

The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS
Vol. 7 No. 11. 16th March 1967

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**Pollok's
Warning for
Labour Party**

***NEW VIETNAM
ESCALATION
IN SIGHT ?***

71 Onslow Gardens, London N.10

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Labour Party
Warning for
Polls

THE WEEK

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A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALLY
FOR THE WEEK END

NEW NEW
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Labour's crisis: Pollok and Shinwell's resignation

Although not directly connected, Pollok's shock loss for Labour and Shinwell's resignation, are symptoms of a deep crisis of policy. They flow from the same process: the continued gallop to the right which Wilson has been making since his election. They also point out another lesson: Wilson's policies are deeply dangerous to Labour, its traditions and even its organisation. The left has been accused of rocking the boat; Wilson has sailed it on to very dangerous waters. Unless the left organises it may very well sink!

Recent developments show too that those who argued that it was wrong for "tactical reasons" to fight Wilson have been shown to be completely mistaken. When the 62 M.P.s abstained on the defence issue this did nothing but good: it has shaken the right wing structure of the Party and forced the apparatus to even appear conciliatory. The lesson is very clear.

The Guam conference: a new escalation planned?

Next Saturday Johnson is to fly to Guam to confer with his military heads from South East Asia. It has been rumoured that Westmoreland, the butcher of Vietnam, is to be made supreme commander of all U.S. South East Asian forces. This would be the logical corollary of using the 7th Fleet and other U.S. forces for the invasion of the North, or the bombing and shelling of the dykes at the flood season. In the next two weeks there will be a large number of activities on the left: the keynote of these activities must be an urgent appeal for action. We must declare that we will not tolerate further escalation of the war by America and that we insist on Labour opposing this.

STOP PRESS: HELP THIS VALIANT ANTI-VIETNAM WAR HERO

We have received this report from an American correspondent: "Howie Levy, an U.S. Army doctor, is to be brought before a General Court Martial within the next month on five charges, including failure to obey orders, incitement to disloyalty, and behaviour unbecoming an officer. On the first charge of failing to obey orders, Dr. Levy is accused of refusing to teach "Special Forces Dermatology" to soldiers in training. "Special Forces Dermatology" is the circumlocution used by the U.S. Army for the rudimentary political-medical skills, such as curing facial blemishes or syphilis, which will help soldiers to win over Vietnamese peasants. On the charge to incitement, Dr. Levy is accused of saying that if he were a Negro he would not fight in Vietnam. He is said to have undermined morale at Fort Jackson. Urgent messages of support should go to his Attorney: Charles Morgan, c/o 5, Forsythe St., Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. All socialist publications should publicize his case, the New York Times between December 23rd, 1966, and January 3rd, 1967, has material on the case."

POLLOK BY-ELECTION - by Tony Southall

As I predicted in "The Week" several weeks ago, the Labour Government's apparent indifference towards the special problems of the 'underdeveloped' areas of Britain was reflected in the vote gained by the Scottish Nationalist candidate in the Pollok by-election (The trend is also clearly seen in Welsh Nationalist support in Rhondda).

Proportion of votes cast for	1966	1967 by-election
Labour	52.4%	31.2%
Tory	47.6%	36.9%
SNF) no candidate	28.2%
Communist		1.8%
Liberal		1.9%

It is clear from the above that whatever they knew of Labour's policies, the Pollok electors who switched votes did not regard the Tories as an alternative -- clearly Scotland's experience from 1951-64 remains in their minds. At the other end of the spectrum the Communist, who was generally acknowledged to be the best candidate, made by far the best impression on television, and possessed the most coherent programme, collected a derisory total. Theoretically this was a situation in which the CP should have profited considerably. If any further proof of the impotence of their parliamentary aspirations was required Pollok surely provided it.

