

The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS
Vol. 5, No. 13. 31st March, 1966

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**TROOPS
FOR
VIETNAM—
R.A.F.
PUZZLED
BY DENIAL**

AFTER THE ELECTION

54 Park Road, Lenton, Nottingham

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Vol. 2, No. 13, 1st March 1972

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AFTER THE ELECTION

Most of our readers will receive this copy on election day. Most of them will also, some time during that day, be voting Labour. Later on Thursday they will stop up late to hear the election results. Everything seems to indicate that these results will entail the gaining of a good number of seats by Labour. We would add only two qualifications to this: first, the Labour vote could very well be much lower than the Gallup polls indicate because of apathy and over-confidence; secondly, the Tories are in a desperate situation - Heath is fighting for his political life - and they will ^{pull} ~~pull~~ all the stops organisationally. For these reasons, it is very likely that Labour's majority will be somewhat lower than that indicated by the polls.

This does not please us - we want the biggest Labour majority possible. We want to remove from the political situation any factor which gives Mr. Wilson an alibi for not carrying out socialist policies. We hope that we are wrong and the pollsters right.

Having made our general position clear, we must say all the main issues facing the left will be very much the same after the election. First of all there is Vietnam. The report from the Daily Telegraph we have reprinted on page 5 makes a liar of Mr. Healey - and a whole motley of other Labour leaders. Will Mr. Wilson feel strong enough, with his larger majority, to follow South Korea, New Zealand and Australia in going to the last point in collusion with the U.S. over its barbaric war in Vietnam? Nothing that Mr. Wilson has said and done since being Prime Minister indicates that he would let political principle stand in his way. The Americans are very anxious indeed to involve as many of their "allies" as possible in their criminal adventure in South East Asia. The left, the peace movement in this country will have to be vigilant and demonstrate on the Easter March that Mr. Wilson cannot take this step. On the contrary, our position is that we should fight for Labour to solidarise itself with the N.L.F. against U.S. aggression. That is why we shall be proud to share a banner with our friends of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign making this point. This is by far the best way to prevent British troops going to Vietnam. The compromises of the past, the watering down of demands to find wider support from Parliamentarians, etc. paved the way for the position where this Government could support the bombing of North Vietnam. This fight and the struggle against trade union legislation will go on no matter how big Mr. Wilson's majority.

Bellman, the lively commentator of The Post, the journal of the Postmen's union, U.P.W., has once again returned to comment on our attitude to the war in Vietnam:

"I have been taken to task by The Week for suggesting, in this column in January, that perhaps the supporters of the Australian Vietnam Day Committee who recently organised a "Folk Songs with A Message - Songs Of Peace And Love" concert in Melbourne might possibly be more desirous of a defeat of the Americans by the Vietcong than in peace. Says The Week: 'Bellman's comment is a little surprising. The Week has consistently supported colonial and national liberation struggles, and has shouted from the housetops that Labour should be aligned with them, against imperialism.' I am then asked if I think this is wrong.

"Well, I do. I am an internationalist. I do not support 'national liberation struggles' against 'imperialism'. I am not prepared to support the Americans against the National Liberation Front (the Vietcong) or the Vietcong and the 'Democratic Republic of Vietnam' against the Americans. Because whoever ultimately wins in Vietnam, it will not be the workers and peasants of that unhappy country. Of that I'm certain. National 'liberation' struggles elsewhere in Asia and Africa should have taught the intellectual 'revolutionaries' of The Week that their success only results in the substitution of one set of rulers for another. Either way, the people get robbed of the fruits of their labour! Unless, of course, there is a strong and free trade union movement around to prevent this."

Ken Coates writes: "Bellman speaks for many people in the Labour movement on this issue, so it is important to meet his arguments. First of all, he is entirely right to insist that a strong and free trade union movement is vital to the protection of the working people anywhere in the world. The Week has always defended trade union rights, wherever they have been attacked, either in the third world or at home. Whenever, in revolutionary countries of the third world, the trade unions have not been actively involved in gaining more and more effective powers in the running of the economy, this has usually resulted in a halt to progress, and even frequently in the overthrow of anti-colonial governments and the installation of military or authoritarian rulers. We would agree with Bellman that without strong and independent unions, workpeople will lose their rights. That is why, in England, we are firmly opposed to the present retrogressive incomes policy of Mr. Brown, which puts essential trade union freedoms in jeopardy.

