Seats of Government. Doubtless this would be denied by a Home Office spokesman if questioned in the House. But this would merely be continuing a long tradition of official deception. Well before the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet, I gained access to a confidential plan for an underground shelter. Consequently, I contacted my local Member of Parliament, Stephen Swingle. As a result, he asked in Parliament, on February 6, 1958: "What steps have been taken to construct or renovate deep underground shelters as part of the civil defence programme? At what cost? And for whose use?" Replying for the Home Office, Miss Pat Hornsby Smith said, "No deep underground shelters have been constructed or renovated."

If the Government denied it was continuing to build shelters or re-site R.S.G.s, then its denial would have the same ring of truth as Miss Hornsby Smith's answer.

RADICAL ALLIANCE INTERVENTION IN HULL NORTH

Richard Gott writes:

"While I am sure that there will be many people who will disagree with the tactical position that I have taken up in standing at the Hull North by-election, I am equally sure that the entire readership of The Week will agree with my views of the war in Vietnam - the major plank on which I have chosen to base my platform.

There are two major reasons why I decided to intervene. Firstly, this is a national by-election of unparalleled importance, and hence there is a chance that the truth about what is happening in Vietnam will become known not only to the electorate of Hull North but to the country as a whole. This is a chance to air the issue. Secondly, foreign policy issues must be got right first time. It does not matter much whether steel is nationalised this year or in 1970, it will come eventually. But if the Government fails to get Vietnam right, or Rhodesia, the chance to do so will slip away forever. The white supremacist regime of Ian Smith will remain in power. It will become as difficult to dislodge him as it is Dr. Verwoerd. In Vietnam, the country will be literally pounded to pieces before the Americans choose to desist.

The daily bombing of Vietnam is, in my view, so unspeakable that it is becoming intolerable to live in a country where the Government not only condones it but actively supports it. While the left wing in Parliament refuses to threaten the Government on this issue, it has no influence. By threatening from outside to bring the Government down - the Radical Alliance intends to contest future marginal by-elections if the Vietnam policy is not changed - we shall provide a backstop beyond which the left MPs will retreat at their peril.

Of course the logic of this argument is that the Tories might win and return to power. But equally they might not. We cannot foresee all the consequences of our actions. I appeal to all those who support Radical Alliance and our intervention in Hull and Fulham (where Tariq Ali will be opposing the Foreign Secretary at the General Election) to send money to the Treasurer: Mehala Trevaldwyn, 42, Vicarage Road, London S.W. 14.

VIETNAMESE BIRTHDAY HONOURED IN LONDON from John Price

Monday, December 20th was the fifth anniversary of the National Liberation Front. As a welcome gesture of solidarity with the Vietnamese people, the BRPF* convened a crowded meeting in London to celebrate the occasion. This was one of the most significant meetings of the British Left for some time, and it may well herald exciting and positive new developments. The speakers included a number of directors of the foundation: Ralph Schoenman, Chris Farley, David Horowitz, Mark Lane, Ken Coates and Hamza Alavi. Ralph Miliband, a moving spirit of the newly formed CSE, made a strong and telling analysis of the historical significance of the Vietnamese struggle, and its importance as a catalyst in the worldwide socialist movement. "There are times when men must stand up and be counted", he said, after commenting on the widespread failure of the Left in Britain to rise to this issue. The story of the heroic fight of the NLF was told in a terrifyingly documented speech by Chris Farley, who has spent much time in Vietnam gathering all the frightening details of the extent of American oppression.

NGUYEN VAN HIEU'S MESSAGE was a highlight of the meeting. (This important statement by the NLF spokesman in Prague is reproduced elsewhere - Editor) A film from South Vietnam was shown, in which the young boys and girls of the NLF fought back against overpowering odds to defend the territories they had liberated. This was warmly applauded.

THREE BRAVE AMERICANS who had done the work of convening the meeting, Ralph Schoenman, Mark Lane and David Horowitz, were enthusiastically applauded when Ralph Miliband congratulated them on their initiative. Each of them spoke with severe clarity, Ralph Schoenman documenting the economic and political stranglehold of U.S. imperialism on the peoples of the third world, and Mark Lane giving a stirring account of the struggle of the American people against this "dirty war."