Instead many traditional Labour supporters chose to give their vote to the Scottish National Party. The latter has been growing apace over the last 18 months. Its total membership now far exceeds that of the Labour Party in Scotland. It managed to draft in hundreds of young people to the Pollok campaign. Its badges were sported every where in the Glasgow local elections. Its vote has leapt from 4,000 in 1964 to 9,000 in 1965 and 18,000 in 1966 when it contested less than half of the seats. This year it will contest all the 37 wards at a time when the Labour Party only needs to lose 5 seats to be forced to relinquish control of the corporation. And all this is happening not in the long-neglected far-flung rural areas of Scotland, but in the most proletarian city in Britain.

Wilson and his advisors should reflect that it is their policies which have brought about this phenomenon. Scotland has not been cushioned from the effects of the freeze -- the current unemployment rate remains nearly twice the national average. Prices -- a recurring issue in the Pollok campaign -- are higher for basic commodities such as food. Coal is 30/- per ton more than in England. Average wages are £4 per week below the level in the South-East. Housing is the worst in the country and the burden of paying for re-development keeps rates exorbitantly high. Above all the Pollok campaign immediately followed the government's decision to disallow the 7% salary award given to local government staffs in Scotland, while paying this to their English and Welsh colleagues, and their intervention to stop payment of the 1/- per hour increase to Scottish contracting electricians. The nationalist undertones in the strike which has arisen out of the latter are clear warnings of this general trend.

What is now becoming clear is that a government which decides to submit to the national and international demands of capitalism and imperialism finds itself unable to satisfy the demands of its own supporters who will become increasingly alienated. In the 'undeveloped' areas - inevitably hit first, the initial reaction to this will inevitably take the form of a fairly crude nationalism where this is appropriate.

For socialists this development has both positive and negative aspects. On the one hand we must be pleased that opposition to the Wilson governments policies is now becoming manifest on a large scale and that this opposition has not taken the form of a turn to the Tories. On the other hand we must be extremely wary of a party whose candidate in Pollok advocated support for the Americans in Vietnam and Scotland's entry into the Common Market, along with the usual vote-catching formula of attacking London-based government. And we have to continually hammer home the case for opposition to the government being conducted within the Labour movement, lest the, often worthily motivated, energies of thousands of young people be exhausted in a futile and basically reactionary movement.

SCOTTISH ELECTRICIANS STRIKE by a Glasgow correspondent

The anomaly created by the government's advice that, since it was settled one day after the commencement of the freeze the 1/-d per hour increase due to be paid to electricians in the contracting industry from March should not apply in Scotland, has inevitably resulted in a strike.

The private contractors stated their intention of defying the DEA advice and of paying the 1/-d an hour. Therefore on Monday 6th March only about 500 men, mainly employers of Glasgow Corporation and of various bakery firms struck. The latter rapidly agreed to pay and their men returned to work. Meanwhile during the course of last week employees of other local authorities, notably Greenock, came out. The strike remained unofficial and when William Blairford, Executive member of the E.T.U. for Scotland, addressed a meeting of the men on Thursday night and condemned the unofficial action he was deluged with eggs.

On Friday (significantly after the Pollok by-election) the government introduced an order under Part IV of the Prices and Incomes Act preventing the employers paying the agreed rise. At the time of writing it is still not known whether the private contractors employees will join the more militant corporation electricians in strike action.

Naturally enough, since the effect of the order is to allow English, Welsh and Irish electricians to earn 1/-d per hour more than their Scottish brothers, the strike has so far had a decidedly nationalist flavour. Pickets outside the Glasgow City Chambers were sporting SNP badges and one of their leaflets finishes with the slogan "Help us to help Scotland". Once again clearly the government have no-one but themselves to blame for this situation.

THE DRAUGHTSMEN'S LOCKOUT from a special correspondent

A National lock-out of the 1,800 draughtsmen employed by members of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation is now over a week old.

