

14

THE

Week

A news analysis for socialists 9d.

THE WEEK

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

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THE STORY OF THE TRUELINE STRIKE,
SUPPLEMENT.

volume 1 number 14 April 2nd, 1964.

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EDITORS' LETTER

Last week's issue was a success. We didn't sell as many as some people had hoped but by-and-large costs will have been covered and some hundreds of people will have seen the Week for the first time. In addition many thousands of leaflets were distributed at the Easter March and the Young Socialist conference. A number of our readers took quantities to sell at various events.

We didn't manage to get out a printed issue because the printer who given us to understand he could do the job said he was too busy - almost at the last moment. Several of our supporters spent a great of time (neglecting their jobs in some cases) trying to find an alternative but without success. One very positive result was that we have now a much clearer idea of the economics of having our journal printed. And it is in the light of that knowledge that we can say that this almost an immediate perspective, but more about this next week.

THE EASTER CELEBRATIONS

While twenty, or thirty, thousand people were marching on Trafalgar Square - depending upon whom you rely for your information - and while the Young Socialists were scandalising the national press by emphasising their socialism as well as their youth, television viewers who stayed at home were watching dour-faced commentators march up and down on the sidelines of what has become known as the "battle of Clacton."

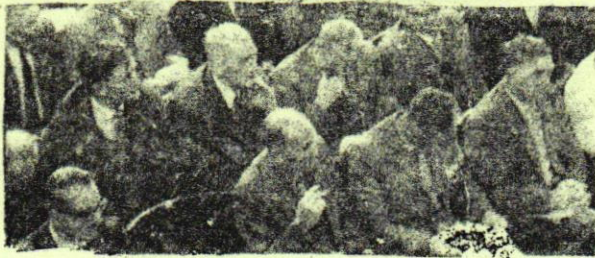
Teenage punchups are not new to this country. Scandals on football trains and slashed seats in cinemas have been routine stories in the popular press for as long as most of us can remember. But the extreme ferocity of the Clacton affair, where "mods" and "rockers" clashed to batter both one another and the rain-sodden amenities of the town, should provoke thought among socialists no less than among the clerics and cheer-leaders whose social task it is to nobble the young. The first self-conscious explanation made ^{by} one young mod in answer to the inquiries of the interviewers, was that "we're bored." To the ratepayer of Clacton, writing in anguish to The Times, this is unimportant: what matters is the valuable property which has been wrecked. But to anyone who is interested in the human condition, leave alone to any socialist, the scandal is not at all in smashed seats and broken windows, but in the appalling mistreatment of young people which the incident reveals. How strange ^{that} someone aged 18 could possibly "be bored" will, one hopes, be a total mystery to the people in the none-too-distant future. But today, as one watches young people being evicted from a prison called school and then, if they are lucky, swallowed up into another prison called work, one is almost persuaded that boredom is "natural."

The good thing about this Easter was that many times more youngsters were arrested for demonstrating outside a NATO base, than were nobbled in the Clacton bust-up. (Although careful readers of the daily papers could be excused for missing this fact.) But the bad thing was, and remains, that the socialist alternative, which alone can liberate young people from the moral desert which stretches around them on all sides is presented only in a halting and desultry manner by a handful of people.

Socialism as a key to the opening of all prisons; as the liberator of initiative and still on a scale unprecedented and full of delights, as a new human landscape in which a profusion of beautiful relationships and things may grow with perplexing richness; socialism as the final death of boredom: this is a vista which is too seldom sketched out by its adherents. It is a vista which is needed by the young.

For some people in ^{high} places in the Labour Party to talk of disbanding the Young Socialists in this situation is not merely absurd: it is culpable. While Clactons can take place at all, Labour needs, and can build, a mass youth movement numbering hundreds of thousands. But not if it chooses as its organising tools the muzzle and the halter.

N.B. Reports of the Young Socialist Annual Conference arrived too late to be included in this issue. We will publish those next week.