But when Bellman opts for "neutrality" between the Americans and the people of Vietnam, he unwittingly harms the cause of trade unionism. The poor peasants and working people of Vietnam do support the Liberation Front, with every bit as much enthusiasm as postmen in England support the U.P.W., to put it mildly. And it is a cardinal principle of trade unionism that the oppressed people of the world must offer support to one another: as the Australian dockers helped Ben Tillett and Tom Mann in 1899, as did the Russians help the British miners in 1926. Such support stems at least as much from intelligent self-interest as from the moral identity of one striker or freedom-fighter with another. If the Americans are not beaten in Vietnam, their economic and political control of the whole third world zone will be tightened, and this will make real trade unionism impossible, because foreign imperial rule today can only take place through the medium of military or dictatorial satraps. Unions become revolutionary bodies in such conditions. In some countries, e.g., Congo, Brazzaville, they even get involved in seizing political power themselves.

REFLECTIONS ON THE COMMISSIONERS OF INLAND REVENUE REPORT

The following extracts have been taken from a longer article by A.M.G. CHRISTOPHER, the Assistant General Secretary of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation, which appeared in the March edition of their magazine, Taxes.

"The survey of personal incomes notes once again the deficiency in both incomes returned from investments (£30 million is the estimate) and in returns of wives' earnings. To what extent surtax is being lost is hard to say - not a great deal probably.....

"For all that I have protested regularly because the Board's Report each year is able to confirm that real wealth is very little differently distributed from the way it was shared out a generation ago; for all that I am equally regularly sickened by the humbug that offers Schedule D statistics which are demonstrably unbelievable as evidence of true profit; and for all that I welcomed the courage of the Chancellor in setting about the scandal of entertaining expenses (tax-free Expenses in 1963/64 totalled £195 million under Schedule E alone), I subscribe to the heresy that the British income tax, at current rates and in its present form, has serious disabilities.....

"Pages 125/135 of the Board's Report seem to me to deserve the attention of Mr. Aubrey Jones. They are concerned with the variations in the ratio of net profit to turnover of companies making a gross profit of £5,000 or more in 1961/62. It is true that no more than 34,436 companies are reported upon, but it is a bit startling to see that, for example, 862 of them had a ratio of net profit to turnover of over 40%: 166 of these companies were in wholesale distribution and 52 in retail distribution."

N.A.L.G.O. OPPOSITION TO INCOMES BILL

Among the resolutions for NALGO's Conference, to be held this June, are the following:

19. N.E.C.: This Conference is opposed to legislation which contains penal provisions for T.U. members and officers in the discharge of their trade union duties and responsibilities.
20. N.W., N. Wales district council and Staffs: That this Conference, believing that Government legislation to enforce its incomes policy constitutes a long-term threat to the fundamental right of an employee to withdraw his labour, declares its strong opposition to such legislation, and calls upon the N.E.C. to use all its endeavours through the T.U.C. to dissuade the Government from either introducing, or, having introduced, from implementing, such legislation.
21. S. Shields: This Conference asserts that any legislation designed to implement H.M.G.'s incomes policy must not discriminate against the public services and should apply to prices and dividends to the same extent as wages and salaries.
22. Hampshire: That this Conference.....views with alarm the increasing interference with the established principles of Whitleyism, i.e., free negotiations between employers and employees, and instructs the N.E.C. to resist all attempts by the P.I.B. to assume the duties and functions of the Ministry of Labour.

U.S. GOVERNMENT INTERVENES TO PREVENT PAY AWARD from a U.S. correspondent

For the first time, the American Government is directly intervening to stop a pay award which it regards as inflationary. Three weeks ago a New Jersey branch of the International Union of Operating Engineers, representing construction workers, secured a settlement which provides for wage increases ranging from $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ to 9% over a three year period. The settlement was agreed and awaited only formal signature.

At this stage President Johnson's Council of Economic Advisers intervened and held a series of meetings, described as "heated", with local union officials. With the union remaining adamant, the Government resorted to action of a blackmailing character by threatening to withdraw 200 million dollars in Federal Highway Funds from New Jersey unless the contract is renegotiated. Although a White House spokesman has said only that "no decision has been made", other officials admit that the threat has been made. Undoubtedly the Administration's main concern is that the New Jersey settlement should lead to other local agreements exceeding the Government's wage guideposts.

