

# The Week

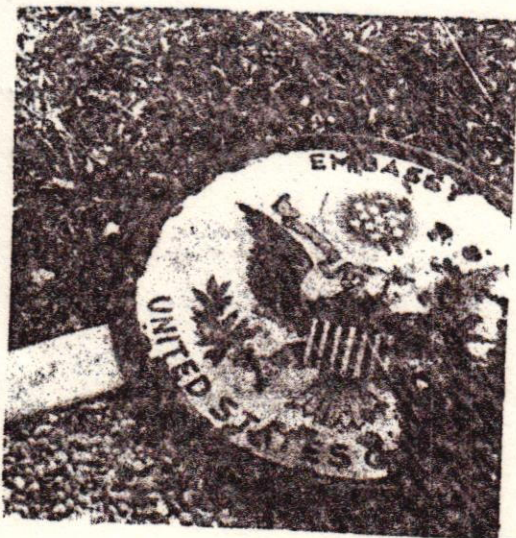
who  
are we  
working  
for ?

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

Volume 9 No. 8 February 21st 1968

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# VIETNAM



**ALL OUT**

for

**MAR. 17<sup>th</sup>**

DEMONSTRATION

71 Onslow Gardens, London N.10. Subscription: £2 per annum & pro rata

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# THE WEEK

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALLY  
Minded People  
6¢

# VICTIM

ALL OUT  
MAR. 17  
1968



Subscription: \$5 per year in advance  
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### ALL OUT FOR MARCH 17th

The Americans' military position in South Vietnam has deteriorated: the reports which appeared in most British papers about the casualties U.S. forces have suffered in the battle of Hue are a small indication of the scale of the defeats inflicted by the N.L.F. The Americans and their stooges are quite unable to prevent the N.L.F. from attacking such targets as Westmoreland's headquarters and the presidential palace of the South Vietnam regime. A certain disintegration has taken place in the ranks of Johnson's puppets: witness the resignation - at this time! - of Ky.

In this situation all those who are appalled by the suffering of the Vietnamese people should do their utmost to give political support to liberation forces. Calling for negotiations, restricting one's demands to calling for an end to the bombing so that the "talks can start", etc., is - regardless of one's intentions - doing the Vietnamese people a disservice. What the Vietnamese people want and desperately need is complete and final victory. From another point of view, a pause in the fighting whilst they regain time to reinforce could very well suit the Americans.

It is in this context that we must view two things: the attack on the V.S.C. in the last week's issue of Comment, a journal of the Communist Party, and the March 17th demonstration. The 4-page attack in Comment requires a full and detailed answer, not because of the profundity of the arguments but because the issues raised deserve a thorough airing and discussion in the whole radical and anti-war movement. We should not be diverted from making a political assessment by the witch-hunting style in which the article was written. Betty Reid should remember that this is 1968; in the past it might have been possible to have frightened Communist Party members and sympathisers with the Trotskyist bogey but today that cuts very little ice. We will be publishing both a full reply from ourselves and some of the indignant letters on the subject that we have received from our readers.

But the best answer to those who seek to oppose taking a position of full solidarity with the Vietnamese people against American imperialism is to make the March 17th demonstration as big and as militant as possible. We learn from the demonstrations organisers that hundreds of letters of support have been received for the demonstrations, that both the stickers and the leaflets have been reprinted three times and that committees of support have sprung up all over the country. Everything indicates a very powerful support indeed. There are just over three weeks to go, this time should be used to work up even more support to give an answer to U.S. imperialism and its British supporters. In this process we shall also demonstrate just how wrong the opponents of the solidarity position are. All out for March 17th!

**BOSSSES' MAGAZINE SAYS "BRITISH WORKERS NOT SO WELL OFF"** by Dave Windsor

The Labour Government has done much to re-inforce the very reactionary argument that all of Britain's ills are due to the fact that the British workers are over-paid and over-protected as compared with those of our export rivals. It is rather surprising to find a well-argued and well-documented refutation of this myth in the latest issue of Management Today, a journal which, as its name implies, caters for managerial staff in large businesses.

The refutation comes in a special report in the latest issue of the magazine. The journal draws the conclusions that British workers are among the worst off in western Europe. Simply in terms of wages, the British worker gets less than his counterpart in Germany and Luxemburg and is only a little better off than Dutch or Belgian workers. And compared with the average European worker he gets much less from his employer in the shape of social security, holidays, pension, sickness aid and bonuses.

