

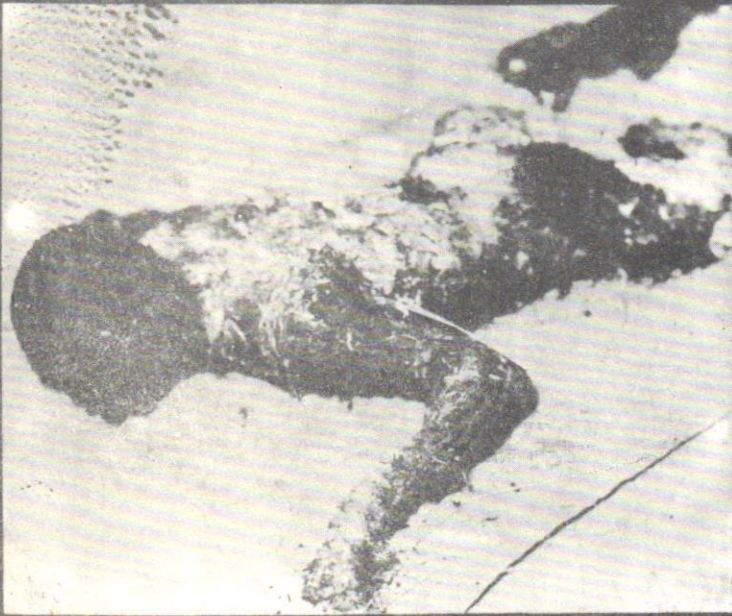
The Week

10 Downing Street
Whitehall
May 24, 1965

Dear Mrs Duff,

The Prime Minister has asked me to reply to your letter of May 10 about the situation in South East Asia. As you yourself suggested, the Prime Minister is extremely busy at present and as you have set out very clearly in your letter the four points you wanted to make to him, Mr. Wilson has asked me to let you have his views in writing.

In the first place, Mr. Wilson does not consider that public criticism of American policy would be either justified or helpful.



Subscription rates: 13 weeks 10/-
26 " £1
1 year £2

Volume 3. No. 23. June 10th, 1965.

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STOP PRESS

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There will be many demonstrations this week-end on the question of the war in Vietnam. We urge our readers to support them to the full. Most are fully advertised in the left press. However, we have been asked to publicise the North West CND demonstration outside the Labour Party rally at Belle Vue, Manchester, Sunday, June 13 at 1.30.

VIETNAM: WILSON MUST CHANGE HIS LINE

Despite waverings and contradictory statements, the general drift of American policy in Vietnam is to intervene more brazenly, more openly, more brutally and with greater and greater force. Senator Dirksen has said that the U.S. is now clearly involved in an open war a la Korea. On Tuesday and Wednesday of this week demonstrations took place in New York (one 18,000 strong) against the latest moves of the Johnson administration. The strength of the reaction to U.S. aggressive moves is clearly responsible for the vacillation in the leading circles of the American military set-up. Needless to say, the protest movement in the U.S. would receive a huge boost if the Labour Government would join the ranks of the protesters. Mr. Wilson has claimed that his behind-the-scenes activities are more fruitful/than the "political masturbation" of the demonstrators. All Mr. Wilson's silence has achieved to date is that universal condemnation of Labour in the third world. But the demonstrators have shown that there is another Britain.

The nature of the war in Vietnam is shown by the photographs which we received from Mr. Christopher Farley of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. These photographs show how civilians are being slaughtered in North Vietnam by U.S. napalm bombing; Mr. Farley describes them as follows: "...two photogrpahs show the shrivelled bodies of civilians burned alive by napalm on March 2 in attacks on villages along the Gianh river. A further picture shows the wife of Nguyen Luong and their two baby daughters, all killed in a raid on Quynh Luu on March 15. Finally, there is the body of Mrs. Hoang Thi Huyen, eight months pregnant, killed on March 2 while fishing on the Gianh river." Need we say more?

WHAT IS THIS MAN GUNTER?: Perhaps we could have ascribed Mr. Gunter's vicious attack on the B.E.A. strikers to bad temper at being delayed; but his subsequent speech at Edinburgh could hardly be so excused. Mr. Gunter's utterances over Whitsun could have been made by any right wing Tory, and his speech about discipline would have gone down well at a Fascist rally. His intervention in the B.E.A. strike undoubtedly encouraged the employers to take their anti-union stand. Mr. Gunter should go; it is a very dangerous thing to have such a man as the Minister of Labour.