Meanwhile, George Meany, president of the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations, has urged unions not to worry about the guideposts but to push instead for the maximum they can extract from employers. Mr. Meany was speaking to the leaders of eight unions in preparation for this year's major confrontation between Westinghouse and General Electric, and 180,000 electrical workers. The negotiations are particularly noteworthy as representing the first occasion on which the unions have acted in unison. Previously the companies have been able successfully to play off one union against another.

The eight unions have now listed their demands. General Electric have described these as "unrealistic" and "four times the Administration's guideposts", and have further hinted that they will not negotiate with the eight-union panel.

Following the Government's decision to keep the wage guideposts at last year's low level of 3.2% , these two developments are clear indications of the direct confrontation which is now building up.

AN EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We have had several comments on our practice of continuing articles from one issue to another. These comments were provoked by one or two bad examples when articles dragged over two or three issues. This has been discussed by the editorial team and we have come to the conclusion that we must not, except under very special circumstances, carry articles over from one issue to another. This is no simple problem because there have been many cases of important, but long, articles arriving just prior to publication, thus placing us in the dilemma of leaving them a week or splitting them. We would ask all correspondents to do the following to assist:

- (1) Try by all means to keep articles down to 500 words (one page);
- (2) If they cannot do this then send us the article early, and indicate how they would like it cut, should this be necessary; and
- (3) Should they not be able to send the article early and it is longer than one page, they should indicate what parts they would like it splitting into (we would prefer this to be done so that it would become two articles in effect.)

America- Big parades and marches in Washington, New York and Chicago, violent outbreaks and sit-downs in Massachusetts and California, demonstrations in 120 cities on March 25th. More than 1,000 people demonstrated against the war; torchlight procession in Iowa; hunger-strike by 50 in New York; draft-cards burned in New York; service-discharge papers burned by veterans of World War II in Manhattan; 1,000 students at California University protested in Los Angeles; medical college students in New York formed a committee calling for an enquiry into U.S. crime of chemical warfare; anti-war organisations in the states of Oregon, California, Washington and Arizona have appealed to people not to pay taxes for the war; 200 demonstrated in Boston, a youth tore his draft-card; demonstrations also in Cambridge, Ann Arbor, etc.

France- Several thousand people demonstrated in Paris on March 25th, in front of U.S. Embassy. Some carried NLF flags. Demonstrations and meetings held in other towns, including Bordeaux.

West Germany- About 400 students in Cologne demonstrated in the rain on March 26th. Police and patrol cars sent out. Placards reading "Yankees Go Home" snatched away by police. Hanover- about 200 people attended a protest rally held in front of the Opera House. Other demos, rallies and pictorial exhibitions held in other cities.

Norway- Over 400 people demonstrated in Oslo on March 25th, and marched to the U.S. Embassy.

Latin America- Several thousand students in Buenos Aires, Argentina, demonstrated on March 25th against U.S. aggression and attempt to coerce the Argentinian Government into sending troops. Tear gas and fire-hoses used on demonstrators. Demonstrators set fire to a police car and a water truck, also belonging to the police. On March 23rd in San Juan, capital of U.S.-occupied Puerto Rico, a demonstration was held in front of a U.S. military establishment. Demonstrations held also in Panama and San Jose, Costa Rica.

Australia- 2,000 young people demonstrated outside Victoria Barracks, Melbourne on March 26th. The police tore posters and arrested two people.

N.B. There will be a full report of various activities in London in connection with the solidarity week end in our next issue.

VIETNAM TROOPS DENIAL PUZZLES R.A.F. from the Daily Telegraph(28/3/66)

Air Cdre E. M. Donaldson wrote: "The denial by the Minister of Defence, Mr. Healey, on Saturday that contingency plans exist for Britain to provide a token armed force to assist the Americans in Vietnam has puzzled the R.A.F. Britain is closely tied by her obligations under the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation to provide assistance if requested for any possible politico-military situation that might arise in the area. It falls upon the R.A.F.'s No. 224 group, a large powerful and highly-trained mobile fighting unit to plan close support for ground forces anywhere in the S.E.A.T.O. area. These plans cover Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. No. 224 group is armed with Hunter ground-attack fighters, Canberra bombers and Javelin all-weather fighters. No. 20 squadron armed with Hunters was sent to Thailand in 1962 for 6 months to "encourage the formation of a neutral government in Laos."