Even the Italian worker gets more in the shape of fringe benefits than workers do in this country. An Italian also gets much more of his total reward for work in the form of fringe benefits. Only 49% of his reward for effort comes in wage-form compared with 84% for the British working man.

Another very significant feature is that the wages in Common Market countries are rising much faster than they are in Britain. Between 1960 and 1966 wage rates in Holland, Italy and Germany all rose by more than 70% compared with 44% in Britain.

For the European worker the promise of increasing prosperity in the years ahead seems real enough, the magazine comments, but for the British worker now living on an unpleaant diet of wage freeze and stop-go, the prospect of greater prosperity seem dim.

The magazine concludes that this situation may go a long way to explain Britain's less-than-impressive economic growth compared with the Common Market countries.

This is an indication of how far the Labour Party leaders and some of their trade union hangers-on have strayed from the path of even reformism. The most far-seeing of the bosses are beginning to realise that present Government policies have many features which are damaging to British capitalism. Of course one can have no illusions in this section of the bourgeoisie - really the whole situation is an indication of the parlous state of British capitalism. Instead of trying to patch up the crumbling edifice, Labour leaders should be proclaiming that only socialism can solve the structural problem of British industry.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**MANCHESTER VIETNAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN DEMONSTRATION**

This Saturday, February 24th, commencing from Manchester University Union, Oxford Rd., at 2.30 p.m. (please be early). Come along and help win support for the March 17th mass demonstration.

The Hull Unemployed Workers' Committee held its first public meeting on Friday, last week, (the 16th) with about 130 in attendance. It is significant that none of Hull's M.P.s attended - all finding excuses. The meeting, whilst not as large as some had expected, was quite a success and the committee's work has been publicised and strengthened.

The chairman has sent the following letter to all labour organisations in the Hull area:

"Unemployment in the Hull area is the worst since 1940 - over 6,500 jobless. A group of those jobless workers have organised a Hull Unemployed Workers' Committee to fight unemployment. The Committee is pressing for the rights of all the unemployed. Amongst other things, the Hull Committee has been formed to see that all men entering the Labour Exchange get their rights. The Committee has given out tens of thousands of leaflets to all the unemployed entering the Exchange on pay out days (every Thursday and Friday). These leaflets have provided a very useful service to the men signing on.

The procedure facing unemployed workers at the Exchanges is very complicated and there is no guarantee that such workers automatically receive the money they are entitled to. Practical information on all the following aspects of social security has been given out: Unemployed benefit, earnings related benefit, income tax rebate, local grants, school dinners, etc. And even more important, the Workers' Committee has taken up and won many cases of delays to claims, the wage stop has been fought successfully and the Committee has usefully represented workers on the Appeals Tribunal.

The Hull Unemployed Workers' Committee is making clear that the policy of unemployment has definite political causes. In recent leaflets the Labour Government and the employers have been severely criticised for their unacceptable actions. All unemployed workers are being urged to join the Committee, involve more workers in the struggle, make demands on local councillors, M.P.s, trade union officials, etc. Unemployed workers are being urged not to accept any jobs offered at the Labour Exchange at below union rates.

Unemployment is still going up. We must emphasise the importance of solidarity between workers with jobs and those without. And the campaign must be national. The Hull Unemployed Workers' Committee has much to do to consolidate its own position locally, but it is keen to hear about similar developments elsewhere with a view to joining forces, perhaps on a regional basis in the first instance. Your observations on the situation and any practical ideas for action would be most welcome. Local contacts in your area would also be most welcome. Do you think it is useful to consider a late March date (when unemployment is likely to be at its highest) as a time for a massive unemployment protest on a regional or national basis? Quick and urgent action by workers, both in work and out, is vital. Contact me at 6, Hardane, Orchard Park, Hull.

Yours fraternally,

Stan Suddaby (chairman H.U.W.C.)"

I hope all interested Week readers will respond to this letter.