Trade union week

HULL DOCKS DISPUTE

by a Hull industrial correspondent

The spirit and intention of the negotiating machinery in the docks industry is that local disputes over manning and piece work rates should be settled locally. Yet, after 15 months of bargaining, a series of firm, spontaneous strikes, and a current ban on overtime, the Hull Port Employers are refusing further negotiations over the issues of manning scales and piece rates for unloading packaged timber, cargoes of which first arrived in Hull in January, 1964.

Packaged, as opposed to loose, lumber of course increases the rate of unloading - it is a straightforward technical improvement which increases the docker's productivity. Since the packaging is done in Canada before the lumber is loaded, it is not an improvement for which the dock employers can claim any credit. Yet the employers began with a demand that the piece rate applying to lumber cargoes should be halved which produced a wholly unacceptable bonus from the job. Cargoes continued to arrive throughout 1963, and on each occasion bargaining proceeded over the number of men, and the piece rate. This occurred in March, July, October and November.

The outcome was that, by January 1964, the gap between the two sides had been narrowed to the difference between a manning scale of 11 or 10 men. Failure to agree resulted in a series of unofficial strikes in the first week of February, and the institution of an unofficial ban on overtime, which is still being operated, and as a result of which, Hull dockers are losing up to a third of normal earnings. The increase in productivity (applying the manning scale demanded by the men) resulting from the packaged cargoes as compared with loose timber, is 88%. The dockers' demands would result in an increase in earnings on these cargoes of 59%. Most of the Dock Employers being private companies, it is impossible to tell what the extra profit will be to the employer: the whole subject of their costs and turnover is shrouded in mystery, unless and until their books are opened for analysis by the unions. Yet on the facts available, it is quite clear that the dockers are not claiming the whole of the increase in output in extra earnings. Despite this, the employers have said that the men could strike for one, two, or six months, for all they cared. They would not shift their final offer. The union has plodded its way along the constitutional path without any real sense of urgency, when a much firmer approach early in the negotiations would have been more fruitful. The problem is now in the hands of the National Joint Council for the industry, with the added complication that packaged lumber is now being handled in other ports. The Hull dockers have fought with solidarity, despite divided union membership. One of them drew this conclusion: "Let this dispute serve as a warning to all workers. Plan the future, be ready for change, but above all don't allow the bosses to achieve greater output and higher profits at the workers' expense. The dockers won't."

LABOUR M.P. ATTACKS BOYCOTT OF SOUTH AFRICAN GOODS from Alec Bagley

Capt. Mark Hewitson, Labour M.P. for Hull West, makes a call for the end to the boycott of South African goods in an article in Perspective, the journal of the South African Foundation. "There are" he says, "many aspects of South African policies with which I disagree but neither can I agree with the proposed methods of bringing about a change of these policies."

He continues: "The call for an economic boycott against South Africa will have no immediate tangible effects on trade between the two countries unless officially ordered by a British Government...A total boycott should, if we had the courage, lead logically to a ban on the sale of gold to this country - so undermining our whole monetary system." arguing that the first to suffer from a successful boycott would be the non-white population who have the highest standard of living among coloured people on the African continent with advanced educational, health and housing schemes, he asks: "Is it likely that they would be willing to commit economic suicide."

"Problems", says Hewitson, "are solved only by understanding them, not by boycotting them." Several key British industries would be seriously affected by the boycott. British capital totalling £1,000,000,000 is tied up in the Republic. There are also the human ties binding the two countries. "The anti-apartheid movement is not rendering a service to the Black Africa by its call for sanctions. It is merely helping them to starve."

ED. NOTE: We have quoted Mr. Hewitson at length to show how far he is willing to go to the defence of the South African regime by opposing the boycott. We hope our Hull readers will take due note, especially as Hull is a town which operates a municipal boycott.

LANCS. AND CHESHIRE LABOUR PARTY DISCUSS TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA

Part of a resolution dealing with foreign trade was withdrawn at the AGM on March 21st of the Lancashire and Cheshire Regional Council of the Labour Party when Stan Orme, prospective candidate for Salford West, pointed out that it implied opposition to a trade boycott of South Africa. The resolution, moved by AEU Manchester District, was concerned with the embargo on the export of computers from Ferranti's at Manchester, to the USSR but contained a section calling for a campaign against "all bans and restrictions on trade with all countries." Conference, which is not empowered to deal with matters for "national decision" was given no opportunity of discussing a resolution on the production at Preston of Buccaneer jets for export to South Africa.