There is a strong element of R.A.F. observers in Vietnam. Recently, Air Marshal Sir John Granby, Britain's Far East Forces C-in-C paid a 3-day visit there to get direct information on how the fighting was developing. The R.A.F. must have provisional plans to move back into the area if the Government decided it was necessary. I am certain Mr. Healey must know of these. When the Indonesian menace is withdrawn America is expected to insist on a token British participation in South Vietnam. Laos or Thailand. "

THE TURMOIL IN WORLD COMMODITY PRICES - a 'Sunday Times' analysis

On March 20th, the Sunday Times Business Supplement carried the following article: "Commodities - the business man's portmanteau word for goods as varied as copper, wolfram, wolftops, zinc, copra and peanuts - are the lifeblood of British industry. ... At least one eighth of the goods flowing into British ports come into this category. This means £600 millions worth or more, excluding oil and other near-commodities. And when prices move up 10% or so, as they have over the past year, £60 million or more is added not only to Britain's import bill, but also to industrial costs.

On an international scale, this is insignificant as Britain's trading competitors have to pay the higher prices too. But it is a detectable burden on company profits - even when it can be offset by clever trading in the commodity markets. Yet for two main reasons Britain has no special interest in lower world prices for commodities. The first is very straightforward: although Britain is a net importer of commodities, and a very heavy one, the sterling area as a whole is a small net exporter. A fall in the world price of copper or tin or ground nuts helps both internal costs and, initially, Britain's own balance of trade. But its effect on the sterling area's balance of payments is adverse.

For this reason alone, it is not in Britain's interest to seek lower world primary product prices. But the second reason may, in the long run, be even more cogent. Just as about one eighth of Britain's imports consists of commodities, about one eighth of our exports go to the under developed countries which, by and large, are the commodity producers. Their own finances are strained at the best of times, and lower prices for their exports are inevitably followed by import stringency. But if industrialisation programmes are to go ahead, capital goods imports must keep on flowing. The result: the primary producing nations turn to aid-conscious suppliers, accepting the trading or political strings that necessarily follow. Although these young states may not now offer great trade opportunities, they are the growth markets of the future. Once lost, they are hard to regain.

"So Britain finds itself in a dilemma. On the one hand, the constant cry from Africa and elsewhere for high commodity prices must be resisted, because of the effect on industrial costs at home. At the same time, we don't want to see prices falling, because of the longterm effects on our exports, and the shorter term effect on sterling area trade balances. Somewhere between the two lies, from a strictly business point of view, the ideal position. But this is exactly what we have not got.

"In fact, the world's primary product markets are in a turmoil. In some commodities, price support or price restraint agreements are breaking down in the face of rapid technological change. Crop failures and diseases are hitting others. Commodity prices have seesawed sickeningly in the past two years.

"Naturally, some efforts are afoot to bring some order to this anarchic world. But the problem of enforcing agreements remains a key to the situation, while even the best arrangements can be sabotaged by labour disputes, transport difficulties or crop failures."

FIRST CONFERENCE OF PORTUGUESE STUDENTS ABROAD* from a special correspondent

For the first time in 40 years, delegations representing Portuguese student associations in several European countries were able to meet in freedom to discuss problems which affect them. But this conference could only take place far from our country, in Belgium.

The large number of expulsions from Portuguese universities, the colonial war, the anti-democratic policies of the Salazar Government and the mediocrity of Portuguese education have forced many Portuguese students to leave the country.

But our meeting was not convened with the sole aim of solving the problems which arise from our exile.

We also wish to give our support to the struggle of Portuguese students for freedom of association, an integral part of the fight of our people for democracy, against the colonial war and for the complete independence of our country from foreign economic, political and military control. Also in these last few years, the fascist character of the Portuguese dictatorship, which murdered General Humberto Delgado, has revealed itself in a particularly violent form when seeking to crush the struggle for independence of the peoples of Guinea and Cape Verde, S. Tone and Prince, Mozambique and Angola. We strongly condemn the colonial war, and hold Salazar and those who support him responsible for the deaths which this war is causing amongst the people of the colonies and also amongst our own people. We also hold his regime responsible for the increasingly dependent situation in which Portugal is being placed by this war.