"The suspensions are 100% complete and will remain in operation until the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians' Association calls off the strike at Swan Hunter's Tyneside shipyard," said a Federation spokesman. DATA instructed its members to report for work as usual despite the suspension notices. Employers at a number of yards made an attempt to turn the men away. Instead the men were told there was no work for them. They could sit at their desks if they wished but would not be paid. At most Tyneside yards men found that drawings had been removed overnight, and filing cabinets locked. A spokesman for the Tyne Shipbuilders' Association said the employers were carrying out a defensive action and they wished to keep the situation "as peaceful and quiet as possible."

One of the 70 yards affected by the dispute was Camell Laird's at Birkenhead, where about 300 DATA members reported for work; 100 of them employed on the Polaris nuclear submarine project.

"Our men are staying in and insisting on work being given them, but all drawings have been locked away," said Mr. Ken Gill, the union's divisional officer. A similar situation was reported at Harland and Wolff's, Belfast, Alexander Stephens and other yards on Clydeside.

A DATA spokesman said: "We have received reports from all our regions. Most of our members presented themselves for work and got into their offices but found their work was locked away or were told they would not be paid for any work performed."

The suspension of Draughtsmen will mean an immediate half to quotations for new orders, but manual work will not be affected for several weeks. It could be several months before work at the majority of yards is seriously disrupted.

The lock-out has been imposed because employers regard a local wage dispute at Swan Hunter's as part of a union campaign to force up rates throughout the industry. DATA decided to submit claims at yard level after a national pay claim was turned down. So far there is no indication of further talks on the dispute, and the Ministry of Labour is showing no inclination to intervene.

While Vickers officials in Barrow denied they had broken the shipbuilding employers' lock-out of draughtsmen, about 30 of the DATA men marched from the shipyard to the Town Hall to present their union's case to local councillors. The mayor said afterwards that the draughtsmen had emphasised the ill-effects a prolonged stoppage would have on the town. "I told them I hoped for a speedy settlement, but that I could not intervene in the dispute in any way."

The 1,800 shipbuilding draughtsmen locked out by the employers are "as solid as a rock," their general secretary, George Doughty, declared.

Workers at the Cammell Laird yard in Birkenhead are wondering when the Minister of Defence, Mr. Roy Mason, is going to complain to the employers about the hold-up to the Polaris programme that will result from the lockout. Last month, he had a lot to say about the need for round-the-clock working, and the ending of restrictive practices by the unions.

"In view of Mr. Mason's concern about completing the Polaris programme on time," a spokesman for the draughtsmen said yesterday. "one would have expected an objection from him over the restrictive practice now being used by the shipbuilding employers in locking out our members."

A meeting of the 725 members of the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians' Association employed by Rolls-Royce in Derby, unanimously endorsed their union's policy on "the elimination of the abuses of self-employment among draughtsmen and the establishment of decent industrial standards among contract design firms."

The meeting called for a time limit of two months for firms engaging self-employed men to sign an agreement with DATA for the elimination of self-employment.

TRIBUNE ANNIVERSARY MEETING IN PRESTON by Rod Kreizman

200 people attended the 30th anniversary meeting at the Coop Hall in Preston last Friday, 10th March. The meeting took the form of a public brains trust, which was chaired by Frank Allaun M.P. The panel was made up of: Ron Aitkins M.P. for Preston North, Albert Booth, Barrow M.P. Russ and Ann Kerr M.P.'s and David Owen Fylde, prospective candidate. Sydney Silverman was due to appear but was unable to make it.

The questions showed the deep concern felt in the Labour movement about the role the Wilson Government has played since coming into office. All the speakers reiterated socialist principles, and publicly warned the Government that it was the left which was being loyal, not the Government.

Ann Kerr felt that we should all pull together on the question of Vietnam to get the Labour Government to disassociate the British people from the atrocities being committed in the name of "Freedom" by the U.S.A. The audience praised the seamen for their struggle last year, attacked the incomes policy and expressed solidarity with those sections of the working class which move into action against the reactionary policies of the Government. There was a collection which came to £28.