THE ORGANISING OF A CAMPAIGN of solidarity to show the Labour Movement the real implications of the war, and to denounce the complicity of the Wilson administration in American policies, was urged by Ken Coates. Hamza Alavi showed how the fight of the Vietnamese people was identical in its aims with the struggles of all the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

PLANS FOR ACTION WERE ANNOUNCED by Ralph Schoenman, who said that the BRPF would be following up the meeting with a national solidarity conference in March 1966, and that attempts would be made to form a standing organisation to link with the people of Vietnam, and with similar bodies in other European countries and the U.S.A. itself. A War Crimes Tribunal was also to be organised to take the dossier of American atrocities before the bar of world public opinion.

WITCH-HUNTERS AGAIN - A COMMENT from Ken Coates

Brian Simister's article on the witch-hunt in various parts of the Labour Party, which appeared in last week's issue, brought some very sad cases to light, and I hope it will contribute to their rectification. But his remarks of the N.E.C. enquiry into the activities of the Nottingham City Labour Party might pre-judge the issues there. While I would not like to vouch in advance for the objectivity of the tribunal which is coming to Nottingham, I think socialists should give it a fair trial, and judge it by its performance.

* Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

Meeting in London on Saturday last, the steering committee of the Centre for Socialist Education decided upon an important programme of activity. Nationally, a weekend teach-in on "The Labour Government and the Trade Unions" is to be convened in London early in 1966. This will be followed by other teach-ins on major questions of the day. Progress with the "Read-in" on incomes policy is advanced, and a seminar of contributors and other interested people will take place on January 22nd in London. Convenor of this event is John Palmer, of 2, Clock House Mead, Oxshott, Surrey, to whom all enquiries should be addressed. Plans were approved for an "Anti-Devlin Report" to be prepared by Tony Topham with a team of other interested people. An extremely interesting report on workers' control in municipal enterprise, prepared by Hull busmen, was discussed, and will be recommended for discussion to local centres. Activity in the regions is booming. Manchester is calling a series of 4-day-long seminars on key problems: immigration, incomes policy, and the national plan. Over 40 people had attended the founding committee meeting of the London Centre, to prepare plans for the public launching of the work of the Centre. The Yorkshire steering committee met on the same day as the national body, and discussed plans for trade union studies in a number of centres. A short guide on "How to form a local Centre for Socialist Education" was keenly discussed, and after it has been finalised it will be published by the committee.

The Sheffield and Oxford centres are both in an advanced state of formation. Oxford will have its inaugural meeting on Jan 22nd, and Sheffield met last Sunday to discuss plans for the formation of at least four study groups. A roster of persons willing to lecture to local centres is being prepared for distribution to local convenors. Although over £100 in donations has been collected nationally, donations to the Centre are very urgently needed. Lack of money is beginning to hold up the publicity drive which is becoming very necessary to develop the work.

THE SHAME OF MR. FRASER*

by Alex Kitson

The inactivity of the Ministry of Transport has become something of a bad joke. Worse, it is guilty of gross dereliction of duty by failing to produce plans for the proper co-ordination of transport 13 months after Labour won power. And the chief responsibility is the Minister of Transport's, Mr. Tom Fraser. Of all the Ministers in Mr. Wilson's administration, he has signally failed to convince anyone - including the leaders of this Union - that he knows what he's about or where he is going.

So far as the public is concerned he has had about as much impact as a flea on the back of a ten-ton diesel. We will lose no sleep if he goes - in fact the sooner the better. Instead of drive, we've had delays. Instead of more nationalisation of the country's transport, we've had private enterprise given a bigger stake. BRS even disposes its Meat Haulage section to a private concern. It has spent £8½ million in buying into other road haulage concerns though Mr. Fraser won't tell us how much has gone into buying shares in companies running in opposition to its own services.

Beeching and Hinton have come and gone - and we seem to be no nearer a policy of road and rail integration. Where we've had a progressive move like the introduction of liner trains which could lead to road-rail integration - private enterprise has been allowed to cash in at the expense of the publicly-owned services...."

! From The Highway, official journal of the Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union of which Mr. Kitson is general secretary.