To maintain the military occupation of the colonies, Salazar has been selling our country.

The German bases on our soil are being repaid by ever increasing military aid to the regime as is shown by the recent sale of planes air force use in the colonies.

We call the attention of our people to the position of dependence in which this war is placing Portugal. The sale of Portugal is a fact.

But the existence of military bases on our territory and in Spain, besides opening the way to foreign interference in the internal affairs of these countries, also places in jeopardy the physical integrity, the very existence of the peoples of the Iberian Peninsula.

The recent disaster in Spain, in which an atomic bomb was lost, could have led to the destruction of a large part of the population of the southern half of the Peninsula, and the danger of radioactivity is still present. The existence of foreign military bases in the Iberian Peninsula and in the Azores permits the continuation of an irresponsible military policy which endangers world peace. Portuguese students, meeting for the first time in freedom, call the attention of the students and peoples of Portugal and all the world to these facts. Portuguese students both in Portugal and abroad know how to assume their responsibilities.

* Final declaration adopted by the first conference of Portuguese students abroad.

Private Robert Luftig of New York City has filed suit to prevent the Army from assigning him to Vietnam. The suit was filed in U.S. District Court, San Francisco, on January 19th, 1966. Those named as defendants are Secretary of Defence McNamara, Army Secretary Reser, and the Commander of Fort Ord, where Luftig was stationed. This suit is believed to be the first of its kind filed against the U.S. Government. The question the suit raises is the right of the defendants, or anyone under their command, to force Luftig to "engage in a war which is illegal under the laws of the United States, the Constitution and treaty obligations." The suit charges: I. That the war action of the United States in Vietnam is violative of our treaty obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and other treaties, II. That the action in Vietnam by the armed forces of the United States violates the Geneva Accords, the terms of which were accepted by the United States although not a signator thereto, III. That the armed Conflict between the forces of the United States and the Vietnamese is a 'war' without a declaration by Congress, IV. That the President of the United States under his executive power 'shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed...', V. That the deployment of plaintiff to Vietnam under existing conditions would be violative of the 'due process' provision of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States...

The brief submitted in the suit has been reproduced and is being distributed by the Luftig v. McNamara Committee which was formed to inform the public about the case and raise funds for its prosecution. Contributions or requests for information can be sent to: Martin Shepard, M.D., Treasurer, L/M Committee, 50, West 96 St., New York, N.Y. 10025. A hearing is scheduled for April 5th.

SIGNIFICANT (?) WEST GERMAN COLLUSION WITH U.S. IN VIETNAM from 'Nhan Dan'

West Germany is second to the United States in giving "aid" to the South Vietnamese administration. So far, this aid has exceeded 230 million W.G. marks- 15m. of this was devoted to the "strategic hamlets" programme, and 50m. to the building of the Nong Son chemical works (near Da Nang) for the production of chemical poisons used by the U.S. and their troops to conduct the war. U.S. and West German news agencies and newspapers have revealed that U.S. defence Secretary McNamara and West German Defence Minister Von Hassel in May 1964 secretly signed a treaty on West Germany's military aid to South Vietnam, including West German troops for participation in this war. Since then, many W.German 'volunteers' have been sent to South Vietnam, as nurses, sappers, jet pilots, military training personnel, etc.

Early this month, West German plants started producing bombs for the U.S.; in January and February this year 2,500 West German military experts arrived there in civilian clothes.

WHAT THE LEFT SHOULD DO AFTER THE ELECTION : In several towns where we have subscribers who work together as a team, we are helping to organise discussions for supporters of The Week immediately after the election. It will obviously both be of great value and necessary to take stock and consider what strategy the left should follow. We will also take the opportunity to discuss the role of our journal, its style, production, etc. at these meetings. If anyone is interested in helping to organise these meetings please write as soon as possible.

COMPULSARY BLOOD DONATIONS FROM SAIGON SCHOOLCHILDREN

The South Vietnam Teachers' Association in a statement dated March 15th strongly objected to the U.S. demand for compulsory blood donations from pupils in Saigon. From March 21-23rd, U.S. troops and Saigon police compelled pupils in their schools to give blood transfusions for wounded U.S. troops from the South Vietnam battlefields. 26 pupils were affected from losing too much blood. Parents and teachers were very indignant at this action.

