

# The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS  
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# VIETNAM PEACE FRAUD

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THE VIETNAM PEACE TRICK

In his message to Mr. Kosygin, Soviet Prime Minister, earlier this week, Mr. Wilson said that Britain is continuing to give the United States all possible support in its efforts to explain the American position on Vietnam. Just what is meant by this? What is the meaning of the tooting and froing of American high-powered diplomats as they wander all over the globe? Columnists have described this activity as President Johnson's instant peace campaign - we would take another view.

Just before Christmas the Vietnam Day Committee of Berkeley, California, sent us a letter in which they stated: "On Tuesday, December 14th, news sources in the United Nations speculated that the Johnson Administration will probably declare war (upon whom, they do not say) in January after the proposed cessation of bombings which may occur during the Christmas holidays...." The serious Sunday newspapers, this week, all had reports of possible - if not probable - action by the U.S. to extend the war in South East Asia after they could claim that the North had turned down their peace overtures. The invasion of Cambodia and Laos was mentioned, as was possible bombing of the population centres of North Vietnam and Southern China. If this is the case - and balance of evidence is pointing unmistakably this way - then Mr. Wilson is saying <sup>in</sup> effect that the British Government is the accomplice to the most cold-blooded and dangerous fraud since Hitler's statement "I have no more territorial demands."

Obviously we must put the maximum pressure on the Government to reverse this drift. But there is more to it than that: this situation is a terrible commentary on the moral degeneration of the leaders of our party; it is also a very powerful argument for the insistence of a very clear policy on the Vietnam war. Every bit of confusion on this question aids the American Government. Socialists can only make one call: that of the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from the South. That this would mean the victory of the NLF is an argument for their withdrawal. We all want peace, but this can only be achieved in the present context by inflicting a decisive defeat on U.S. imperialism.

APOLOGIES TO CORRESPONDENTS: We have had so many contributions build up over the Christmas period that apart from adding two pages <sup>to</sup> this issue we have had to hold over several important articles until next week.

The following article appeared as an editorial item in the December 31st issue of the Railway Review:-

'The government appears to be determined to force the unions to inform the incomes board about applications for increases in pay. Whilst this need not be the death blow to free wage claims, or destructive of collective bargaining, it will cause claims to be delayed. There may be some who would like to stop collective bargaining altogether. If compulsory checking of claims is imposed and the decision to accept, or reject, or modify wage claims is transferred to a Government body then the old style collective bargaining procedure will be radically altered. Employers will not mind being instructed not to pay the full claims.

But in practise will it really matter? Employers, particularly in some areas and industries, have for years negotiated local agreements, which have to a large extent made nonsense of national agreements. The wage-drift has been caused by this method of retaining and gaining scarce labour. It will go on so long as there is full employment. The trade unions have been compelled to play ball with their members because this has been the most effective way of increasing take-home-pay. The whole wages structure is twisted by incentive schemes of one sort or another. So how can the incomes board, or the government, expect to create order in this situation, whatever legislation is passed?

We still live in a society where a worker can refuse to work if his pay and conditions are not satisfactory. The trade unions movement will fight to retain this right. Democrats will fight to keep this right. If we lose we shall have a fascist set up, in which wages and conditions of service are imposed <sup>and</sup> enforced and the working class will be held in a vice operated by the state. But the question of wages and conditions is inextricably bound up with prices. It is also relevant to link it with profits and dividends. Drastic control of wages and conditions without control of prices will lead to a fall in the standard of living of the working class. What is more, it will lead to a rise in the wealth of the already rich.... If legislation is forced onto the trade unions on wages and conditions it must be equally forced onto the capitalist class to prevent their gaining advantages. Profits and dividends must also be vetted. Rises in profits and dividends this year have exceeded any of the wage rises. To a socialist government this ought to be impermissible.

The trade union movement will not willingly give up their arms even to a Labour government unless the profiteers and dividend drawers are drastically controlled. If that happens, what price capitalism? How can capitalism, the so-called free enterprise system, work in these circumstances. It could mean the policy will lead to a greater step forward to socialisation of our economy. Yet one extra turn of the screw could produce a fascist system. It is a situation fraught with great dangers, even if there are possibilities that it could turn out to be a movement towards socialism.

BUILDER MAKES HIS WORKERS "SELF EMPLOYED" From Financial Times

A builder has defied the government's 'golden handshake' scheme by making all his workers self employed. He claimed that other employers were using the same dodge. When the Government's plans for severance pay were announced, Mr G Jessopp, a director of the Bournemouth company, A.G. Jessopp, told his staff they could be either self employed or he would pay them the union rate - less than what they were then earning.