The weakness of the meeting was that no call to action, other than "join the Labour Peace Fellowship", and, of course, "get your copy of "TRIBUNE". This was rather odd. This was the biggest political meeting Preston has seen for a number of years, yet the panel seemed content to allow people to go home and watch T.V. for another five years. There were indirect allusions that they should join the Labour Party and help win the fight for the policies put forward; but no organisation was offered to help them or to integrate them into local or national struggles. There has been discussion on the meeting in the local L.P.Y.S. and CND and it was generally agreed that it was a roaring success. This, of course, vindicates the proposition that there is a left, but it needs encouragement and an organisation, one that will organise discussion and action.

FAILURES PREDICTED IN FURNITURE MAKING - from a special Correspondent.

The collapse of a significant number of domestic furniture manufacturing businesses is fore-shadowed in an economic report being circulated throughout the industry. Present order books, at current rates of production, are only equal to one month's deliveries to the trade and are the thinnest for four years.

The industry's central forecasters, who have a good record in predicting trading conditions, expect deliveries to stagnate for the third year running at around £158m. Many factories are operating well below capacity and short-time working has been introduced in the hope that the Government will soon ease the credit squeeze, so preventing the disbanding of labour teams.

The report prepared by the Furniture Development Council says manufacturers cannot expect much improvement in trading conditions in the first half of this year. Repayment of SET and receipt of premiums, together with training board refunds and investment grants, are seen as a form of aid to relieve the "now possibly serious liquidity position" of manufacturers.

"For some firms, however, these improvements will be too small and come too late," warns the report. "Consequently, the total number of firms manufacturing domestic furniture will probably decline quite significantly in 1967. With a few notable exceptions, the companies best prepared for 1967 are those that have diligently built up sizeable export and/or contract markets, and whose fortunes do not therefore depend entirely on their performance in the increasingly competitive but, at present, virtually stagnant market for domestic furniture".

Fierce competition in all major European markets is seen this year and aggressive counter selling is already reported in the case of German producers, who are faced with deteriorating home market. In the home market, the FDC expects the car industry to cream off much of the initial benefit of any pick-up in consumer spending and demand for furniture is thought unlikely to start reviving in the last quarter. Some of the most severely affected companies are said to be those making bedroom furniture, though those producing kitchen and dining furniture only have six weeks' work on hand on current order levels.

After spending record sums last year on advertising only to suffer new H.P. restrictions under the July economic measures, the industry has now cut back appropriations severely. The jointly sponsored "Old Furniture Must Go" campaign is already postponed until the economic situation improves. In the retail sector, multiples (very dependent on credit sales) appear to have been suffering worse than independents and competition for sales in 1967 (trade was worth £332.lm., including bedding last year) is expected "to increase markedly". The F.D.C. points out that mail order houses have been showing a rapid growth in furniture business and H.P. restrictions "will undoubtedly result in some transfer of purchases to the mail order houses since their policy is to offer interest free credit over a period of up to a year".

The Trade Unions for the Furniture trade will no doubt be faced with the prospect of large scale sackings because of the situation. It will be as well for them to start preparing now to meet this situation.

IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY from a Nottingham reader

In America scientists are using mentally abnormal children as human guinea pigs. In a special research ward in the country's largest mental institute, the Willowbrook State School on Staten Island, New York, retarded children are being deliberately infected with hepatitis a virus that attacks the liver and can prove fatal to adults, since 1956. More than 240 of these pathetic youngsters have contracted hepatitis after the virus has been implanted into them by doctors. Another 350 were subjected to the experiments - but did not get the disease. They are being used in an intensive research programme to produce a lasting anti-hepatitis vaccine. What is equally horrifying is the WAY in which the Willowbrook State School obtains these human guinea pigs.