This most timely book of essays carries forward the work begun by the New Left after 1956, and takes it an important stage further. Perry Anderson contributes two studies of great significance: one concerned with the working out of the nature and relations of classes in Britain throughout the last three hundred years; the other with the problems of socialist strategy today. Robin Blackburn and John Westergaard assemble and add to the growing volume of fact and analysis which have eroded the Crosslandite myths of a benevolent, classless, post-capitalist society. Thomas Balogh and Richard Crossman review the failings of economic planning and political strategy in post-war years, and Tom Nairn takes up and deepens the study of the nature of the Labour Party which has rightly been a pre-occupation of the New Left since its early days. Ken Coates' essay on Democracy and Workers' Control synthesises the two complementary aspects of the growing campaign in this field: the offensive which politicises the present struggle against trade union corporatism, and the pre-figuring, through transitional demands, of the full flowering of democracy in a self-managing socialist society. These themes are discussed also in the distinguished contribution of Andre Gorz. Professor Titmuss demonstrates with all his authority the failure of the welfare state to conform to the purposes of its Labour enthusiasts, and echoes also the demand for "social participation". Raymond Williams, too, sees the aspiration to self-government, control over the work situation and economic life generally as a fundamental goal of socialism.

Such a bare summary of contents cannot hope to convey the harvest of thought to be gathered from this volume. Its significance might be summarised under the following points:

(1) The earlier themes of the original New Left: the role of culture, the nature of the Labour Party, the critique of Croslandism, the nature of work and work relations, the evaluation of the welfare state, have been strengthened and deepened by further sustained research, and synthesised into what Perry Anderson insists again and again must be a "total" view of life under capitalism.

(2) Issuing from the analytical work has emerged the beginnings of a revolutionary discussion of a contemporary socialist strategy, which is distinct from orthodox Leninism and the exclusive parliamentarianism of social democracy.

(3) In striving for a "total" view, and for a programmatic strategy for the transition to socialism, we are led to re-interpret the history of class in Britain, a re-interpretation which informs the whole discussion of contemporary problems.

In the past, Bevanism, Victory for Socialism, and such movements have been vulnerable on two counts. Strategically, they have accepted the very parliamentary and vote-counting limitations which give the right wing leadership its apparently immovable authority, and they had too much of the instinctively moral protest, too little of theoretical self-awareness, about them. Their own empiricism was confronted with a leadership endorsed by the intellectual traditions of utilitarianism and Fabianism.

continued over/

"The Worker and the Law" (Penguin Books 7/6) is an invaluable and long-awaited guide to the position of the law as it affects trade unionists. Important chapters deal with issues such as Contracts of Employment, Collective Bargaining, Compensation and Members' rights when in dispute with their union. The most significant section, however, is the chapter dealing with the right to strike, and the appendix which discusses the Trades Disputes Bill, 1965.

No reader should imagine that the law will be made clear for him as a result of reading this book. He will probably leave it feeling both angry and bewildered. But this is no fault of the author, Professor K.W. Wedderburn, whose exposition is clear and useful. The fault, rather, lies with the law. If the law is, as commonly supposed, an ass, then the ass is on the side of the employer.

During 1964, the whole issue of the right to strike was affected by the judgements in two cases: Stratford v. Lindley, and Rookes v. Barnard. Statutes placed in being at the end of the last century and in the first year of this were reinterpreted by the law Lords in an anti-union fashion. Professor Wedderburn quotes Professor Kahn-Freund as saying: "One is under the impression that the regressive tendencies of the courts, which in the 19th and early 20th centuries had to be repeatedly counteracted by Parliament, are on the point of being revived."

Labour's election promise to the unions was to rectify this mess. Many commentators called for a new law which would have rationalised the whole position and cleared up the anomalies of the 1906 Trades Disputes Act which gave rise to the re-interpretation. The T.U.C. more modestly requested an amendment to the 1906 Act which would have restored the ground lost since Rookes v. Barnard, but which would have left certain other anomalies still to be resolved. It is amazing, therefore, that the Government's Trades Dispute Bill, 1965, will probably confuse the issues still further and falls considerably short of the T.U.C.'s proposals. It may involve the unions in new test cases to establish the meaning of the new Bill and leaves on one side important areas of legislation in which the trade unions need to be protected from litigation. The real goods, it seems, will only be delivered after the findings of the Royal Commission have been made. Meanwhile, the mess remains and Professor Wedderburn's comment is that the new Bill "is the narrowest measure that could honour the pledge to provide...protection for union membership and officials." Determined courts, he says, will not find it difficult to evade the terms of the Bill.