The inaugural meeting of the Sheffield C.S.E. was held on the 19th December and it brought together 14 supporters, mostly members of the Labour Party, but also some trade unionists and C.N.D. supporters. Although some comrades expressed anxiety that the C.S.E. might be just a 'talking shop' the general tenor of the national C.S.E. statement of aims was endorsed. It was agreed that in the beginning at least, the C.S.E. could set itself a modest educative task, and establish a common meeting ground for varieties of left wing activists in the Sheffield area. In the long term, however, it was hoped to develop an extensive range of study and propagandist activity. Great stress was laid on the point that the C.S.E. should not be an organisational substitute for existing left wing parties and pressure groups. It was felt that the C.S.E. should not engage in any activity for which effective organisations already exist.

It was agreed that the meetings of the C.S.E. should concentrate particularly on issues of local concern, especially to activists in the trade unions and shop steward movements. The first major meeting of the Sheffield C.S.E. is planned for Sunday, 6th February, when there is to be a brains trust on the effect of anti trade union legislation. Members of the Sheffield C.S.E. also agreed to take an active part in the local 'Voice' conference on steel nationalisation scheduled for the 16th January.

WOODSIDE C.L.P. VOTES FOR DEMOCRACY

From Tony Southall

The following resolution was passed nem com, at the December meeting of Woodside C.L.P.:-

This C.L.P. condemns the N.E.C. for its handling of the Labour Party Young Socialists. It is the N.E.C.'s treatment which has led to the near collapse of the youth movement. The so-called conference at Malvern is a prime example of how not to run a conference, if we are to make pretensions to democracy. We protest at the following points:

1. The Y.S. should have been consulted about the venue of the Conference.
2. The delegates should have picked their own chairman.
3. Suspension of standing orders and the removal of the chairman should be the right of any meeting.
4. Alterations of standing orders reports should have been allowed.
5. Emergency resolutions should have been accepted.
6. The N.E.C. foreign policy statement, which contained such phrases as 'The Y.S. supports, welcomes, recognises etc.' should have been put to the vote.

The N.E.C. should allow the Y.S. to decide on its own constitution. We ask the N.E.C. to give the Y.S. the same freedom at Conference as the Women's sections.

NATIONAL TOUR TO CELEBRATE N.L.F. ANNIVERSARY from a special correspondent

After the extremely successful meeting in London which celebrated the fifth anniversary of the founding of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam it is planned to hold similar meetings in the provinces. Among the speakers at these meetings will be Ralph Schoenman, Chris Farley and Ken Coates; a recorded message by Bertrand Russell and a film will also be available. The meetings are planned for the latter part of February and March. Already, a date has been fixed for the Nottingham one - February 18th and support has been promised by a number of individuals and organisations including the Trades Council. Full details of all meetings will be announced as they become available. Write to BRPF, 3 & 4, Shavers Place, London SW1 if interested.

THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE YORK BRANCH OF THE C.S.E. by Norman O'Neill

Following the highly successful campaign conference held at York by the Regional Organisation on Saturday, 4th December, the York Branch of the Centre for Socialist Education was able to initiate a modest, but immensely stimulating meeting. At this, its first, and refreshingly informal grouping, the new branch brought together, almost for the first time in York, a number of socialist trade unionists from all parts of the town. Nigel Harris - the group's convenor - opened the discussion by depicting the aims of the National Centre. He then stressed the specific problems which the York branch would face in view of the relative lack of industry in the area, as compared with other Yorkshire towns, and emphasised that whatever was intended for the future, the success of any scheme would, necessarily, depend upon the approach and dedication of each individual member. It was to be a long, but ultimately, much rewarding process.

How then, was a start to be made? After a long and detailed discussion it was decided that initially, the branch would seek to provide speakers, on a variety of subjects, who could visit local trade union branches, Labour Party wards, and other labour organisations. Subsequently, when adequate contact had been achieved with such organisations, and branch members had learnt from the experience of the town's workers, the branch could proceed to a more ambitious programme of weekend schools and a series of weekly lectures. Some conflict arose concerning the "correct approach" and subject matter of the lectures, and arising out of the arguments was the inevitable demarcation between so-called "grass-roots problems" and "politics". Finally, however, all agreed that it was incredibly foolish to separate industrial matters from politics, and what the argument really amounted to was the necessity to begin at the existing level of consciousness. Branch members would have just as much to learn from the day-to-day experiences of the workers as they would be in a position to assist in socialist education, and only after some time could they effectively enhance the level of socialist consciousness in the local labour movement.