Throughout the world, people speak in awe and admiration of the extraordinary spirit of the Cuban people. In the course of history, there have been many cruel and predatory imperialisms, but few have been as powerful as United States' imperialism. In Cuba, a small nation has defied successfully this great colossus. I need not tell you of the impact your revolution has made on the consciousness of all those suffering from exploitation and domination. There is no other country in Latin America where the wealth and resources of the population are not manipulated and stolen by foreign capitalists whose base of operation is the United States. The problem, therefore, that presents itself to the people of the world is how to remove the rulers of the United States, who have created a war machine of great brutality to protect their economic empire. In Vietnam and the Dominican Republic the rulers of US capitalism have sought directly to suppress popular and patriotic struggle. But the problem is not only one of military aggression. US rulers also control world markets, and through this they siphon the wealth of people and make them ever more dependent on the United States. When we consider the suffering this causes, we are again reminded of the debt we owe to the Cuban people for showing us the way to overcome misery and degradation.

Let us examine the nature of this war machine. 3,000 military bases and vast mobile fleets, bearing missiles and fleets of nuclear bombers, are spread over our planet to protect the ownership and control by U.S. capitalism of 60% of the world's resources. 60% of the world's resources are owned by the rulers of 6% of the world's population. The aggressiveness of this empire imposes on mankind an expenditure of 140,000 million dollars annually or 16 million dollars each hour. The current arms expenditure exceeds the entire national income of all developing countries. It exceeds the world's annual exports of all commodities. It exceeds the national income of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The U.S. military budget is nearly 60,000 million dollars per year. One Atlas missile costs 30 million dollars or the equivalent of the total investment for nitrogen fertilizer plant with capacity of 70,000 tons per annum.

Consider this in terms of the United Kingdom only, to take the example of a prosperous country: one obsolete missile equals four universities, one TSR 2 equals five modern hospitals, one ground to air missile equals 100,000 tractors. During the past fourteen years the U.S. spent 4,000 million dollars to purchase farm surpluses; butter and cheese have been stored and poisoned to keep prices up in the world markets. Blue dye is poured into great mountains of butter and cheese to render them unusable. By 1960, 125 million tons of bread grain had been stored in the United States to rot - enough food for every citizen of India for one year. Unimaginably vast quantities of foodstuffs are calculatedly destroyed by the rulers of U.S. capitalism for no other purpose than the continuation of their profits and the retention of their power. Like vultures the handful of the rich batten on the poor, the exploited, the oppressed. A drop of 5% in the world price of staple exports of any country would, according to Dag Hammarskjold, wipe out all investments of the world bank, of the United Nations and all bilateral and other investments. These were the fears of Hammarskjold. What are the facts: in recent years prices have been operated against poor countries not merely at 5% but at 40%. The industrial production of Western capitalism is consciously employed not only to perpetuate the hunger which exists in the world, but to increase it vastly for profit. In South Africa,

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The example of Cuba continued/

10,000 children die annually from gastro-enteritis. The smallpox which haunts many countries could be eliminated at a cost of 500,000 dollars. Hundreds of millions who suffer from yaws could be cured by a fivepenny shot of pencillin. Five hundred million people have trachoma. 60% of the children of Africa suffer from protein deficiency diseases such as kwashioker, beri-beri or pellagra. When U.S. capitalists hoard food and poison it, they not^{only} deprive the starving, but force the developing countries to buy food at high costs. The riches of the earth are destroyed, wasted, stolen by the few and used to murder the millions.

But the people of Cuba have stirred the conscience of the American people. Every university, school and, indeed, every major city in the United States witnesses the popular resistance of the American people to the military-industrial complex which rules them. This new resistance of the people of the United States is a tribute to the people of Cuba, because the demands of the American resistance are precisely those which have been achieved, in practice, in Cuba. As the people of the United States become more militant and strong in their opposition, and as the peoples of the world follow the Cuban example, the predatory system which so jeopardises world peace will succumb to the people of the United States and the world. I send you my warmest greetings in our common struggle.

* Having received the message from Bertrand Russell to the three-continental anti-imperialist conference in Havana, the Cuban authorities were so pleased with the expression of solidarity that they asked for a recorded message to play over Havana Radio. This article is the text.