## NATIONALISTS HAVE BIGGEST SUPPORT IN SCOTLAND SAYS "EXPRESS" POLL

A Daily Express poll of public opinion taken in Scotland between February 12 and 15 puts the Scottish Nationalists ahead of both the Tories and Labour. In answer to the question: "In an early General Election, for which party would you vote?", 20% said Labour; 30%, Tory; 4.5% Liberal; 32.1% Scottish Nationalist; and there were 13.4% "don't knows". To the question: "Irrespective of party are you in favour of Home Rule for Scotland?", 52.8% said "Yes"; 34.2%, "No"; and there were 13.0% "Don't knows."

43.6% favoured a totally independent Scottish Parliament with full control over Scottish money and a separate foreign policy and Armed Forces. The rest, 56.4%, favoured a Scottish Parliament which left foreign policy issues, etc. to Westminster. Exactly half of those questioned thought that the Secretary of State for Scotland, Mr. William Ross, was not doing a good job, while only 29.5 thought he was. There was an even bigger margin on the question of whether people were satisfied with the Labour Government's policies for Scotland: no less than 79.5% were dissatisfied. However, only 33.3% thought the Tories would do better, and more than half (51.7%) thought they wouldn't.

These figures are very alarming for Labour. Nearly every one of Labour's 44 Scottish seats would be lost to the Nationalists if half the swing indicated by these figures took place at a general election. Just now this could still be a temporary phenomenon, perhaps being reversed as the workers saw the prospect of another Tory regime. However, if the present policies continue much of the loss to the Nationalists could become permanent. Under these circumstances the prospects of another Labour Government would be very dim (especially as the same kind of thing could happen in Wales). The right wing is constantly accusing the left of stabbing the Labour Party in the back. These figures show that Mr. Wilson and his right wing supporters are on the point of permanently destroying one of the mainstays of any future Labour Government. Who, then, is being disloyal?

from a special. correspondent

### MEETING TO MARK THE 3rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF MALCOLM X

On Saturday February 24th  
at the A.C.T.T. Hall, 2, Soho Square, London W. 1.  
(nearest tube Tottenham Court Rd.)

Commencing at 7.30

Speakers include: Dr. David Pitt sponsored by: Universal Coloured  
Obi B. Egbuna People's Association  
J. Amartey Bertrand Russell  
Mike Zamora Peace Foundation  
Pat Jordan The Week  
R.S. Webb.

Please make this meeting as widely known as possible.

It is difficult to know what Anne Costello is trying to prove with her article on Ernest Mandel's "An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory" (THE WEEK - Feb. 14th. 1968). Is she criticising Mandel's presentation or Marx's economic theories?

The pamphlet was originally presented as a course of lectures organised by the Paris Federation of the United Socialist Party in 1963. It set out to acquaint his listeners with the basic elements of Marxist economics. We can assume that the subject was fairly new to his audience. In one weekend - which was the length of the course, and even aspirant Marxists have to eat and sleep - it would not be possible to acquaint the students with Marx's economic theory as well as the criticisms of Joan Robinson, Sweezy, Baran etc. as well as his bourgeois critics, to say nothing of the intricacies of Keynesian economic theory. For this the reader will have to wait for the English edition of Mandel's "Treatise on Marxist Economics" where, no doubt, the criticisms raised by Anne Costello and the others will be fully dealt with.

Is it really necessary for Mandel to explain within the compass of such a short outline why pre-Keynesian and non-Marxist economists ignored the concept that the increasing organic composition of capital eventually causes a slump? Keynes' own research into the workings of capitalism led him to the confirmation of this theory because he had more objectivity and insight than his fellow bourgeois economists.

When we come to Anne Costello's criticism of Marx's labour theory of value we are on firmer ground. It is a crude simplification to state that "Marx says the price of an article is determined by the amount of labour put into it." Marx was no economic simpleton and as well aware as Miss Costello that prices fluctuate with supply and demand. In Volume III of CAPITAL he wrote quite clearly that market-prices and market-value would continue to differ, the value of a commodity being determined by the labour-time in it in only "a vague and meaningless form". For commodities to exchange with each other at their value, i.e. based on the labour-time contained in them, three conditions are necessary. There must be (1) an established market; (2) large quantities exchanged, and (3) no monopoly.

Prices will fluctuate according to supply and demand but over a definite period market-prices over or below value will balance out. The fluctuations will centre round the basic value and market prices cannot be understood without reference to the labour theory of value.