Having dealt substantially with future intentions, a five-point plan was drawn up to act as a guide for immediate action. Broadly, it amounted to the following:

1. To list a variety of subjects of direct relevance to local workers, (i.e. railway closures, youth unemployment, the incomes policy, apprentices' training, female employment, and so on) and make plans for a series of weekly lectures on such topics as "The History of the Labour Movement"; "Socialism - From Saint Simon to Bernstein"; "Karl Marx and Labour"; "Workers' Control in Industry"; "Structural Changes in Contemporary Capitalism"; and, of course, on local matters as and when they arise.
  2. In order to establish a degree of autonomy, to list as many local members as possible who could lecture on the topics outlined in point (1).
  3. Send a duplicated letter together with the C.S.E. leaflet on "Aims of the Centre" to every trade union branch and Labour Party ward in the area, offering to send a speaker from the branch, in order to explain fully what activities the York Centre intends to carry out within the coming year.
  4. Send out speakers to those organisations mentioned above, and other interested parties such as the Young Socialists and students.
  5. Prepare for a campaign meeting to take place in February.
- Of the points outlined above, the first three have already been undertaken with amazing success. The duplicated letter received the signatures of a number of trade unionists - including the secretary of the York Trades Council, and prominent members of the C.L.P.....

The regional steering committee which was elected in early December, met for the first time in Leeds on December 18th. Present were local convenors and other committee members from Leeds, Hull, York, and Sheffield. Leeds reported that they aimed to establish their Centre early in the New Year. Hull representatives discussed the desirability of forming a CSE there which would be in the first instance distinct from the Hull Labour College - it was agreed to convene an early meeting to discuss relations between CSE and the College. Sheffield reported that they were holding their inaugural meeting on the following day. 92 people had been circulated about the meeting, including the list of addresses which had been established by the steel workers' control group. Several lecturers who had been concerned with that project had expressed their support. York Centre had already been formed....(Editorial note: see elsewhere in this issue) It was felt by the committee that York's initiative could help other groups in thinking out practical forms of development.

A long discussion took place on the general principles which should be incorporated in any advice or guidance which the Region should give to local Centres. This developed from consideration of the points raised in a discussion paper submitted by John Saville to the committee. (Editorial note: this is also reproduced elsewhere in this issue)....In discussion on the paper, it was suggested that it might be too academic and dry, too limited to the locality, (stress should be laid on the links between local and national CSE) and that generally education was more than "desks and chairs". CSE should not be limited to drawing people to its meetings, but should be prepared to go out to union branches, factory gates and canteens (lunch-time meetings), etc.

Sheffield convenor Pete Smith reported that their plans included one-day conferences on the "Non-Union Shop", "Anti-Union Legislation", "Immigration" and "Steel Nationalisation". It was agreed that the key to the CSE local strategy, as outlined by John Saville's paper, lay in organising and developing contacts between socialists and trade unionists who combined an industrial militancy with a political commitment to the left. Various amendments to the paper were suggested, and it was agreed it should be treated as one of a number of possible models or guide lines.

A regional conference on incomes policy and anti-trade union legislation was discussed: it was felt that local centres should themselves promote this topic in the first place, and that evidence be collated as to the support which such a conference could expect at regional level. If we decided to proceed with it, the aim would be to hold it by next April. Discussion of the role of CSE in relation to students' socialist societies had to be postponed. The National Steering Committee was asked to clarify the financial arrangements between itself and the localities. At present all money from subscriptions was being centralised, and it was expected that local centres would need funds themselves.

THE WEEK AND THE NORTH HULL BY- ELECTION: We have received many articles, letters, etc. on this question. We are publishing a balanced selection. However, we must make it clear that we identify ourselves with the Voice papers - particularly the Humberside edition - on this question. We do so more in sorrow than anger. It is sad to find ourselves arguing against our colleagues in the Radical Alliance and we trust that we work together on many issues in the coming months despite this difference on tactics.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORK IN A CENTRE FOR SOCIALIST EDUCATION by John Saville

1. It is important at the outset to be quite clear that the CSE is not intended to promote intellectual discussion groups per se. There is nothing wrong or useless with discussion groups, and given the antipathy towards theory that is so widespread in the British labour movement, a discussion group alongside other educational activities can be useful. But it is necessary to understand that if in any area the CSE does not progress beyond a central discussion group, it will largely have failed in its purpose.

2. The purpose of CSE, as I understand it, is to promote a grass roots movement which will begin the long and difficult historical process of re-grouping the left in the localities. We all agree that this coming together must begin with the trade union militants and the left in the Labour Party; and in areas and towns where there has been no continuous work in the past decade - in the sense of a continuous meeting of the left - the business of beginning is exceedingly difficult. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that what is required is the growth of confidence between trade union militants and other groups, and this can only develop through constant discussion and personal contact.