ILLEGAL ELECTIONS IN OKINAWA

Residents on Ishigaki Island at the southernmost tip of Okinawa prefecture protested against the illegal election of a pro-U.S. mayor of Ishigaki City on March 20th. U.S. occupation forces brought plane-loads of police from Naha City, Okinawa, to Ishigaki Island to suppress the islanders' protest. After a count of votes following the announcement that the pro-U.S. candidate had been elected mayor by a slim majority, 2,400 ballot papers were found to be missing. Local citizens gathered to protest. The election chairman, after first admitting lawlessness and declaring the election invalid later reversed this decision. Angry citizens surrounded the chairman, who tried to flee to Naha City aboard a U.S. plane. Failing in this, he took refuge in the local police station. About 10,000 people gathered around the police station that night demanding the withdrawal of the election announcement. The airborne police attacked these people, who retaliated with stone-throwing. The fighting lasted until dawn and thirty people were injured.

THE CASE OF THE ANTI-WAR ARMY LIEUTENANT

by Harry Ring.

U.S. Army Lt. Henry Howe, 24 yrs. old, is serving a one-year prison term in the Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He was convicted by a court-martial last December on two charges: using contemptuous words against the President and conduct unbecoming to an officer and gentleman. He is actually doing time because, opposed to American action in Vietnam, he made his views known by participating in a demonstration against the war held in El Paso, Texas, last November. In civilian clothes and not on duty, he carried a placard which read: "End Johnson's Fascist Aggression in Vietnam" and "Let's have more than a choice between ignorant Fascists in 1968" (He was disgusted at Johnson's about-turn, after his pre-election attacks on Goldwater for promising to continue the war). As the demonstrators dispersed, El Paso police stepped forward and arrested Howe, charging him with 'vagrancy'. They then turned him over to the military police and he was promptly court-martialled.

There was a third, graver, charge: seeking to "promote disloyalty among the troops and civilian population". That charge was dropped when the Presiding Officer decided that Howe's action did not constitute "an attack on the war aims of the U.S." because the United States is not at present at war. Lieutenant Howe is now confined in virtual isolation at Fort Leavenworth. At the last report there was only one other person in the officer's section of the prison.

The Investors' Chronicle of March 25th carried an item in its Business Affairs section which considered the United National Economic Commission's Survey of Europe in 1965. It claimed that the Survey undermined the Chancellor's assumption that most things are going well in the U.K. economy and especially his date for the restoration of equilibrium in the balance of payments. It went on:

"...the survey holds that a continuing outflow of long-term capital will postpone overall balance at least until early 1967." The Investor's Chronicle dismisses Government claims with these words: "'Whitehall's claims are dismissed almost casually. Of the £250m. improvement in the balance of payments between 1964 and 1965, £100m. follows from better terms of trade, £75m. follows from the economically disruptive imports surcharge, £30m. from postponed debt service in North America and thus only minimal amounts derive from any direct deflation of demand."

It continues: "U.N. says that there are two ways in which the U.K. might secure the surplus necessary to restore the monetary position....The first, to hold down the growth rate for some years; the second, to increase the U.K.'s competitive standards...None of this makes cheerful reading for the next Government. Implicitly, the short-term impact of Mr. George Brown's harangue on prices and incomes is stamped as derisory and a sharp contrast is made with the rise of 10% in actual hourly wage earnings."

The final note is very gloomy indeed: "After all, says the U.N., the U.K. has had the shakiest payments structure, the largest (relative) loss in world trade and still 'the smallest increase in average earnings and labour costs per unit of output' during the sixties. So (with Sterling at \$2.80) room for manoeuvre hardly exists....."

MORE WARNING SIGNALS FOR THE BRITISH ECONOMY by an economics reporter

I have already mentioned that there were signs of inflationary pressure in the U.S. Wholesale prices in that country were reported on March 18th, in the Financial Times as standing at 105.3, an increase of 4.1% in the last 12 months. The Guardian commented, on March 19th, that this is the highest point since the Korean war. One of the White House economic advisors in the Kennedy era has advocated that the 7%^{tax} credit for investment be suspended and the U.S. Labour Department has been pulling out all the stops to attempt to impose a guiding light for wage increases.