When Marx wrote CAPITAL British capitalism enjoyed almost a monopoly position on the world market. The United States, Germany and France were only on the threshold of large-scale capitalist development. With their emergence as competitors in the world market and with the increasing drive toward monopoly there are far greater divergences between market-prices and exchange value based on labour-time than in Marx's day. He could only see the beginnings of this and neither Marx nor Engels ignored it, just as they did not ignore the effect of the class struggle on wages and the living standards of the working class.

A reply to Anne Costello - continued

CAPITAL is not a Bible inspired by divine authority. Marx did not write the last word about capitalism. He was a scientist working in a laboratory - 19th. century Britain - not a prophet with an infallible pre-view of the future. On the basis of his scientific research he was able to expose the workings of the capitalist system which economists till then had only succeeded in obscuring. His analysis has stood the test of time and it is Marx's critics who have usually been confounded by events.

Ernest Mandel's pamphlet is a very useful introduction to a vast subject. It is, however, only an introduction and one can only hope that those who read it will be persuaded to a wider reading, both of Marx and his critics.

EDINBURGH STUDENTS PROTEST

We have received the following letter:

Dear Sir,

We should like to protest at the heavy fines of £10 each (the maximum permitted) imposed upon the thirteen people arrested at the demonstration against Dow Chemicals Ltd, at the George Hotel on February 8th. For all those arrested this was a first offence. The demonstration involved no attack on person or property, but those guilty of street violence have frequently been given smaller fines. The issue was prejudged by the Burgh Court; a policeman nodded at the accused before the session started; 'You're in for £10 today'. The bailie first sentenced all thirteen to pay £15 each; then it was pointed out to him by the accused that £10 was the maximum fine. Could there be any clearer indication of deliberate victimisation? (Particularly since at least two of the accused walked out of the hotel of their own accord, whilst others present who did likewise were not even arrested).

The bailie said 'Edinburgh citizens are tired of students behaving in this sort of fashion'. (Not all of the accused were students, anyway). This clearly indicates that the Muggeridge issue - quite irrelevant to the genocide in Vietnam which was the point of the demonstration - influenced the scale of the fines. The bailie claimed that it was profits from firms like Dow that kept students at university. This after any statements relating to the demonstrators' motives, other than 'moral reasons' (given in those two words only), were ruled out as 'propaganda speeches' by the bailie. Is this justice? We appeal to the public to contribute to our appeal fund to help the victims pay their fines. All contributions will be gratefully acknowledged by Brian Lavery at the above address. (Edinburgh University Union, Park Place, Edinburgh 8).

Yours faithfully,

Robert Coddily, President Napier College Labour Club; Brian Lavery, Secretary Edinburgh University Labour Club; Brian Gilmore, Chairman, Young Socialists, Edinburgh South CLP; Ian D. Soane, Secretary, Edinburgh University Liberal Club, Executive Member Scottish League of Young Liberals; Peter Yeo, President, Edinburgh University Catholics Students Union.



"The starting point is our belief that the community must equip itself to take charge of its own destiny and no longer be ruled by market forces beyond its control." Thus read the 1964 Labour Party manifesto. Rarely can those words have seemed so like a rather unpleasant sick joke than during the last few weeks. For the confirmation of the extent of the Government's intentions to restrict personal consumption became clear at just the same time that factory closures revealed to those in doubt the results of 'rationalisation' and regional redeployment in an uncontrolled capitalist economy. It has become increasingly clear that the Government has abandoned most forms of direct planning and is now relying almost entirely on clumsy manipulations of personal consumption as their only large scale tactic in attempting to bring about the economic recovery and rationalisation which is now the limit of their ambitions.

It became clear last week that the Government appear to be planning for virtually no rise at all in personal consumption over at least the next two years. The calculations of Peter Jay, Economics Editor of The Times, led him to the conclusion that, from the way in which Jenkins is talking, consumers' expenditure and private productive investment are left with next to nothing extra in 1968 and with perhaps £650m in 1969. This, it seems, is the extent to which they are willing to take control of the economy. And it is a weak and clumsy form of control; however much Wilson tries to pretend that money saved in Government expenditure and taken in taxation helps the balance of payments, there are many economists today who question the link, given absence of direction elsewhere in the economy, and certainly the connection is a very complex and indirect one.