HOME OFFICE TURN BACK APARTHEID REFUGEES

On Thursday March 26 a South African family of 7 were refused landing permission at Southampton, and within 12 hours they were on a boat back to South Africa. Mr. Williams, his wife and their 5 sons were accorded this treatment on the grounds that they ^{had} no work permit. Because they dislike Apartheid, the family had sold up its possessions and intended to take up permanent residence in Britain.

LABOUR AND C.N.D. A COMMUNICATION

from Peter Price

First, congratulations on carrying the statement from the Labour CND Committee. The Week's columns should be open to a broad spectrum of the left. The statement itself however filled me with misgiving. When even so equivocal a figure as A. Wedgewood Benn admits publicly that UNO's role in the Congo was disgraceful, and this is widely acknowledged by those sections to which Labour CND addresses itself, unconditional support for UNO causes more trouble among the cogniscants than it settles. Even in the future it is obvious that a UNO commission backed by Irish and Swedish troops will produce a qualitatively different solution to a UNO commission by the soldiers of Cuba and Poland. Surely for any CND group support must be for the positive possibilities of UNO action.

The Committee states "the immediate danger to the peace of the world - rises not so much from the activities of the two world powers, as from the narrow nationalist ambitions of some of the smaller powers." Leave out the word "immediate" and you have a statement of hair-raising inaccuracy. The basic danger to the world arises from the cold war with America and Russia as the principal protagonists. It is within this 'cold war' context that CND might observe 'narrow nationalist ambitions' of Fidel Castro seeking to give the Cubans a decent way of life as imperilling the peace of the world. With the colonial revolution in full swing ⁱⁿ country after country is going to adopt the 'Cuban' solution to their tremendous problems. Does anybody really visualise CND standing in opposition to the legitimate aspirations of small nations?

Whilst apologising for my non-attendance during the last few months I would ask my colleagues on the CND Labour Committee to examine their formula afresh. Coexistence is doomed as a policy if it involves strangling the colonial revolution.

Ed. note: we are pleased to publish this letter and would like to express the hope that it leads to a lively discussion (in the columns of our journal and elsewhere) of the fundamental issues posed by P.Price.

SIR EDWARD BOYLE IS PREPARED FOR THE H. BOMB by Chris Arthur

Sir Edward Boyle, of the Ministry of Education, has just issued to local authorities a bit of bump telling them what to do about schools if someone presses the nuclear button, an event which would lead, it says, "to the virtual destruction of both sides." "In an emergency" says the pamphlet, "many parents would wish to keep their children at home. These children would run risks on their way to and from school"(!!!).

So Sir Edward "will take powers enabling him at the appropriate time, to direct that schools of all or any kind should be closed..." But what about boarding schools?— can't close those in four minutes. Para 6 reads "The minister will take powers enabling him, if necessary, to direct that schools of all or any kind should remain open."



INDUSTRIAL week

THE WEEK AND THE RALEIGH AEU STRIKE

We have received the following letter from Mr. D.J. Williamson, 1, Aber Terrace, Briar St., Nottingham:

"As a regular reader of the Week and also a production worker employed by Raleigh Industry, and at present laid off work because of the dispute between the AEU and the Raleigh management, I am deeply perturbed by the article written in the current edition of your magazine, and would appreciate an answer to the following:

(1) Were the full time officials or any representatives of the other unions at Raleigh asked for their views before this article was published, if not, why not?

(2) Who are ALL the local Labour Parties apart from West Nottingham Cons. L.P. with members on this solidarity committee?

(3) What are your views on this article taken from the local press Please note the writer of this letter.

I would also like your views on the clause in the National Insurance Act which debars workers from receiving unemployment benefit if they are in the same class of unemployment as another worker who is on strike. An example of this is, a labourer employed in my own department at Raleigh is barred from benefit simply because there is a labourer in another department who is a member of the AEU and is on strike.