Naturally no child can be made to undergo such experiments without the permission of its parents - even if it is hopelessly abnormal. The scientists, however, bring pressure to bear. It could even be called blackmail. For when parents apply to hand over their child to Willowbrook they are told that there is a long waiting list, and admissions can take up to three years. A few weeks later, however, the same parents may be surprised to be told that the child could be placed IF THEY WERE WILLING TO SIGN A STATEMENT AUTHORISING ITS USE IN RESEARCH! A husband and wife weighed down by worry and fatigue often agree to give their mentally retarded child the opportunity of a place at the institution - even at the price the scientists demand.

Dr. Jack Hammond director of Willowbrook State School said "Infectious hepatitis in young children is a mild disease, but the children who develop the disease in our research programme get it in an even milder form". He admitted: "In adults hepatitis is much more dangerous, and in the past we have had a number of deaths among employees who contracted it from inmates. We have discovered that there are at least two different hepatitis viruses - and not one as was believed a few years ago", said Dr. Hammond. "One of the direct results of our research is that hepatitis cases among soldiers in Vietnam are far fewer than in the Korean war - where the disease caused a large number of deaths."

Not everyone is happy about the use of human guinea pigs. New York State senator Seymour Thaler, a lawyer by profession, has recently initiated a number of official investigations into hospital practices - one of them being research on patients. "I am not satisfied with the way permission is being sought from parents to carry out these experiments," he said. "And it is not only children who are being used for research. Adult patients who cannot pay their hospital bills are being used to test new drugs without being told what's happening".

N.B. The material for this article appeared in the February 12th issue of The People.

REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER

Please note our new address: 71, Onslow Gardens, London N. 10. Please send all monies, letters, articles, etc. to that address, unless you have some special arrangement about late articles.

V.S.C. TO HOLD NATIONAL YOUTH SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE from David Robinson

The Vietnam Solidarity Campaign is organising a National Youth Conference on April 22nd to bring together members from all youth organisations in Great Britain who are opposed to the war of aggression and atrocity waged by the United States in Vietnam. A draft resolution is being prepared by the National Executive and this will be distributed to those taking part in time for them to submit amendments. The resolution will call for co-ordinated action in support of the National Liberation Front and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in their struggle against American imperialism and its puppet forces.

All youth organisations such as the Y.C.L., Young Liberals, Y.C.N.D., L.P.Y.S., University Socialist Societies and youth members of V.S.C. and B.C.P.V. will be invited to participate. Groups may be represented by delegates or participating observers. Participating observers will be welcome from groups who do not wish to commit themselves in the first instance to sending delegates to a solidarity conference. They will have the right to speak but not to vote. Delegates will be limited to three from each group but anyone is welcome to attend the conference as an observer.

The agenda will be:

Saturday, April 22nd. 10am. Presentation of resolution followed by discussion from the floor--preference will be given to delegates in the calling of speakers.

1 pm Adjournment for lunch.

2 pm Discussion on plans of action and setting up of Youth sub-committee of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign.

The aim of the conference is to co-ordinate youth action against the vicious war of genocide being implemented by America against the Vietnamese people. Copies of the draft resolution will be sent to interested organisations as soon as possible. Any group or individual interested in attending this conference should write to National Youth Conference, Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, 11a Wormwood Street, London E.C.2. Tele. 588-1924.

N.B. If any reader of The Week can send names and addresses of youth organisations for the purpose of inviting them to the conference **it will be most helpful.**

Eric Lubbock Supports Free Speech Campaign.

Support for the Vietnam Free Speech Campaign has now been received from 34 Members of Parliament. Those who have signed during the last few days include: Lewis Carter-Jones, Eric Lubbock and Raphael Tuck. Officers from 27 C.L.P.'s have also signed the petition and this section is expected to increase considerably within the next week. Arrangements are going ahead for publicising the petition as widely as possible and gathering support from every section of the public.