The abdication of all pretence at even the 'socialist planning' (sic) referred to in the '64 manifesto became quite clear with the news of the factory closures following mergers. Woolwich, Harlow, Sydenham, Coventry - and this is only the beginning. Give firms in a competitive market incentives to go to low wage areas such as the north east, and they will go, regardless of the cost to workers in the closed factories. Allow massive mergers to go through, and 'rationalisation' will lead to unemployment. And yet the Government looks on approvingly. Indeed, according to The Times of Friday, 16th February, it was Edward Short's threat to AEI that the GPO would be forced to buy their equipment in Sweden that led them to cut costs and move to the north east. Who's backing Britain now? In a public relations job for Weinstock, Robert Jones of The Times wrote, 'It is no help if such action is presented as a ruthless lack of concern for the workers' and went on to revealingly to say that 'His stand may well make it easier for other industrialists to take unpopular decisions.' And now, Wedgwood Benn warns the Cabinet that many more mass redundancies are in the offing as a result of mergers (Times 17 February).

These two aspects of economic news reveal the extent to which the Government has abandoned all pretence at allowing society 'to take charge of its own destiny'. All it is left with is consumption to fiddle around with. And to what end? To promote a big increase in exports. Yet only Germany of the larger industrial countries exports more of her productions than Britain. And besides, as David Johnson observes (NLR 47), an export led boom is notoriously vulnerable to the fluctuations of world trade.

## WHO ARE WE WORKING FOR?

Statement from Bristol New Left

Most people work at least 40 hours a week, a period during which a person is awake and active about 84 hours. That is, approximately half the time of a man's life is spent working. What kind of activity is it? For too many of us, the work we do has no meaning. For us, the relationship to the employer is rather like that of the machine: he keeps us well oiled, and we make money for him. The number of employers is small, the number of those employed is large, yet the few employers direct the workers, and own and keep what the workers produce.

How can this situation be changed? The answer is to nationalise all the industries which are privately owned, making them instead the property of the public, of the people, who will in this way be the owners of what they produce. Nationalising an industry has nothing to do with whether an industry is efficient or not, but only with whether the money it earns goes to those who produce the goods. An industry will only reward the workers if they own it. Nationalisation, as the Labour government has promised it, means public ownership, ownership by the workers of the industries in which they work. That is, of all the industries. The present government promised to begin with steel. But in three years only one major industry has been nationalised. Contrary to election promises, and to the ideals of the working men who founded the Labour Party and who voted the government in, this government does not want to nationalise industry and take the profits of industry away from a few capitalists in order to redistribute the gains of work among the people who do work. In order that the people of Britain do not realise that the government intends to break its promises, it talks of 'efficiency', 'growth rate', 'the economy', but these words only obscure the fact that they do not intend to nationalise industry or redistribute the wealth of Britain.

It is clear that the fact of state ownership is an empty one if the industry taken over by the state remains the same as it was before. What kind of socialist government is it where the men who work the railways have to go on strike against their bureaucratic overlords who are themselves meant to represent a government whose basic aim should be to put the control of an industry into the hands of those who work in it. The men who run the railways are, in fact, capitalists disguised as civil servants. They come from the same schools as the industrialists, and the same universities. These civil servants have no interest at all in giving the railways to the railwaymen who are the rightful owners. It is no good pretending to nationalise an industry. If the real control of the industry does not pass into the hands of the workers, the industry is nationalised only on paper, and the control of it still belongs to the small group of privileged people in this country who effectively control everything.

Capitalism has taken over nationalisation in Britain. Unprofitable industries are nationalised in order that they may lose money at public expense, while private industry makes use of the services they provide. The railways carry goods from one factory to another, helping the owners of the factories to make a big profit, while we, the public, pay for running the railway. Pretended or fake nationalisation is just another means by which our money and our rights are handed over to someone else. Until all the industries, including those that make big profits, belong to the public, the public will continue to pay while someone else makes a profit.

Apart from exploiting the work done by the men he employs, the relationship between a businessman, whose first aim is to make money, and the worker, is necessarily measured by what the worker produces and how quickly and cheaply he does it. The man who wants to make money must see the men who work for him in the same way as he sees machines. However, at least the workers know that this is what the employer does. Worse than that, our Labour government have endorsed the capitalist view of men as efficient super-machines, makers of money for someone else. The government got in on promises of quite another kind, on votes got under false pretences from the working men of Britain - the seamen and the dockers and the miners whose industries are now being made more efficient at the expense of the men who work in them. Wilson says that Britain must raise itself by its own exertions. The exertions however are those of the workers, the only things that rise are prices and profits.