Towards Socialism continued/

The New Left has now achieved a mature and triumphant demolition of the theoretical supports of Labourism. The myths have been destroyed: they can hardly continue to claim factual or analytical respectability. Conversely, the so-often limping, frustrated and bewildered left is being equipped not with a crutch, but a springboard. If the concepts, the strategies, the armoury, which this volume contains can be absorbed, disseminated and refined in fruitful and constructive discussion, and translated into coherent programmes, the near-future may startle the young, and rejuvenate many older socialists, who at this moment are so dismayed at the collapse of the half-hopes of Wilsonism, and the weakness of the parliamentary left. No one who is seeking that possibility can afford to neglect this book.

THE PRESTON STRIKE

from Raymond Challinor

Eight hundred immigrant workers went on strike last week at Courtaulds' Preston factory. The majority are from India and Pakistan, but they include West Indians, Africans, Poles and Ukrainians.

The dispute arose in the tyre cord spinning department when the management increased the production norm by 50%. Previously a worker had tended one machine; now it was proposed that two men should tend three machines between them. The management claims that this increase was in accord with an agreement reached with the Transport and General Workers' Union, but the men say that they have not been consulted.

Since the afternoon when the company tried to impose the speed-up, workers have clocked in as usual but refused to operate the machines. The company now threatens to have them prosecuted for trespass.

Standing outside the Transport and General offices, I spoke to many of the strikers. They emphasised, in a quiet, friendly manner, that conditions in the department were very unhealthy. They had to work in searing heat, amid hot acid and biting fumes. Many suffered from eye, ear and stomach complaints. Most Englishmen had been unable to withstand the temperature and, although they did not do their work properly, had been promoted to more attractive and better-paid jobs. Gradually the department had been transformed into an industrial ghetto, with only the foremen white. - "They come along. They say, 'You work'. But I work hard now. I can do no more."

This statement, made to me by an Indian, basically sums up the position. The strike action committee emphasises that they are interested in preserving their health, not in getting more pay: "We are not donkeys.... we want to live."

During the past five years, immigrant workers have flocked to join the Transport and General Workers' Union at Courtaulds'. They were told it would be in their own interests, as well as those of their fellow workmen. But it appears that all the Transport and General have done is to hamper their struggle. R.Roberts, one of the Union's officials, has called the present settlement, which gives the Company a 50% increase in work for a 2% increase in pay, "fair and reasonable". Then he went on to dismiss the dispute as "entirely racial".

It is true that in Preston there is considerable colour prejudice. When, before the last General Election, Russell Kerr, the Labour candidate for Preston North, accompanied coloured people into public houses that barred coloureds, he had his knuckles rapped by some Labour Councillors. Many Preston people say that Negroes are unclean, etc.

But the immigrant workers themselves reiterate that they wish to work alongside their English brothers. They do not, in any way, wish to erect barriers between them. For such a division always leaves the way open for the management to play one group of workers against another. So far, Courtaulds' have tried to introduce its speed-up plans against the immigrant workers, whom they probably think the weakest and most defenceless. But, says the Strike Action Committee, if the management succeeds in the
continued/

The Preston Strike (continued)

tyre rope department, it will try the same trick in other parts of the factory. An injury to one is an injury to all.

It is this spirit of solidarity that needs to be shown at present. the strikers remain united and confident, pleased at the support coming from other parts of the country. But it is important that it come not simply from coloured workers, but also from their white brothers. Moreover, resolutions condemning the stand of the Transport and General Workers' local organisation need to pour into their London headquarters.

All expressions of support, monies, etc., should be sent to:
Mr. Choudhury, 4, Sergeant Street, Preston.

P.S. Readers will no doubt be sorry to learn that because of the strike the manager of Courtaulds' has had to cancel his three-week American holiday. He was going to visit Courtaulds' plant in Alabama.