BULGARIAN SUPPORT FOR WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL from Geoff. Coggan*

The following letter has been received by Lord Russell from Dimiter Kostov of the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency:

"I am sending you the number of our world events weekly Po Sveta, which carried in full your introductory speech at the opening of the First Session of the International War Crimes Tribunal, your statement at the press conference, and all other documents of the Session. I thank you with all my heart for the kind letter to Po Sveta, which was also given prominence. I am writing also to Dr. Vladimir Dedijer, our mutual friend, whom I am also profoundly grateful to for his help.

In our dailies we published an account of what was written in the number of Po Sveta that was given up to the tribunal set up by you and we arranged a special radio broadcast about it.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that this number of our magazine evoked enormous interest. Your struggle against the criminal war being waged by the U.S.A. in Vietnam has the full sympathy of the Bulgarian people. Letters from our readers have been arriving at our office, letters expressing admiration for your courage and firmness. Some have been asking us for your address so that they might mail you their congratulations.

I am enclosing one of the latest numbers of Literatouren Front, the weekly organ of the Union of Bulgarian Writers. This number of the paper gives prominence to an article written by Lyudmil Stoyanov, the distinguished Bulgarian writer and public figure, about your struggle, about the International Tribunal. The article is written on the basis of the number of our magazine that was dedicated to the setting up of the International Tribunal and Stoyanov quotes your statements at length and gives an account of your views.

I am also sending another number of our magazine that also contains an article by you and also numbers with an article by Jean-Paul Sartre and with an interview with Dr. Vladimir Dedijer. (In the interview I make special mention of your friendship with Dr. Dedijer).

I can assure you that Vietnam is always one of the topics on the pages of our magazine. That is the reason why we cannot pass over in silence another fact, a fact which has caused us much grief and has evoked our profound indignation - John Steinbeck's Letters to Alicia. He is well-known to the Bulgarian reading public and that is one more reason why we could not pass his infamy over in silence. We printed in full the first three Letters taken from the Newsday. We also published a commentary by our New York correspondent and an Open Letter of the Po Sveta magazine to Steinbeck and statements by distinguished public figures and newsmen on different aspects of the Vietnam problem, statements that we have already given to our magazine. We have taken your statements from the introductory speech of November 13, 1966. The number of the magazine is headlined: "Steinbeck Against the Truth".

*Geoff. Coggan is the Press Officer of the International War Crimes Tribunal

DIRECTORS TAKE NOTE OF WORKERS' CONTROL CAMPAIGN - by Ken Coates and
Tony Topham.

The Director, origin of the Institute of Directors, leads its March issue with an editorial entitled: "What Would the Workers do on the Board?" In view of the discussion on the Labour Party NEC statement on 'Industrial Democracy', its contents are extremely interesting:

"The idea of getting workers on to boards of directors is now beginning to develop a notable head of steam. The suggestion that a second Companies Bill, following the current one, will enable the introduction of new schemes such as these has quickly resurrected the vision of workers' participation in management. Moreover, several concrete steps to this end have been taken by the Government.

"The first was announced by the Minister of Power in an amendment to the Iron and Steel Bill. This was fairly revolutionary. As he stressed, for the first time it was intended that there should be no limits placed on the participation of workers in the running of an industry. Well, perhaps a few. Although it would have the right to information about the running of the steel business, one or two items would still be excluded. Some books, records and papers - particularly the minutes of the corporation - could not be allowed to get into workers' hands. After all, even workers cannot be expected to get on both sides of collective bargaining. (Our italics). As the Minister summed up the intention: "Management clearly has to have the right to hire or fire. They will have the right to make decisions, but the people involved should also have the right to express their point of view."

"So far so good. The aim is fairly clear. The Government wants the unions to share in the responsibility for the working of a major industry. More important, they want the unions to share the responsibility for some of the expected unpopular decisions. Few people would quarrel with that. (Our italics). The only question is whether this kind of responsibility can be divorced from the responsibility of those actually running the concern.