Message from Vietnam continued/

1. The United States must cease its aggression against Vietnam, respect and correctly apply the Accords of Geneva of 1954, retire its troops and its arms, as well as all those of its satellites, and dismantle all its military bases in South Vietnam.
2. It must respect the national rights of the people of South Vietnam, that is to say: independence, democracy, peace and neutrality. The internal affairs of the people of Vietnam will be settled by the people of Vietnam themselves, without foreign meddling and interference. The unification of Vietnam will be decided by all the Vietnamese people in their entirety.
3. The N.L.F. of South Vietnam is the sole legitimate representative of the people of South Vietnam and must have a role and decisive voice in all political decisions of South Vietnam.

This position and the four points of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam constitute - one has no doubt whatever - the unique and sole basis of a political settlement of the Vietnamese problem.

For their part, the people of South Vietnam under the direction of the NLF, are determined to struggle to the very end for the realisation of these objectives. They mean to contribute in this way to the safeguarding of peace in Indo-China, in South East Asia and the world. In a recent declaration for the forthcoming Tri-continental Conference, you had the kindness to recall that our people have given every ounce of their strength and life in a resistance lasting these 25 years, against 3 powerful industrial states... You have added that this struggle has demonstrated the incredible spirit of which men are capable when they are dedicated to a noble ideal. Our infinite thanks for your generous appreciation of our people and of our struggle." The message ends by thanking "all our friends, known and unknown, in Great Britain" who are working for our cause. N.B. The full text is available from BRPF, 3 & 4, Shavers Place, London S.W. 1

The Swedish Parliament last week passed a Bill for State Subsidies to the Political Parties. The Bill, first submitted to Parliament on November 12, received a solid vote in the Lower Chamber of 148 in favour and 38 against, having already secured 92 votes against 29 in the Upper Chamber.

The Bill provides for a total of Kr.23m. (about £1.6m.) to be distributed to the five political parties in 1966 on the basis of their Parliamentary representation. The parties are free to use the funds at their discretion for the purpose of shaping and informing public opinion. Three high ranking judges are to be appointed to supervise the distribution of the funds to the parties, and to settle any disputes that may arise. On their present Parliamentary strength the Social Democrats will receive Kr.11.5m, the Liberals Kr.4.1m, Conservatives Kr.3.4m, the Centre Party Kr.3.2m, and the Communists Kr.0.6m. In terms of value per M.P. the subsidy is worth approximately £4,000 per annum.

A GERMAN INCOMES BOARD ? *

West Germany long seemed immune to the economic problems besetting other Western nations, but the difficulties the country is now undergoing as it approaches 1966, the "Year of Stabilisation", prove that it is truly one of the family. ... "What must be done" is the heading of a recent article in the weekly "Die Zeit" "If prices continue to increase at the present rate, if another wave of wage claims strikes us, then we shall lose the major foreign markets in 1966, and register, by 1967 at the latest, a flight from the D-mark." The proposals include holding the next Federal Budget below the expected increase of 4% in the gross national product for 1966. All subsidies should be cut by 10% without exception. Other aid, such as children's allowances, should be cancelled or postponed until 1968. The Federal Railways should be given the green light for a rationalisation, and from 1967 should begin a fare policy based upon economic cost. There should be an enforced breathing space in the movement towards wage increases and shorter working hours."

The drive by the German unions to increase the amount their members take home in their pay packets is discussed in the same issue. Wolfgang Kruger suggests the need for a German Incomes Council - and the British Prices and Incomes Board is clearly his inspiration. The President of the German equivalent of the T.U.C. recently declared the unions' responsibility in maintaining the stability of society and the economy, and almost at once its biggest and strongest member, I.G. Metall, fired the opening salvo in the campaign for increases in 1966, with a claim for an increase of 9%. The print and paper-workers followed up with a 12% claim, the commerce, banking and insurance workers with 12%, and the food, entertainment and hotel workers with 14%.

Current estimates indicate that this year the real growth in the German gross national product will be about 5%; and if price increases are reckoned in, 1965 will end with a nominal plus of 8.8%. For 1966 the estimated growth figures are 4.45% real and 8% nominal and, the writer points out, there is a clash between these figures and the unions' claims. With an Incomes Council ... the voice of the general interest of the economy would be heard. "In England", concludes the writer, "they decided on this method only when forced by dire necessity. We shall do so before reaching that stage."

* (Condensed from "British Industry", 10 December)