STATEMENT BY C.A.R.D. ON THE PRESTON COURTAULD STRIKE

Following investigations carried out by a representative of our organisation, the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (C.A.R.D.) feels impelled to make the following statement:

In the section that is on strike, 95% of the workers are Indian, West Indian or Pakistani. But the strike is not a racial one. It is a purely industrial dispute. The strikers do not claim that they have been treated differently because they are Indian, Pakistani or West Indian. We have found the following to be the reasons for the strike:

The new machines will mean a 300% increase in productivity. The new agreement will mean a 50% increase in the workload for each man. In return, each worker is promised a rise of 10/- a week. The strikers say that the new agreement is intolerable. Moreover, they claim that the terms were first tentatively put to them at a meeting on the 26th of April and were unanimously rejected by them. However, the union and management negotiated the agreement on the above terms. On May 24th the men for the first time were informed of the agreement by management, and were told to carry it out. They went on strike.

Immediately the strike started, the union official involved issued a statement to the press saying that the action was racially motivated and had nothing to do with an industrial dispute.

This attempt to hide the issue behind accusations of racialism is a dangerous precedent. It seems intended to inhibit coloured workers from taking part in any industrial action. Whatever the motive, the publicity which has been given these unfounded accusations can only be harmful.

The question of race has never been raised by the men on strike: they have found it necessary to engage in unofficial action which is not in any way unique. In these circumstances, the management's decision to dismiss over 360 men is a callous and deplorable act.

Over 150 delegates attended this year's three-day conference over the Whitsun holiday. There was no major alteration of policy this year: C.N.D. re-affirmed its stand for unilateralism, showing no shift at all to present Labour Party policies. Conference passed the following resolutions on Vietnam and Dominica unanimously:

Vietnam: "Conference deplores the British Government's unlimited support for U.S. policy in Vietnam, which threatens escalation into a world war. It calls upon the Government to use its influence to stop the bombing of North Vietnam as a first step to peace. It calls for the bringing together of the participants of the Geneva Conference of 1954, together with representatives of the National Liberation Front (Vietcong). It asks that the International Control Commission set up by that conference should return to South Vietnam to supervise a ceasefire, the withdrawal of all outside armed forces, and the holding of free elections, without prejudice to the eventual reunification of the country as envisaged in the Geneva Agreements. "Conference expresses its full support for the British Council for Peace in Vietnam, for its lobby of Parliament on June 30th, and for any similar demonstrations called by this Council."

Dominica: "Conference condemns the American interference in the internal affairs of the Dominican Republic and calls for the immediate withdrawal of American troops."

In a discussion on the United Nations, conference did not suggest the setting up of a permanent peace-keeping force, but in sharp contrast, many delegates point to the need for the Republic of China to be admitted to the United Nations.

Before conference ended it seemed clear that C.N.D. would be giving more attention to the development of support in the Labour and trade union movement; C.N.D. aims to give more emphasis to its campaign for a reduction in the Arms Bill, against the bases, etc. Early plans are being drawn up for a massive demonstration to take place on the Sunday preceding Labour Party Conference in Blackpool at the end of September.

LINCOLN LABOUR PARTY DEMANDS SOCIALIST FOREIGN POLICY from J.T. Ginniff

The G.M.C. of the Lincoln Labour Party adopted the following resolution unanimously at its June meeting for submission to Labour Party Annual Conference: "That this Annual Conference of the Labour Party demands of the Government that foreign policy shall be based on socialist principles and and that election pledges and promised policies shall be treated seriously, and as having meaning and purpose."

The resolution originated from Castle Ward, and in a preamble the ward explained: "We are compelled by events to note that socialist principles of foreign policy have been jettisoned one after another by the Government in favour of a continuation of the policy of the Conservative Party and the previous Government..." It goes on to cite Vietnam as a case in point, and concludes: "...continuing the Conservative foreign policy must, at the least delay, or even destroy, the basis for a socialist programme at home, and at the worst, may well involve us in a war completely disastrous as it would be unnecessary.."

ALEXANDER COMMITTEE TO BROADEN CAMPAIGN from Bob Pennington

The South African Supreme Court has rejected the appeal of Dr. Neville Alexander and his ten comrades. A number of further requests for assistance have been received by the British Alexander Committee. A statement issued by the All-African Convention (AAC) and Unity Movement, from their Lusaka headquarters informs us that the former Unity president, Leo Linda Sihlali, and Louis Leo Mtshiza of East London have been arrested by the South African Government.