Hoping for a reply from you,
Yours sincerely.....

ED. NOTE: Our reporter was not claiming to speak officially for any of the unions, but was merely presenting the situation as he saw it. The policy of The Week is to place itself at the disposal of the workers concerned in any such dispute such as this, so we are pleased to print Mr. Williamson's letter on this matter, and invite comment from members of any of the unions at Raleigh. Pat Jordan replies:

I will deal first of all with the strictly factual aspects of brother Williamson's letter.

(1) the answer to the first question is "no" and as the Editorial Note explains the article did not claim to be the official view of any union - moreover it is my concern to promote unity of Raleigh workers.

(2) Mr. Williamson will have seen the subsequent issue of The Week which lists some of the members of solidarity committee; they include the secretary of North Nottingham, the Treasurer of South Nottingham, and several officials of the Central Nottm. L.P., this covers all four Nottm. L.P.s.

(3) The main bone of contention of the cutting enclosed (a letter by the secretary of the Confed) is that politics should be kept out of the Raleigh strike. This is an old, old argument. Perhaps the best comment on Mr. Baker's position is that even though he is the Nottingham secretary of the Confed. he has stated that he is opposed to the policy of the Confed. for the nationalisation of the engineering industry. That is taking his 'non-political' position to its logical conclusion.



COURT VICTORY FOR YOUNG U.S. SOCIALISTS by Sylvia Riley

On March 20 in Bloomington, Indiana, Monroe Circuit Court Judge Nat. U. Hill quashed the indictments in the Indiana "subversion" case reported in The Week no. 13. Leonard Boudin, general counsel for the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, argued that the indictments against the three officers of the Young Socialist Alliance chapter at Indiana University should be thrown out on the grounds that the 1951 Indiana Anti-Communist Act, under which they were brought, was unconstitutional. The judge agreed. The court proceedings followed a meeting at the university addressed by Leroy McRae, secretary of the YSA.

Daniel T. Taylor III, the trial lawyer for the defendants, had subpoenaed eight people, including prosecutor Thomas Hoadley and his key witness, calling on them to produce in court a tape recorder, tapes and pamphlets allegedly stolen from a rented apartment. These, Hoadley had indicated that he wished to use as evidence; the defence claimed that they had been acquired illegally.

Judge Hill's ruling not only invalidates the Anti-Communism Act; it has a broader legal significance. Unless overturned, it affects all state sedition laws because it sets the precedent that the federal Government has jurisdiction in such matters even if the law deals only with sedition against a state government. Unfortunately, this victory does not entirely eliminate the threats to the defendants. Hoadley, can appeal to a higher court if he obtains the permission of the state's Attorney General.

RANK-AND-FILE TEAMSTER CHALLENGES "THE ECONOMIST" ON HOFFA TRIAL

The report of the Hoffa case in The Economist of March 7 is sharply attacked in a letter in the current issue from Matt Gelerner of Los Angeles, California, a rank-and-file member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Of the paper's description of the 'collapse of his (Hoffa's) normal ebullient self-assurance', Gelerner says: "Rest assured that he is still of his old fighting spirit...If he disdains the title of 'labour statesman', it is because he wants to remain a fighting labour leader leaving others the 'honour' of 'labour statesman.'

On the trial itself, Glerner remarks: "...the reporters you mention were using Justice Department handouts and at no time did they convey the defendant's side. For instance, the informer witness you quote was under indictment in Louisiana on 26 counts. He had been charged in the past with perjury...At the same time, Hoffa's rooms were bugged by agents so that attorneys could not properly defend their client and agents with cameras and sound pickups had 732 'surveillance' photographs. Fair trial indeed!" As a final shot he adds: "The best source...on this subject is the rank-and-file membership."