All those who work in the so-called 'nationalised' industries deserve the support of all the people of Britain for whatever attempts they make, by strikes or threats, to influence and eventually control the industries themselves, taking power away from the civil servants who, like the government, are the servants of private industry and who run public industry not for the working people but for the government and private industry.

When public industries are really run by the people, the benefits of automation can be used to reduce the hours each man works - and he will of course receive his share of the profits just the same. But while industries are owned privately, automation will be used only to reduce the cost of labour, the amount paid out in wages, and thus to increase the profits of the private owners.

The situation in Britain today is not standing still. The small measure of effective control on the shop floor which has been won (after years of industrial struggle) is being taken by the government and the management of private industry, acting together. What control the workers have over the conditions of labour and its rewards the government hope to end, and they hope to do it in two ways: first, by 'productivity' agreements which bypass earlier agreements on working conditions (the rule book) and, second, by denying his right to strike, making it impossible for the worker to do anything about the agreements.

A typical 'productivity' deal is that agreed between the ETU and NFEA (the contracting employers). This deal has given the employers the right to pay electricians according to 'grades' where, in the absence of 'formal qualifications' the grading is arbitrarily up to the employer. What this has meant is that, first, thousands of electricians have been downgraded losing as much as £3 10s a week on wages that had previously been bargained for. Second, the employers have been able to ignore the old agreement under which one electrician worked with an adult mate, and the mates have been downgraded to labourers. This loss in control over conditions of work has as its bedfellow the big cut in wages.

What can the electricians do about this? Nothing at all officially. The ETU executive have signed the agreement. The decision to do this was arrived at by the union executive without any vote whatever being taken on the matter by members of the union or their delegates. The union executive which signs such an agreement cannot officially endorse any strike action against it. Any protest the electricians make against an 'agreement' which has cost most of them wages and many their jobs has got to be unofficial. And that, under the terms of the agreement and the Prices and Incomes Act, is illegal.

The coffin into which the ETU executive has nailed the future of the electricians is a 'negotiating body' known as the Joint Industrial Board. Its function can only by the grossest perversion of the truth be called negotiation. The creation of the Joint Industrial Board has meant for the electricians in one fell swoop a speed up, redundancy, conditional overtime, the loss of the right to strike and, finally, official recognition by the board and the union for the bosses' lack-list of militant workers.

This deal, a disaster for the electricians, is a good example of the kind of deal (and its results) which has been and is being proposed for many workers in Britain. It has many names - decasualisation for the dockers; the 'transport revolution' or the miracle of the containers for transport workers; the 'efficient utilisation of labour' at the oilworks, Fawley; manning deals on the railways. All these names are blinds to cover a general attempt by private industry and the government to extract more work from fewer men under conditions in which the worker has no say at all about what he does.

Productivity agreements, the Prices and Incomes Policy, incomes restraint, the vetting of wage claims, restrictions on trade union negotiating rights and practices, and the open threats of legislation and prison against unofficial strikers, all form part of the Labour government's service to capitalism, to private industry. Why? Private industry needs money. In order to survive, its profits must be large enough to make it worthwhile for those who are already rich to stay in it and get richer. Otherwise they won't bother. The bait which the government is offering to the capitalist is a rise in the profits of private industry. Therefore wages must be kept low, more work must be got out of the same number (or fewer) men in a given time, and, finally, where fewer men can be made to serve, serve they must while the rest are made 'redundant'.

Why should a Labour government, a government in theory committed to socialism, agree to this? The reason is that, in a capitalist economy, as Britain's is, NO government can act in any other way, unless that government attacks the system itself. Even this attack could be crippled by the fact that the British government itself is part of a capitalist political system. While we live under a capitalist system our action is always defensive. Those who run and own the legal and financial prison in which we live will never weary in their onslaughts upon the little we have, and, unless they go, and the whole system of capitalist power with them, we have very little chance of more.

What is to be done?

- 1) Reject entirely the productivity deals and rationalisation schemes offered by the management of private or 'nationalised' industry.
- 2) Put an end to the Prices and Incomes Act, which is loaded in favour of the management.
- 3) Fight for the recognition of the right to strike and of free negotiation between workers and management at all levels.