Sihlali was forced to resign as the Unity Movement president when the Government slapped a five-year ban on him. He was placed under house-arrest; prohibited from membership of any of the affiliates of the Unity Movement; not allowed to receive visitors and compelled to make regular reports to the police. During his teaching career, this former graduate of the University of South Africa had been elected president of the Cape African Teachers' Association. This organisation was banned by the Government and all its executive members dismissed from the teaching profession.

Denied the right to teach, he was forced to move his home and find work as a labourer. His wife, also a qualified teacher, had to take work as a domestic servant. After a police visit to his employers, he was instantly dismissed. From 1960 until 1964 he engaged in political activity around Johannesburg, living in hiding. In 1964 he was placed under house-arrest, thus denied political and social contact with his fellow men. At this time his eldest child was due to enter the higher primary school. All the principals refused to enrol the child. Only by sending his children to the remote parts of Transkei, was he able to get them into schools.

This persecution made Sihlali decide to flee. Now he is incarcerated in Verwoerd's jail. His children will be evicted from their schools as there will be no one to pay their fees.

Mtshizana, ex-chairman of the East London branch of the Society of Young Africa, one of the organisations affiliated to the Unity Movement, is a lawyer. His real crime is the prominent role that he has played in the defence of the victims of racial terror. Arrested twice on trumped-up charges, once for unlawful possession of a firearm, the other for failing to produce a pass when demanded by the police. The Supreme Court set aside the conviction awarded by a local magistrate on the first charge, the magistrate dismissed the second charge. But Verwoerd's police are persistent, when Mtshizana was briefed to defend some young boys charged under the the Anti-Communism Act he was accused of weakening the State case. Advice he had given to his clients was considered tantamount to attempting to defeat the ends of justice. He was tried, convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. While his appeal was pending he was allowed out on bail of £500. Before the division of the Supreme Court met, he was arrested along with Sihlali and jailed.

Young paper and its readers gave much assistance and valuable help to in the campaign to publicise the case of the Alexander defendants and assisted our fund raising activities. We are sure that you will recognise the importance of helping these other victims of apartheid and give this case maximum publicity. Readers prepared to help with the work of the committee should write to: The Secretary, Alexander Committee, 27, Thursley House, Holmewood Gardens, London S.W. 2.

BELGIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS SUFFER CRUSHING DEFEAT from a Brussels correspondent

The Social Christian (Catholic) and Social Democratic parties constituting Belgium's coalition government suffered a major defeat in the May 23rd general election. In the Chamber of Deputies, which has 212 seats, the Catholics fell from 96 to 77 seats and the Social Democrats from 84 to 64. For the Social Democrats this was the heaviest defeat in their 72 years of parliamentary activity. The main gainers in the election were the Party for Liberty and Progress (Liberals) which increased its seats from 20 to 48, and the Volksunie (Flemish nationalists) which won 12 seats as compared with 5 in the 1961 election. Both are right wing capitalist parties.

The clear-cut shift to the right registered by the over all election results is ascribable primarily to the policy of capitulation followed by the reformist leaders in their coalition with the Catholic party. Following the general strike of 1960-61, the Social Democratic party recorded the highest vote in its history in the spring 1961 elections. This mandate to push forward along the road of socialism was abused by the Social Democratic leaders. They joined in a capitalist coalition government with the Catholics. This could only disorient and demoralise the working class. The right wing opposition parties capitalised on the situation by advancing a clever demagogic platform that promised everything to everybody. The demagoguery proved successful at the polls. As always, the opportunism of the leaders of the working class paved the way for defeat.

In a general swing to the right, in which the Social Democrats lose seats, the parties to the left usually suffer too. However, this did not occur on May 23rd due to the fact that among the most conscious sections of the working class there was a shift to the left. As a result, the Communist Party increased its number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies from 5 to 6 and gained two seats in the Senate. The new left socialist party, which has been in existence only a few months, won two seats in the Chamber of Deputies, one in Liege and one in Brussels. A third seat in the south (province of Hainaut) was missed by a few thousand votes. The winner there was Robert Moreau, former assistant national secretary of the Belgian Federation of Labour, who ran on a Walloon nationalist platform.