THIRD WORLD WEEK



WORKERS' SELF-MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE OPENS IN ALGERIA

The Algerian News Agency reports that the first congress of Algerian workers of the self-managing industrial sector opened in Algiers on March 28th. More than 1,100 representatives from 450 self-management committees began to discuss the problems of self-management and to sum up the experiences of the last year. Ben Bolla announced at the opening session that the congress of the Algerian FLN scheduled to take place in a few weeks would perfect the Tripoli Programme, define the charter of the Algerian Revolution and elect a unified collective leadership. Self-managing industrial and agricultural workers' congresses were held prior to the FLN congress, he said, so that the latter could reflect as truthfully as possible the aspirations and needs of the working masses and that the FLN might establish itself and take root among the people.

The President pointed out that the self-management industrial sector was still relatively weak in relation to the rest of the industrial sectors and in regard to its absolute proportion in Algeria's present economy. "But", he said "we are firmly determined to protect and reinforce it in relation to the private sector...and accelerate industrialisation...a neo-colonialist regime is absolutely incapable of promoting industrialisation." A member of the preparatory committee announced that of 450 self-managing industrial enterprises, one-third belong to the building industry and one-quarter to the food industry. A greater part of the enterprises are located in Algiers and its immediate vicinity.

CLASS WAR ERUPTS INTO CIVIL WAR IN BRAZIL by James Wilcox

On March 20 President Goulart of Brazil announced a programme of constitutional change before a meeting of over $\frac{1}{4}$ million workers in Rio de Janeiro organised by the CGT (Brazilian TUC). This programme included the enfranchisement of the illiterate (some 30,000,000), the legalisation of the C.P., the enfranchisement of the armed services and the granting of powers to the President to enable him to carry out nationalisation and agrarian reform. This meeting was protected from the troops of the ultra-reactionary State Governor, Lacerda, by pro-Goulart Federal troops who ringed the meeting. Over Easter, rank and file mutinies within the navy and marines supported the program. On March 31st the right wing officers of the Fourth Army launched a rebellion against Goulart's Government ^{only} to be countered by the pro-Government first army. The CGT, which is now led by Communists and Fidolistas in the main, has announced that it will support Goulart and his regime against military coups with all the means they can command, including a general strike.



THIRD WORLD WEEK

REPRESSION IN VENEZUELA

The following article is based upon a statement sent to the Week by the Committee for the release of political prisoners in Venezuela. We hope all readers will do their best to draw attention to the facts contained therein, particularly as there has been some confusion in the left on the nature of the Betancourt regime in Venezuela.

On September 30th, 1963, Senator J. Farias and Deputies G.G. Ponce, G. Machado, E. Machado, J. Villavicencio, and J.M. Casals were imprisoned despite their parliamentary immunity. Thereafter, the already existing police state repression was intensified and a fierce persecution of parliamentarians and members of the Venezuelan Communist Party and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left began.

Constant violation of the most elementary human rights have since taken place. Manipulation of public funds and the power of the state for the partisan benefits of the Government parties created the conditions under which the elections of 1st December, 1963, took place. People frightened by the armed forces and by police pressure were forced to vote. Irregularities of all sorts, the appearance of more votes than votes in some areas, the loss of electoral records, etc., are facts that themselves constitute sufficient proof of the fraudulent nature of this election. The so-called "triumph of democracy in Venezuela," to quote the Venezuelan official press and the international news agencies, is a gross misrepresentation of what really happened. (footnote)

The elections of December 1st have changed or solved nothing. A deep crisis remains in the social, political and economic affairs of Venezuela. The bloody and repressive policies of the Government continue, the gaols are crammed to capacity with thousands of citizens, whose only offence is to disagree with the Government.

We call for your support in our demand for the freeing of political prisoners in Venezuela. If you are gracious enough to support us, you can best help by sponsoring our campaign in Britain, in which case you should let us know in writing to the secretary of our movement at 6, Tregunter Rd., London S.W. 10. Letters of protest should also be sent to the Venezuelan Embassy at 3, Hans Crescent, London S.W. 1.

Footnote: According to official figures, the number of voters at the time of the election was 4,070,000, at the close of the electoral enrolment the number enrolled was 3,332,000 (showing that 738,000 had decided not to vote). According to official figures 2,918,896 voted 413,104 less than enrolled, there were also 100,000 blank papers. This means one-third of potential voters abstained.

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