"The steel industry is not the only example where workers' participation is being encouraged. A substantial increase is also being recommended in a plan reported to be in preparation for the Labour Party's annual conference in October. In particular a Transport House Working Party is said to be recommending legislation, possibly of a discretionary nature, to provide for trade union representation on boards of directors. The T.U.C. has welcomed the idea. But the Government may well be more cautious. It has good cause.

"It is difficult to see how union members of the board could not be provided with the same full information now available to any normal director. Yet, if this were done, what would happen to free collective bargaining? One solution being put forward is the creation of two boards within a single company, one to deal with financial matters, the other (including the union representatives) to deal with economic planning and production problems. (Our italics.) Yet this would give the impression of putting the unions in the lower league. Like many other ideas of this kind, the principles seem easy until they have to be turned into practice."

This is perhaps a classic statement of the corporatist's view of life: the vital relevance of the slogan which has been so fiercely discussed in the past four years: 'Open the Books!' could not be made plainer. The left must keep up its offensive for workers' control, and prepare a most serious

FORCING GUNTER TO ACT ON ARUNDEL from an Industrial correspondent

A five point programme of action to force Minister of Labour Ray Gunter to intervene on behalf of the unions in the Roberts Arundel dispute, was agreed here last night. The decision was reached by 100 engineering shop stewards representing 40 factories in the Greater Manchester area. The action began Wednesday when workers in every factory were asked to stage a 15 minute sit down from 9 a.m.

Stewards will tell their employers to inform Mr. Gunter of the loss of production resulting from the stoppage. Sitdowns doubling in length from a half-hour on March 15 an hour on March 20 to two hours on March 22, will be staged, and will culminate in a half-day strike on March 29 and a mass demonstration in Stockport unless Mr. Gunter intervenes.

Appeals to join in the snowball sitdowns are to be sent to the Merseyside, London and Sheffield Committees for the defence of trade unionism, and to the London docks liaison committee. Other acts of solidarity are welcome.

At a meeting last Thursday the point was made very forcibly that while efforts to black completely all Roberts Arundel goods are having an effect, this in itself will not guarantee victory. Another success was recorded on Thursday when the Tower Shipping Company, under threat of being blacked by Liverpool dockers, agreed to stop transporting goods for Roberts Arundel.

Workers here are convinced that they face an American-inspired attempt to cash in on the Government's anti-trade union attitude by challenging the very basis of trade union organisation. Next week a deputation of strikers, together with six conveners from Manchester, will visit the Ministry of Labour in London to let Mr. Gunter know of the action planned here. They will demand that he intervenes in support of the union's demands. All support and donations to: 125 Wellington Road South, Stockport, Cheshire.

AUSTRALIAN SEAMEN "BLACK" ARMS SHIP FOR VIETNAM

Seamen at seven major Australian ports voted against manning a freighter carrying ammunition to Vietnam. The freighter, Jeparit was due in Sydney. Stop-work meetings to decide whether to work the ship were held in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Hobart, Adelaide, Port Kembla and Newcastle. Earlier, the freighter Boonaroo was commissioned by the Royal Australian Navy after seamen had refused to sail it to Vietnam carrying military supplies for Australian troops.

We urge British National Union of Seamen and Transport and General Workers' Union to send messages of solidarity to Australian seamen. Further, all British trade unionists should do all they can to ensure that no war equipment or supplies for U.S. goes via any British port.

THE DIRECTOR AND WORKERS CONTROL CONT'D

campaign against participation in "responsibility for some of the expected unpopular decisions" as the Director so graphically puts the matter. A key opportunity comes with the Labour Party Young Socialists' Conference in Llandudno this Easter. This should carefully separate 'control' ideas from 'participation' blandishments: seizing the one in order the better to attract the other.

THE NEED FOR A STRATEGY AGAINST THE WAGE FREEZE

Since October, 1964, when Labour was elected to power a series of vicious attacks have been made against the trade union movement. Whilst this is not surprising to those who have studied the performance of previous Labour governments, it has helped to confuse the majority of the rank and file. What has perhaps been more surprising is the lack of response from the movement. Despite many heroic struggles, the number of strikes in 1965 was the lowest for over a decade, and the number of workers involved in strikes the lowest for 7 years. And this in the year of the wage freeze!