The vote for the parties of the left was up well over 80% but they failed to win a proportionate number of seats due to division in their ranks. The pro-Peking Communist Party (the Grippa group) refused to join the electoral bloc of the pro-Moscow Communist Party and the new left socialist party. This prevented the bloc from getting a second member of parliament in the Belgian capital. In Antwerp the Communist Party won about 19,000 votes and Camille Huysmans 15,000. But the 34,000 votes gained no seat. Had all the groupings of the left joined in an electoral bloc, they would have won 10 or 11 seats as compared with the 8 that they actually chalked up.

The left socialist member of parliament from Liege is Professor Perin of the Parti des Travailleurs Wallons, the less radical and more nationalist wing of the new party. In Brussels the member is Pierre Le Greve of the Union de la Gauche Socialiste and chairman of the Brussels Teachers' Union. A well-known figure of the far left of the Brussels' labour movement, he was the initiator of the Belgian Committee to Aid the Algerian Revolution. Because of this an attempt was made on his life (by a bomb through the post) by the agents of the Red Hand. His wife became suspicious of the package because an associate of Le Greve had been killed by a similar attempt, and the plot failed.

The goose-stepping guards in olive green, the rumbling heavy Panzer-wagen and the martial strains of Beethoven's York March on Berlin's Marx-Engels-Platz celebrating the 20th anniversary of the war's end might lead a modern Rip Van Winkle to believe that Germany had turned the tide and won the war after all, or the cynical to suppose that the Soviets had simply bought up their share of the Prussian military caste and set them marching again. Appearances, however, are sometimes deceptive.

Even at the superficial level, closer inspection reveals that the helmets are not those of the old Wehrmacht and the slogans are different. According to the slogans 1945 marked not just the ending of the war but the liberation from Fascism and a new beginning. The East Berlin officials claim the building up of the 90,000 strong National People's Army (NVA) was forced on them, but that it too marks a new beginning. If their military literature for home consumption is any guide, one can see their point. The aim has been to marry the 'National Democratic' military tradition exemplified by the struggle against Napoleonic domination and the bomb plot against Hitler, with the proletarian military tradition of the Paris Commune of 1871, the Spartakus revolt of 1919 and the International Brigade in Spain. It is worth noting here that the East Germans claim Colonel Count Schenk von Stauffenburg, the man who put the bomb in Hitler's bunker in 1944, as really one of them. Neues Deutschland, the daily paper of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), declared on July 21st of last year, "He belongs to us". To find sartorial expression for the struggles of the patriotic count and the armed Berlin workers of a generation ago which would also evoke a response among the people was a difficult and painful task. The uniforms of the para-military formations before 1953 were determinedly German. Later they became almost Russian. When the NVA was set up in 1956 the present traditional German uniforms were introduced.

More important than the uniforms are the men inside them. As far as the officers are concerned, the official Handbuch states that 82.4% of them are from working class homes, 54% have been recognised, after investigation of their pasts, as anti-Fascist fighters, 42% were in the working class movement before 1933. There are some ex-Wehrmacht officers in the NVA, but most of these joined in the (for them propaganda) war against the Nazis whilst prisoners of war in the Soviet Union. Some of the most notable of these like Colonel Adam of Stalingrad and General Vincenz Mueller, are either retired or dead. The officer who led the parade on Marx-Engels Platz was not one of these, but Kurt Wagner, a 60-year-old ex-electrician from Chemnitz (now Karl-Marx-Stadt).

If the social composition of the organs of power of a state tell you what kind of a state it is, then the German Democratic Republic (DDR) is a Workers' State. Official sources claim that 70% of the leading officials of the German People's Police (DVP) are recognised victims of Nazism and that 85% come from working class or peasant families. Among the future members of the intelligentsia, the students, 59% are from workers' or peasants' families and 19% from the homes of white-collar workers. In Parliament the workers are less well represented. There "only" 192 are listed as skilled workers (out of 500) while 51 are listed as white collar and 95 as skilled agricultural workers. Scientists and doctors number 45, educationists 23 and technicians 23. As in the DDR members of Parliament are not professionals, these occupations are current ones.