Another way in which the U.S. balance of payments problem is beginning to affect Britain - and, indeed, most of Europe - arises from the fact that U.S. companies are remitting more profits home. This is putting pressure on interest rates because the companies have to borrow locally instead of financing their own investment. Moreover, any general increase in world interest rates throws extra burdens on the primary producing countries.

The combined affect of these factors is to create conditions where there could very well be a slowing down in the increase of world trade. The recent improvement in Britain's export performance is entirely due to the general increase in world trade. In fact Britain's performance lagged behind the world (6% as against 8%). Anti-inflationary measures in the U.S. will also tend to hit British exports far more than those of other exporting countries.

ANSWER, BROTHER BROWN !

It would be nice to welcome Brother George Brown to Nottingham as a spokesman of Britain's most progressive union.

Unfortunately, he is speaking for policies which are not so easy to welcome. In particular, his present incomes policy should be sternly rejected by every trade union worthy of the name.

At the Labour Party Conference last year, West Nottingham Party had a motion down asking for a genuinely socialist incomes policy. Unfortunately it was never discussed, because the agenda was carefully controlled to prevent it from being reached.

Here is the speech which would have been made by Leo Keely, the Nottingham fireman, if he had been called.

Can you answer it, Mr. Brown ?

THE NEED FOR A SOCIALIST INCOMES POLICY

I am well qualified, coming from Nottingham, to speak on a socialist incomes policy. It was a Nottingham man who started the idea. His name was Robin Hood. His policy, which still fevers our imagination, was to rob the rich to pay the poor. It is time that this government of ours followed that inspired example as contained in Clause Four.

We are not suggesting that we can reach Utopia in the first year of a Labour Government. We are well aware of what state the country was in when the Tories were thrown out. Yet we are certain that put to them properly, the working people of this country will make sacrifices if it is necessary. But to ask them to make these sacrifices it must be shown that basic changes in the structure and control of the economy are taking place. There must be a growth in their power and a reduction in the arbitrary powers of the employers. The working people have not been attracted towards any incomes policy whilst they see this Labour Government dragging its feet on steel and land nationalisation. If as much zeal had been devoted to controlling the bankers as to criticising trade unionists this party would have a far greater show of unity in conference today.

What are the preconditions of a socialist incomes policy ? I would say that our resolution lays them down quite clearly. It certainly cannot begin with a situation where many workers in this country are receiving less than £10 per week. If Mr. Brown really thinks that this is a living wage, then I would suggest that he attempts what Ernest Bevin did when he was making his case for the dockers: try to live on it.

It is a scandal that an incomes policy should be under discussion without the firm expression for and action by the government on the question of equal pay for women. Above all it should never be entertained before a guaranteed minimum wage is actually established - and when one talks of a minimum wage that also means a living wage. However serious is the state of the economy, there is one reform that costs nothing. The trades unions must have the right to judge from the findings of opening the employers' books what sort of an incomes policy they should have. At the moment they are unaware of the facts as to how much they are being exploited. Mr. Brown recently pointed out that wage increases are out in the open and can be seen by all. Mr. Woodcock told the Institute of Directors last year that they were too scared to disclose their profits. Of course they want to conceal them. We can guess at some of them, but generally we know far too little.

The vital secrets are being kept hidden. What we say is: "Open the books." Let us have everything out in the open. Let us know whether these people are cheating the incomes and prices policy or not. The boss and tax office see through Pay As You Earn that they have the last ounce out of the employee. Why, therefore, shouldn't the unions be allowed to assist the Inland Revenue to stop the employer's tax fiddles and expense account rackets ? Until the unions have this sort of information their members are bound to suffer. Why shouldn't we scan the books ? We can study the accounts of local councils down to the last penny. What is so sacred about profit ? The present incomes policy keeps us in the dark and the employers can see we are blindfolded. Mr. Brown has done nothing whatsoever to take any power away from the employers but we are constantly hearing threats against fundamental trade union rights. Trade unionists throughout this land have built this movement in hard won battles and they will not succumb to threats or intimidation wherever it comes from. I will say finally that the first blow against these threats will be at this conference when you vote for this resolution.