3. The problem is how to begin? The experience of Hull is that it has been the promotion of educational classes concerned with trade union matters that has provided the most useful contact and that out of the classes a number of trade unionists have come who unite a militancy in industrial matters with a political commitment to the left. There are, of course, always a number of politically minded unionists in all towns, but usually they are not in contact with each other except perhaps on Trade Councils and it is rare that they meet to discuss wider industrial and political problems.

One can either begin with an attempt to start a Labour College or a trade union class or both. The important thing is to find subjects that are of direct concern and interest to trade unionists. In Hull the largest attendance at the Labour College has always been on subjects such as industrial accidents and apart from matters of such general interest, discussions on problems of redundancy with special reference to local conditions would provide a useful starting point. The point being made here is that starting from scratch one will not get a response from straight political subjects but that it is necessary to evoke a sympathetic hearing by an examination of problems that are close to ordinary experience.

4. Early on a survey of existing educational facilities, and of tutors, should be made; and some sort of co-ordination should be attempted. In the first instance one may well find that the existing facilities, suitably stiffened, if possible, cannot be added to, but the aim to work towards is a trade union class with industrial-political perspectives.

5. Ideally, what we want is: a central Labour College, one or two regular trade union classes, a speakers class, and a growing number of trade unionists who are beginning to move beyond their immediate trade union problems and who are considering the specific problems of their own trades and occupations; so that local statements of factory problems can be written up and discussed among much wider groups. This is the way to get people on the shop floor and ultimately we want to have sufficient numbers that a local Voice paper can be started. In Hull this has been of the greatest importance and is the objective that all groups in fair sized towns should be aiming at.

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A committee, drawn from representatives of constituency parties and trade unions in the Nottingham area, is to campaign for the reinstatement of Ken Coates in the Labour Party. The committee will include a number of constituency leaders, secretaries, chairmen, treasurers and other officers both of local parties and the City Party itself. It will discuss the promotion of a campaign in the movement, publicity, the publication of the facts within the Labour movement, and a number of similar questions.

At the end of December ominous statements appeared in the Nottingham newspapers, purporting to be "leaks", implying that the Organisation sub-committee of the National Executive Committee, which is investigating the situation in Nottingham, had already made up its mind. Ken Coates wrote immediately to Len Williams, asking him to rebut these reports or investigate their origin. He has as yet had no reply from Mr. Williams. He had previously written on the 17th December, welcoming the Commission, asking to participate, and asking **if** his appeal could be taken in conjunction with the Nottingham enquiry. No reply has yet been received to this letter, either.

Scores of protests from unions and constituency parties have come in to Nottingham. A letter condemning the expulsion has been signed by a large number of members of the Tobacco Workers' Union. The Fire Brigades Union branch has circulated a petition which has so far been signed by about fifty members. Workers at Raleigh and Ericsson's have also signed an appeal. A co-ordination of these protests may be one of the first aims of the new reinstatement committee.

#### ENV SHOP STEWARDS ORGANISE CONFERENCE

We have received from the ENV Joint Shop Stewards' Committee details of a conference they are organising on the theme: "Defend the Shop Stewards!" In explaining why they have called the conference, the shop stewards point out "Every day, rank and file trade unionists and shop stewards come under attack. Employers, government and the press are united to denounce the "wreckers" in British industry. Proposed government legislation seems designed to undermine traditional methods of defending and improving members' wages and conditions. A meeting is being arranged to discuss the defence of the rank and file movement, the implications of incomes policy and the National Plan. Prominent members of the dockworkers, joint building sites committee, Post Office Engineers, London Airport workers, factory convenors and shop stewards have been invited to speak from the platform.

The conference is at Mahatma Gandhi Hall, Fitzroy Square, London W.1. (near Portland Street and Warren Street tube stations), on Sunday, 16th January, 1966 at 2.30 p.m.

Suggestions for work.....continued

5. One last point. To develop a genuine understanding and sympathetic personal contact between the various groupings on the left takes a lot of time and patience. Only if local CSE groups are prepared to take a long view shall we get any permanent results. It has taken us in Hull some five years to achieve our present quite modest scale of operations and if anyone believes there are some obvious short cuts they are deceiving themselves. If CSE groups remain predominantly either YS or middle class intellectuals, they will have failed; only those who mistake their own emotions for a class movement will be satisfied.