Demand:

- 1) The complete nationalisation of the economy, and the end of capitalism in Britain.
- 2) Full workers' control over all industries and organisations so nationalised, and over the British economy.

Fight for these policies in the political organisations of the Labour movement. Work for democratic unions controlled by the lay members.

If you have any comments on the above, contact the Bristol New Left, Secretary: G. Edwards, Basement Flat, 3 Windsor Terrace, Bristol 8.

#### POLISH COMPOSER GETS THREE YEARS based upon A.F.P. report

On February 19th, a Warsaw court sentenced Janusz Szpotanski, the composer of the satirical opera, Those Who Keep Quiet and Those Who Chatter, to three years in prison. At the end of a secret trial, Mr. Szpotanski, aged 34, was found Guilty of "spreading false information on political, economic and social relations in Poland of a nature to harm the authority and prestige of the state". Mr. Szpotanski was also ordered to pay the costs.

The opera satirised Warsaw's officials and bureaucrats - party and state alike. Among the 16 witness at the trial was Nina Karsow, recently sentenced to three years' gaol for "collecting documents hostile to People's Poland."

To those who had great hopes of Poland democratising itself after the "October Revolution" of 1956, these incidents must be extremely disappointing. It is very clear that genuine socialist democracy will only come to the countries of the Soviet bloc after organs have been created which are capable of leading a struggle against the bureaucrats who have political control.

In the meantime it is the duty of every communist and socialist to protest against these trials. It is to be hoped that the British Communist Party, which did protest (be it rather mildly) against the recent trial of 3 Russian writers, will make its disquiet known to the Polish authorities. If it fails to this, it will be understandable if many draw the conclusion that it only moves when there is a great deal of publicity about one of these trials.

## OLYMPIC COMIC CAPERS

by George Curvin

What a farce it is to think of South Africa's agreement to send a racially mixed team to the Olympic Games in Mexico as a breach in the wall of apartheid. On the very day that this information was blazoned round the world the Coloured people of the Cape Province lost their right to send (White) M.P.s to the House of Assembly.

Even in the field of sports there is to be no let-up on the strict segregation of the races within the frontiers of the apartheid republic. White, Black, Coloured and Asiatic sportsmen will continue to carry on their activities in their own separate sports grounds. Needless to say, the facilities used by the ruling Whites are vastly superior to those available for the non-whites. Furthermore, the great majority of the African people in South Africa are undernourished and live in conditions not very conducive to physical prowess. How, under these circumstances are the "integrated" Olympic teams to be chosen? Presumably, like every other country, the apartheid republic will want to be represented in Mexico City by her top athletes. How can these be chosen if they are denied the opportunity to compete against each other, leaving out the important question of unequal training facilities? Just to ask the question is to expose its utter absurdity.

The team is to be chosen by a committee of six Black and six White selectors. Will they sit together to make their choice? On South African sports grounds, spectators are strictly segregated. Will the Black selectors be allowed into White grounds to sit alongside their White colleagues to choose the teams? Can one really imagine the White Herrenvolk of South Africa allowing a dark-skinned man or woman to pronounce judgement over a White man or woman? If the International Olympics Committee believes this it does not know the White South Africans.

This decision to allow South Africa to participate in the Mexico Games makes a farce of the anti-racial clauses of the Olympic Charter. It should not be left to the African nations to fight against the decision. Britain, as well as the socialist countries should back their action by withdrawing from the games unless the decision is reversed. There must be no truck with the inhuman system of apartheid, either on the sports field or off it.

## U.S. FORCED TO CLIMB DOWN BY BRITISH UNIONISTS from a Lancs. reader

Pressure from British trade unions has forced the United States' Government to drop its notorious "anti-strike" clause in civilian contracts at U.S. bases in Britain. On direct instructions from Washington, a new industrial relations charter has been drawn up. The clause banned employment of anyone belonging to a union or organisation which would advocate strikes! Even the right-wing General and Municipal Workers' Union was prominent in the campaign to get the clause thrown out. This union has members at the American base at Burtonwood, Lancs., and was forced to lodge protests with the U.S. Embassy. In future, all that will be required is that civilians working at American military bases will be asked to sign a form agreeing by the general rules and regulations. About 800 workers are affected by this ruling. It is shameful that the Government, despite many requests, made no moves to put pressure on the Americans to reverse their anti-union regulations.