The DDR's Parliament mirrors the direction the East German leaders wish the country to go. There are no unskilled workers listed, for instance. Economically speaking, East Germany cannot afford them. The plan is to concentrate the national effort on "intelligence intensive" products requiring little raw material. Thus the products of the metal industry head East Germany's export list, followed by chemicals, in pro capita production of which, so the Statistisches Taschenbuch assures us, the DDR is second only to the USA. In 1963 chemicals accounted for nearly 16% of East German production. Like the other Communist states, the DDR has undergone a major industrial upheaval. Unlike them, the territory of the DDR was industrialised before the war. However, the founders of the Democratic Republic found themselves without the necessary hard coal and steel, brought before 1945 from West Germany, to make their economy viable. At that time, 1949, the other Communist States were in no position to deliver these goods and so a costly program of investment was embarked upon. Some say this policy was exaggerated by Stalinist autarkic theories (Kurze Gesichte der DDR, Stefan Doernberg, East Berlin, 1964) but at least it has led to a situation where the DDR produces more electricity per head of population than the UK or Western Germany - and still there is not enough!

Apart from the lack of raw materials, other factors have retarded the DDR economy. Many of the technical and managerial personnel of the old regime automatically chose to go West rather than live under the Soviets. Others were later induced by high monetary rewards to do the same. Then there was, and is, the problem of the economically unfavourable structure of the population with two million more women than men, many of them elderly. The emigration of thousands of E. Germans before 1961, mainly, let us be clear, for economic rather than political reasons, has aggravated the situation. In the years before the Wall, and still to a much smaller extent today, there was the enormous economic loss to the DDR caused by illegal export of currency and quality articles across the open Berlin frontier. Briefly, DDR citizens wanting oranges, bananas, cheap textiles, Western cigarettes or coffee, all in short supply in East Germany, changed their money for West Marks in West Berlin at the highly artificial rate of 4:1. The less well-off West Berliners (for years there were many unemployed) and racketeers got hold of these East Marks and bought, or got relatives to buy, Zeiss cameras and other optical equipment, watches, radios, typewriters, even bread. These they often resold in the West at a good profit. They also "lived it up" in E. German restaurants, theatres and night clubs. Finally, E. Germany paid more than its fair share of reparations, compared with the Federal Republic, for Nazi crimes committed in the Soviet Union and Poland. Little wonder that the Times correspondent wrote on May 29th, 1964, that the East German economic development was "more miraculous than the better known West German miracle..."

Despite the tremendous economic progress, the above mentioned difficulties have meant that in certain respects the standard of living of the East Germans has not kept pace with that of the advanced Western nations. E. Germany now claims to have more TVs per thousand households than France or Italy, but fewer than W. Germany, Britain or the US. Official statistics freely admit that E. Germans have fewer fridges, cars or washing machines than their relatives in W. Germany. Friedrich Ebert, Lord Mayor of E. Berlin, readily admitted to me that he could at present see no solution to the housing problem. Figures published in the Statistisches Taschenbuch show the seriousness of this.

Continued/

East Germany (continued)

In 1961 45% of all the 5,447,122 dwellings dated from before 1900 and only 10.5% had been built since 1945. Between 1961 and 1963 about 255,000 flats and houses were built. To overcome the problem efforts are being made to apply prefabrication methods and in 1964 the majority of new dwellings were constructed in this way. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, living standards are high in East Germany.

The measures connected with the building of the Wall in 1961 have not stopped the process of "liberalisation" in the DDR. This has found official expression particularly in the speech Walter Ulbricht made to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the setting up of the Republic. In it he insisted that E. Germany was now in the process of transition from dictatorship of the Proletariat to a People's State (Volksstaat) in which the administration of justice would be a matter of the whole people. He claimed that E. Germany had overcome the remaining "dogmatic phenomena" and was pledged to the deepening of the rights of the citizen and equality of all before the Law. He also promised that in the DDR the "inviolability of the person and the home" and the secrecy of the post would be respected. This speech, which was given in Neues Deutschland on October 7th 1964, was taken seriously by the highly respected Hamburg weekly, Die Zeit (November 27th). The W. German weekly interpreted these new formulations as a clear break with "the Stalinist class justice" of the past. The same paper reported a whole series of cases which it said showed that something similar to the Western idea of the "rule of Law" had reached the DDR.

In the above mentioned speech Ulbricht promised a measure of electoral reform. The main point of this was that starting with the next local elections, there would be provision for more candidates than seats, thus allowing for the removal of unpopular candidates and providing the electors a chance to show their dissatisfaction without endangering the regime or the system of single list elections.