Like thousands of other members of the Labour Party, up and down the country, I fully support Richard Gott's views of the war in Vietnam. I do not, however, think that his candidature in Hull will achieve anything - except perhaps to let the Tories in. The derisory vote which he will obtain will only give Wilson and Stewart the chance to claim that the electorate supports their policies in Vietnam. Only a very few people feel passionately enough about foreign policy to make this single issue the deciding factor in how they are going to vote. We may think this deplorable but it is a fact we have to face up to.

Life for Socialists inside the Labour Party is frustrating to the point of desperation. Nevertheless, it remains the party of the working class and commands the loyal support of the great majority of socialist-minded voters in this country. If we cannot win the politically active men and women inside the Labour Party for a genuine socialist policy, then what hope have we got of making any progress among the electorate at large? The easy way is to hive off and form new parties or stand as independent candidates on specific issues (the bomb, Vietnam). There is no place for faint hearts in the battle for socialism.

Richard Gott writes: 'It does not really matter much whether steel is nationalised this year or in 1970.' He has yet to learn that domestic and foreign policy are two sides of the same coin. You cannot pursue a conservative policy abroad and a socialist policy at home - or vice versa. The same interests which oppose nationalisation and demand anti trade-union legislation, also insist on Government support for American aggression in Vietnam and a soft policy towards Ian Smith in Rhodesia.

If all the energies which went into C.N.D., the Committee of 100, I.N.D.E.C., and now the Radical Alliance were concentrated inside the Labour Party on a fighting socialist policy, much would have been achieved by now. Now is the time for socialists to get active inside the Labour Party, in readiness for the next general election - whenever it comes. It is difficult but not impossible, to get rid of non-socialist M.P.'s and replace them with Socialists. This requires hard work, not only inside the Labour Parties but inside the trade unions. We need people like Richard Gott at our side in the fight.

The whole history of the British Labour Movement this century bears witness to the ineffectiveness of splinter parties. The I.L.P. lost its real influence when it left the Labour Party. Mosley's 'New Party' - originally a left wing break away from the Labour Party, supported by people like John Strachey, Harold Nicolson and C.E.M. Joad, came up against the hostility of the workers because their intervention let the Tories in in several constituencies. According to John Strachey, it was this working class hostility which caused Mosley to turn to fascism. One does not wish to take historical parallels too far but surely there is a lesson in this for impatient socialists.

The working class of Hull will surely be true to themselves and vote solidly Labour. This will not mean that they endorse Wilson's Vietnam Policy but the intervention of the Radical Alliance will, unfortunately, give this impression. Even now it is not too late for them to face the political facts of life.

"More people have been killed in the Indonesian revolt in the past three months than have died in the Vietnam war in the past five years...." This is the conclusion gained from a careful sifting of reports, according to the Sunday Times reporter Nicholas Carroll. Writing in the January 2nd issue of that paper, he goes on to say: "Figures given of the number killed vary between 20,000 and 200,000, but fairly conservative estimates by Western diplomats put the figure at around 100,000. European engineers, business men and other foreign travellers returning from up-country speak of rivers filled with floating decapitated corpses. One traveller said he had seen children in a village playing football with the severed heads of Communist supporters. The murders have mostly been the work of Muslims who suffered grievously at the hands of the Communists before the abortive coup d'etat last October.

".....It is reliably reported that on the island of Bali alone between 3,000 and 4,000 were killed in the past ten days and Army helicopters had to be flown in to restore order....There is still no final confirmation that D.N. Aidit, the Communist leader, was executed at the end of November, but most diplomatic missions believe the story is probably true. The governmental position is still confused. Although President Soekarno is still nominally at the head of affairs, with a Cabinet of some 100 Ministers going daily to their offices, there is little question that the real master of the country is General Nasution, the Defence Minister, who escaped assassination on the night of September 30 by climbing over his garden wall.....There is no sign at present that the Army intends to take over formally, though in practice its writ runs nominally everywhere outside of Jakarta. In Sumatra there is in effect a military state with a state...."

THE SOVIET UNION, CHINA AND VIETNAM - CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES by D. Windsor

The latest exchanges between the Soviet Union and China over the question of aid to Vietnam, because they took place over the Christmas period, had very little publicity in the West. The Chinese were stung to reply when the Moscow weekly Abroad reprinted a dispatch of the New York Times to the effect that China demanded - according to its regulations governing freight charges - payment in dollars for the shipment of Soviet military and medical aid to Vietnam. This accusation followed many others over the question of Soviet aid to Vietnam, including the notorious charge that the Chinese deliberately obstructed the passage of arms.