Although the major responsibility for this lack of response must be laid at the door of trade union and Labour leaders who have refused to fight Wilson this is not the whole story. Neither can we believe that the British trade union movement - so jealous and proud of its rights - has lost the will to fight. Confusion and the lack of a fighting strategy has been the main cause of lack of rank and file response. This confusion has been made worse by some on the left: those who have refused to fight Wilson for "tactical" reasons; and those who have predicted that the rank and file would automatically break with their leaders - and organisations! - once an attack was made.

To meet this situation the movement needs to work a strategy. But such a strategy can only be worked out by a thorough discussion and in struggle. Every initiative and every struggle must be supported by the whole movement. The organising of a discussion which tackles both the political and industrial aspects is difficult.

As a first step we would suggest the calling of a conference of the left, to draw in the leaderships of those unions which oppose the wage freeze and the rank and file of those unions which are dominated by supporters of the freeze. Such a conference should be open to all socialists, including Labour Parties, which oppose the freeze, and there should be no bans and proscriptions. Such a conference should be the first step towards building a left which will appear in the eyes of millions of supporters of Labour as a real alternative to Wilson. As a basis for discussion we suggest the following points:

- (1) Immediate abolition of the wage freeze and anti trade union legislation;
 - (2) full freedom for trade unions to negotiate;
 - (3) a sliding scale of wages to meet increases in the cost of living;
 - (4) Huge cuts in military expenditure;
 - (5) nationalisation of the commanding heights of industry;
 - (6) a workers' plan to develop the economy at the expense of the employers;
 - (7) opening the books of employers and workers' control of hiring and firing, etc.;
 - (8) a socialist foreign policy: Labour should be on the side of the oppressed; and
 - (9) an all-European conference of labour to meet the threat of the Common Market, etc.
- The Week would be pleased to hear from anyone who has ideas on this proposition.

DISAFFILIATIONS FROM THE LABOUR PARTY by Ken Tarbuck

Raymond Challinor is undoubtedly correct when he points out that both the pottery and the textile unions have consistently supported right-wing policies in the Labour Party. However, I'm afraid it is he and not Pat Jordan who misses the point in this matter. Whilst it may be true that Harold Wilson is losing "a staunch friend", and this is perhaps some cause for rejoicing, the really important point is that the left has not gained a friend in this episode.

As socialists we are not concerned merely that sections of the labour movement oppose the present policies of the Government, but that they are opposed in a positive way, i.e. with a socialist alternative. This is the heart of the matter, just so long as the present disaffiliations are done on the basis of a retreat from politics then they are a retro-grade step. No matter how much we may sympathise with the feeling of revulsion that gives rise to such actions, we should not therefore hasten to applaud actions that can lead to the a-politisation of working-class struggles.

At the moment there is no place for the pottery and textile unions to carry on a political fight of a socialist character except in the Labour Party. To advise them otherwise is to ultimately help confirm the trend towards business-unionism. This is not what is needed in the present situation, what is needed is more political commitment and activity. Those who applaud or advise such actions as disaffiliation, without at the same time providing a real and viable alternative, not an imaginary one, are objectively playing a reactionary role. It may give one a feeling of satisfaction to indulge in 'emotional spasms', but in the long-run it doesn't do the fight for socialism any good at all.

It would have been far better if these two unions had decided to engage in political activity by declaring that they would no longer be "Harold's staunch friends" at this years Labour Party conference. That would have been a move in the right direction.

WEEK READERS' FORUM

< DAVID HOROWITZ

Author of the new Penguin

FROM YALTA TO VIETNAM

Friday, March 17th, at 7.30 p.m.

Caxton Hall, Westminster.