Perhaps another sign of the positive development of the DDR is the provision, written into the conscription law of 1962, for alternative service for those who for reasons of conscience refuse to carry arms. According to Neues Deutschland such service is likely to be done in "building" units of the NVA. The members of such units are not trained in the use of arms and are not required to utter the normal military oath of allegiance. At another level, in creative writing, the term "Socialist Realism" is being interpreted in a much broader, more positive way than in the past. Again, the new program of "Die Distel", the political cabaret in E. Berlin, is bolder and franker than I remember it from my last visit to the DDR in 1959. Criticism of W. Germany was kept to a minimum; the bulk of the program was concerned with putting the DDR in order.

Harold Wilson is reported to have likened the DDR to an elephant one cannot ignore, Walter Lippman has written of the "metaphysical unreality" of a policy based on the fiction that the DDR does not exist. It is time for deeds to replace words and for the Western powers to normalise their relations with the world's eighth industrial state, the other Germany.

*DR. DAVID CHILDS, who was Labour candidate for Rugby in 1964, studied at Hamburg University and was awarded a Ph.D. by London University for research on postwar Germany. His book From Schumacher to Brandt: The Story of Socialism 1945-65 is to be published this year.

Robertina Freeman, 15, and Alex Brown, 15, have been sentenced to incarceration in the Georgia Training School until they are no longer minors. This is the maximum penalty and would mean that Robertina would spend three years and Alex 6 years imprisonment on a charge of fornication. Both teenagers are Negro and are very active in the movement. During the summer of 1963, they, along with many others were arrested and put on three years parole. Minors could be taken off parole and released in custody of their parents if the parents would sign a Release. Reverend Freeman forgot to sign the Release for his daughter.

During the Autumn of 1964, Robertina Freeman became one of three Negro girls to integrate the Americus High School. In May of 1965, she and Alex Brown were picked up at the Sunset Park in Americus by a Georgia State Patrolman and he accused them of fornication. The State Trooper stated: "I shined my light in the car and Alex Brown was on top of her. He looked up, turned his head and just kept going." Robertina and Alex were taken to Atlanta, Georgia, to take a lie detector test. Their denial of the charge was confirmed by the lie detector test. They were sentenced in a closed-door hearing with their parents, Attorney Warren Fortson and Judge James W. Smith presiding. Attorney Fortson is a cousin of Ben Fortson, Secretary of State in Georgia. Attorney Fortson was apparently shocked at the maximum penalty being given when this same judge had released persons on the same charge previously.

Robertina and Alex are out on an Appeal Bond, but this bond is good only for 30 days, and there is small chance that they will be able to get an appeal. Citizens of Sumpter County have had several meetings in protest against the decision handed down by Judge Smith. Neither Robertina nor Alex had any previous record with the exception of the demonstration in 1963.

The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (S.N.C.C.) has been working in Americus, Georgia, since 1961. A spokesman from S.N.C.C. stated: "Attorney Fortson didn't have records of the proceedings made because 'it would rile the judge'". This is another example of the type of harassment the Negro citizens of Americus are confronted with. There have been several protest meetings to discuss this and other actions taken by the white citizens of Americus. The local Negro citizens say that if no action is taken on this case, they will fill the city with demonstrations.

Editorial note: Readers wishing to express their disgust with this shocking case should send letters to the American Embassy and local newspapers, you can also express your solidarity with S.N.C.C. by writing to: S.N.C.C., 6, Raymond St., N.W., Georgia, U.S.A.

AFRICA FREEDOM DAY FOLK AND JAZZ CONCERT

This year's Africa Freedom Day celebration is to be held on Sunday, 13th June, at the Royal Festival Hall, commencing at 2.30. A whole galaxy of stars of stage and screen are giving their services. Steve Benbow, Andrews Faulds, Vanessa Redgrave, Cy Grant, Nadia Cattouse, Johnny Dankworth and Barry Foster, to name just a few. Tickets cost 5/-, 7/6, 10/- and 12/6. You can have an immensely enjoyable afternoon and at the same time support the Movement for Colonial Freedom. Write to M.C.F., 374, Grays Inn Rd., London W.C. 1. or, especially in view of the time factor, ring TER 1078.