However, the Chinese, in their reply, made a telling point when they asked: "If the facts are like those given in the weekly Abroad, why should Soviet journals have recourse to quotations from American journals instead of coming out themselves to make their remarks with a clear conscience?" And, as could be expected, the Chinese reply went on to make several points about the character of Soviet aid to Vietnam. Their first point was that the post-Khrushchov leaders of the Soviet Union had changed from a policy of disengagement to that of sending arms so that they "could have a say" in the Vietnam question and thus be in a better position to do a deal with the Americans. The second point they made was on the quality of the arms supplied by the Soviet Union to Vietnam. They claimed "a great part of the Soviet military equipment supplied to Vietnam consists of obsolete equipment discarded by the Soviet armed forces or damaged weapons .....both in quantity and quality" (these arms are) "...far below the aid the Soviet Union has given to the Indian reactionaries." The reply ends with a challenge to examine the records of the arms shipments, claiming that China makes no charge whatsoever for their transit.

A LETTER ON THE NORTH HULL BY-ELECTION

....I cannot agree with your able defence of the view that socialists should work for the success of the official Labour Party candidate in the North Hull by-election. You contend that the left can only hope to affect policy on Vietnam, or other scandals, if the present Government is confirmed in office. Let us agree for present purposes that all the "Radical" votes come from electors who would otherwise have voted Labour. To show that your conclusions would still be wrong, please imagine two possible results of the by-election (the second I fear more far-fetched than the first):

- (a) Richard Gott gets only fifty votes, while Macnamara holds or increases the Labour Party vote;
- (b) Richard Gott get 5,000 votes and Macnamara loses the seat.

Then just ask - which result would encourage Wilson to suppose that he has overwhelming popular support for his present policies, and which might persuade him that he has to change course sharply if he is to be able to go on seeing the Queen every few days?

Yours etc.,  
Tony Young (Ilford)

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS MUCH WORSE IN 3rd QUARTER from an economist

Britain's balance of payments position deteriorated in the third quarter of last year - the deficit increasing to over £236 million. This compared with a deficit of only £19 million in the second quarter and £98 million in the first. The overall deficit for the three quarters, £353 million, however, was a big improvement on the position in 1964. In that year the deficit for the first nine months amounted to £561 million.

Seasonal factors account for much of the setback in June-September, but the Labour Government must be worried about them nevertheless. On current account seasonal factors accounted for a change of no less than £130 million between the second and third quarters. The main cause of the large deficit was the sharp increase in the capital outflow which, after having fallen to £11 million in the second quarter, rose to no less than £108 million between July and September. Here, special factors were at work. Official bodies in other sterling area countries sold some £27 million of U.K. securities. Though the proceeds were reinvested in short-term U.K. assets and thus there were no actual withdrawals of funds from this country, these transactions still show up as an outflow in balance of payments.

Furthermore, overseas investments by British oil companies rose sharply, while direct investment by foreign companies in this country fell back after having been exceptionally high in the second quarter (a certain amount of this may be due to steps taken by the American Government to solve its balance of payments problem by discouraging U.S. firms to invest overseas).

It now looks unlikely that Mr. Callaghan's target of halving the deficit in 1965 can be achieved. On the other hand - and making allowances for the fact that the U.K. is not making the repayments of nearly £70 million under the North American loans this year - there is still a chance that the margin of failure will not be very big. Having said all this, one can see that the "recovery" of the British economy is on very parlous basis. Mr. Wilson and his team will be subject to tremendous pressures in 1966 to impose the incomes policy on the British working class.

It is in its confused attitude to the aircraft industry that Labour's economic thinking is now shown to be so empty of socialist content. The Government's response to the Plowden Report indicates this.

It is clear that the Government will accept the Report's main findings. It will offer no socialist alternative because in all the Labour Party's publications none is presented. The 'best' that British socialists can expect is that the Government will take a 51% shareholding in Hawker-Siddeley and B.A.C. airframes. Clearly this is a case of 'state capitalism' by default. What an amazing situation to find that this predominantly Tory Plowden Committee (set up by a Tory Government) which includes the chairman of Tube Investments and managing directors of Shell International and Imperial Metal Industries should come up with as 'radical' a solution as the T.U.C. did in its evidence to Plowden!

The T.U.C. will offer no basic opposition to Plowden because, fundamentally, both bodies are on the same side; neither body advocates the nationalisation of the aero-engines side of the aircraft industry. The T.U.C. can say: "on the engine side the structure of the industry appears to be reasonably satisfactory" despite the fact that the two main groups, Rolls-Royce and Bristol-Siddeley, are heavily subsidised by the Government.

Like Plowden, neither the Labour Party nor the T.U.C. has got anywhere near to working out plans for the aircraft industry which indicate the areas of management where the workers could fulfil their demands for increasing democracy in industry. As for the size of the industry and its composition, military and civil, we have to wait for the "outcome of the Defence Review." We are supposed to wait until we know what Wilson comes up with in the way of 'East of Suez', N.A.T.O. and other policies on his return from Washington. But it would be dangerous for socialists to wait. Socialists cannot accept the formula: the larger the Government's Defence and colonial commitments, the larger the British aircraft industry. Socialists need to pose the alternative to buying U.S. Phantoms, F111s or British Buccaneers against the arms bill, packing up the bases, and developing hovercraft, air buses and European production.

In the meantime, it is not clear that the Government's efforts at economic planning and industrial re-training have done much to lessen the insecurity of aircraft workers. For instance, only last month it was reported that over 1,000 workers at Hawker Siddeley Dynamics missile factories in the Bolton area are threatened with redundancy.

#### BUSMEN LOSE £39 FOR STRIKING

from our transport correspondent

The warnings given in articles by myself and others in The Week about the nature of the recent agreement between the unions and municipal bus undertakings have been confirmed with a vengeance. Just before Xmas, 650 bus drivers and conductors of the Birkenhead Corporation forfeited 6 months' service pay under the new agreement because they went on unofficial strike. The service pay award has only just come into existence. It is distributed at six-monthly intervals and the Birkenhead men would have got it on the second pay day in June. In the case of men with 20 years' service the pay would have been £39. Strike action was taken over delay by the management in considering the request for a 40-hour week spread over five days. In the first instance, dismissal notices were sent out but these were withdrawn when the workers reported for duty. Members of the Labour Party must make "it hot" for any Labour Councillor who has a hand in anything of this kind.

We have received the following communication from the Council of African Organisations:

"Operation - Rhodesia

"For the past 500 years, Africans and peoples of African descent have been abused, subjugated, deprived of their lands and in general were pillaged by the imperial powers.

"Today, a New Africa is emerging, determined to regain all that rightfully belongs to all her children. However, in Rhodesia, as in other areas of South Africa, those foreign colonial settlers who believe in a racialist order are fighting a last ditch battle. With the support of racial chauvinists and powerful financial interests, they now challenge all decent sections of humanity, of all races and creeds.

"More than ever, Africans, peoples of African descent and all peoples throughout the world believing in human dignity and justice, must meet this evil conspiracy, squarely, whatever the cost. We must not allow this new crime against Africa, against humanity, to succeed. The racists must be crushed. They have resorted to brutal force and violence. They must be met on that level and taught a final lesson by all decent peoples of all races.

"The African Action Committee has been set up to recruit volunteers and collect funds to help those forces fighting for freedom. We must put an end to empty protests and build up a strong force to compel the racists (Smith and Verwoerd) and their imperialist supporters to accept the will of decent mankind.

"You can volunteer now by giving your name to your area organiser, or make contact in person with the Africa Action Committee (Rhodesia) at No. 3, Collingham Gardens, London S.W. 5. (If you do not have an area organiser, write to us at the above address).

"Please send donations, especially if you cannot volunteer, to AAC (Rhodesia), 3, Collingham Gardens, London S.W. 5. No sum is too small! Make your crossed cheque or postal order payable to: A/C, A.C.C. (Rhodesia), All contributions will be acknowledged promptly.

"ACT NOW TO BUILD THE FREEDOM ARMY"

Editorial note: the Council of African Organisations is anxious that this information be as widely circulated as possible.

#### AN APPEAL FROM NEW YORK

We have received an appeal from the Progressive Labor Party to publicise their efforts to organise an international campaign to protest against the arrest of one of their leaders, Bill Epton. They ask "we urgently request that you send us at once statements of support for Bill Epton - care of Challenge, 132, Nassau St., New York, New York 10038. In a statement about the arrest of Bill Epton on a charge of "criminal anarchy", Adam Pierce, spokesman for the Students for a Democratic Society, said: "William Epton is not responsible for the riots that occurred in Harlem, and he, William Epton is a scape goat for the officials of New York City. The actual blame for riot lies at the doors of the Exploiters and leeches who feed and live and even prosper off the poor of Harlem...."

It is to be hoped that readers will respond to this appeal. It is clear that Bill Epton is being framed and charged with "criminal anarchy" for what, in this country would amount to ordinary political propaganda activity.

John Holland's piece on Rhodesia in The Week conjures up a picture of him standing on a traffic island somewhere in central Africa directing southwards the traffic in military armaments, preferably labelled made in Russia or China, to the mass of expectant workers and peasants of southern Africa who will know that means the Revolution has begun. At the same time from this commanding position he lashes out at random at the United Nations, Nyere, Kaunda, economic sanctions, Portuguese Africa, Rhodesia, Wilson, etc., etc., and calls for industrial action in this country against Wilson's Rhodesian policy. This is the sort of muddled-headed clap-trap which continually damages the left in this country.

Hasn't Holland noticed the effective use made of the U.N. by the African states, as the only world platform they have, to demonstrate their opposition to Wilson's Rhodesian tactics? Shouldn't we on the left help them by commenting on this, supporting their stand, and by boosting the principles of the U.N. Charter? Then we can castigate those who flout it.

Do we really see the struggles in southern Africa simply in terms of winning the right to vote?

Surely a constructive alternative policy for socialists in this country would begin by collecting evidence of the "national resistance movements of the whole of Southern and Central Africa", discovering their grass roots and aspirations; then we should seek ways to strengthen them with theoretical as well as physical support to mobilise these movements. This can only be done by helping them to obtain information and advice on how to organise and control a vast national movement which has precise aims in view.

They want much more help from us and other socialists with grass roots organisation work for political and industrial action, trade union structure, co-operative production, right through to full government planning with workers' control.

At the same time, socialists in this country should be putting much more pressure on Wilson to release the national leaders in Rhodesia, and not just bemoaning negatively Wilson's sanctions tactics. Then we can begin to aid these leaders to weld their movements into a genuine national socialist group which understands its power, its strategy and its aims, and so overthrow the racist minority governments in order to put into their place a socialist alternative. The physical overthrowing process may require military help from outside in the end, but Russian or Chinese armaments alone can never produce a genuine national socialist movement in any African nation.

19/12/65

RHODESIA: A NOTE

from Pat Jordan

John Holland's comment on the discussion we are having on Rhodesia seemed to me to grossly oversimplify things. It suffered from a more fundamental point however; its lack of application to present day conditions and the tasks that we have to face. I would/ <sup>like</sup> after Christ to go into this in much more detail but let me say here and now that it is not the place of this movement in a journal directed towards the British movement to put forward slogans which are connected with the tasks of the Russian and Chinese governments. We can, of course, make a general appreciation of what socialist governments should do but precise slogans and demands should be directed towards our Government.

Labour Party Regional conferences are usually dull and uninteresting. The rule forbidding discussion of national policy results in most of the time being devoted to trivia. Yet, with the growing importance of regional government, it seems to me an opportunity to enliven regional conferences with matters of consequence is being missed. Here are a few of the issues that legitimately could be raised:

First, the regional economic development plans. These are based on the principle of giving private industry a carrot (financial concessions) to induce it to open new factories. Instead of lining capitalists' already bulging pockets, socialists would, I think, favour government-built and run factories in underdeveloped regions.

Second, regional seats of government. In the two years since the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet, it is surprising no attempt has been made to raise this issue at Labour regional conferences. While VIPs, in a nuclear war, will descend a thousand feet to concrete-encased safety, apparently the rest of us are to be left frantically whitewashing windows, filling baths, shaving hair, cutting toe-nails, and doing all those other things that can be done in four minutes flat. Surely it is time this class distinction in the survival stakes, as well as the larger lunacy of most civil defence thinking, was exposed.

Third, regional boards of public corporations. This involves doing some research. But when I last looked, for instance, at the board of the British Transport Commission that runs the North-West (where I live) I found the seven-man committee held 34 other directorships between them. One of the gentlemen, Mr. R.F. Summers, a director of four steel companies, is a passionate believer in private enterprise. During the last General Election he strenuously argued against the nationalisation of steel. Are not the decisions to close railway workshops, shoving the work out to private industry, understandable when the boards are weighed down with businessmen and financiers?

Fourth, the pricing policy of regional boards of public corporations. Capitalists make over £500 million a year through receiving cheap coal, gas, electricity, etc. The case against this hidden subsidy can best be made in terms of gas, a homogeneous commodity. For, if one type of customer is having it more cheaply, then another type must be paying more. A small concession for bulk-buying might be reasonable, but it is quite outrageous that the small domestic consumer should pay precisely twice as much as the large industrialist, a situation that the North-West Board's report shows exists in our region. Almost certainly, it is the same elsewhere.

But it is necessary, if these and other issues are going to be raised that some research is done. Perhaps, the various Centres for Socialist Education could be usefully employed in delving for suitable ammunition.

HAVE YOU ANY UNWANTED BACK COPIES OF "THE WEEK"?

We still need back copies to make up sets of files which are required by libraries. It will be extremely helpful if readers could send us unwanted copies - especially the early issues, notably Vol. 1 No. 2 of which we have no copies. Unsold copies of any of the "specials" we have done will be credited, again we urgently need several copies of the Workers' Control ones.