

The Week

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- LINWOOD SIT-IN
- INCOMES POLEMICS
- LINER TRAINS
- WORKERS' CONTROL
- JAPANESE SOCIALISTS
CRITICISE WILSON

AMERICAN AMBITIONS CAN KILL US ALL

BERTRAND RUSSELL

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STOP PRESS

All readers in the Glasgow area should give support to a meeting this Sunday, May 23rd, organised by C.N.D. and Trades Council. It is on the Vietnam crisis and will have 5 M.P.s as speakers. They are N. Carmichael, N. Buchan, Hugh Brown (Provan) John Rankin, Maurice Miller (Kelvingrove). It is at the McLellan Galleries and starts at 7.30 p.m.

AFTER THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

The municipal election results have been commented upon so widely and analysed in such detail it is scarcely necessary for us to more than note certain features. Firstly, there was no real swing to the right: the loss of just a little less than one thousand seats was due to Labour abstentions. Secondly, that within a framework of a general loss of votes, there were quite marked local variations: one has only to contrast the winning of control in Flint - a steel centre - with the severe losses in a previously very solid stronghold, Porthcawl - another steel town. Thirdly, it has been universally noted that one of factors in Labour's losses was the severe decline in Labour workers.

It is almost trite to say that the lesson is clear: that what is needed to reverse the decline in Labour's fortunes is a bolder and more radical programme. The fight for such a turn is not a simple matter - it has to combine a firm principled stand on important issues with a flexible approach and sensitive understanding of those in the Party who will react defensively to any criticism of the Government. This means above all making the running around concrete issues and taking due regard of the practical problems connected with Labour's narrow majority. Its means elaborating a fighting policy against the Tories. As well as drawing the obvious lessons we must force the Government to turn its sharp edge against the Tories: the Ulster M.P.s need putting in their place; features in the electoral system which favour the Tories need sweeping away; the House of Lords must be eradicated; Polling Day should be a bank holiday; votes should be given at 18; etc.

By simultaneously raising these issues with the campaign for real socialist policies we will at once find common ground with all Labour supporters, strike at the basis for an excuse to drift to right, and, most important of all, help to generate a fighting spirit in Labour's ranks.

It is quite clear that if liner trains are to be run at all, the stubborn attitude of the Railways Board will have to relax. Mr. Fraser may be convinced by the Board that free terminals are necessary to make liner trains a success. That the admission of a Tory concept of transport co-ordination - through joint working between private and publicly-owned sections in the contradictory situation of competition - is utterly at variance with the original idea propounded and practised by the Labour Party, may not make Mr. Fraser lose any sleep. But for those, and the railways unions must be included, who have consistently advocated integration in transport the present policy of the Railways Board is so mistaken that opposition is certain.

So what is the solution? The railwaymen, accused of stubbornness, retort that the intransigence of the Railways Board is responsible for the situation. They say that they are in favour of freightliners. They have agreed to allow traffic to be brought into depots in vehicles of traders and manufacturers operating their own vehicles, that is, "C" licenced; they have accepted the vehicles of the British Road Services. From these two sources alone there is a vast potential traffic new to the railways. Traffic now carried by private road hauliers over long and short distances may be suitable for freightliners. The Railways Board say so. What is perhaps not realised sufficiently well, is that this potential traffic is now being carried according to arrangements between road hauliers and their customers, apparently satisfactorily.

The Railways Board believes that part of this traffic can only be secured to rail if they do a deal with the road hauliers. The vital element in this proposal is conveniently pushed aside - the customer, the user of transport. It is presumably thought that this traffic belongs to the road haulier and it is with the road haulier that the Railways Board will have to negotiate. But this presupposes that the customer will be satisfied to have his traffic carried in the way suitable to the providers of transport - the road hauliers and the railways. The great weakness of the Railways Board's plan is that they have abandoned the attempt to deal directly with the customer and propose instead to deal with another transport provider, who is a competitor. It means that millions of pounds worth of equipment will depend for its use on the arrangements of a competing transport provider, and with customers remote from the railway part of the haul.

This policy of defeatism is completely at variance with the practice of the Railways Board generally in the securing of rail traffic. Already, the Board run 750 company trains a week for 50 firms. If the railways can enter contracts of this sort for the carriage of oil, cement, frozen foods, motor-cars, etc., directly with the customers, why are they now choosing to deal differently with general merchandise traffic, which happens to be carried by road? The unions say that given an environment of competition it does not make sense if the Railways Board now abdicate their role and refuse to take on road transport. There is no doubt that the services which the freightliners could offer, in speed, reliability, and price, is superior to anything the road haulier, on his own, could hope to provide. In other words, it is commercially ludicrous to throw away the advantage when the railways could offer transport direct to the customer on terms which could be expected to be more acceptable than are now offered by road transport.

If the volume of traffic secured from this new kind of service became greater than could be dealt with by the railways' own collection and delivery

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Mr. Tom Fraser mistaken...continued/

services - and it was more economical for the customer and the railways - then there may be opportunity for road hauliers to participate. But it is that way round that the unions see such co-operation, and not the way round now proposed which gives the advantage to road hauliers. There did not need to be trouble with the freightliners if the management had genuinely joined with the unions in such a scheme. The unions would have jumped at the chance to show that the railways could provide an excellent service in order to attract new traffic.

It is not the railwaymen who are obstructing the freightliners. It is the Railways Board and the former policy of the Conservative administration which has driven the railway unions into a position of opposition. The unions' opposition, which is soundly based, has been grossly distorted by the Tory press because the B.R.B.'s policy happens also to be the policy laid down by a Tory administration. That a Labour Minister of Transport cannot see that point is astounding and very depressing. If he, the Board, and the Tory press think the issue is now closed they are mistaken.

from the Railway Review of May 14th.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

At a meeting held in Transport House, Belfast, on 8th May which was organised by the Belfast Trades Council, a motion was carried unanimously to pursue the elimination of religious discrimination in Northern Ireland. The meeting was attended by over sixty representatives from various trade unions and there were individuals from the following political organisations: the Northern Ireland Labour Party, the Republican Party, the Communist Party, and the Campaign for Social Justice.

The meeting which was intended to follow up the one in London in March, this year, by the National Council for Civil Liberties, was addressed by a member of the staff of Queen's University Faculty of Law. The speaker concentrated on the many electoral anomalies that occur in Northern Ireland and he pointed out the need for a revision of the law with special regard to the limited franchise and the gerrymandering of ward boundaries.

A committee is to be formed from delegates representing the main trade unions and political parties, although it is expected that the Ulster Unionist Party will not be represented.

William Barratt

N.B. In our next issue we will be publishing an extensive summary of an analysis of electoral anomalies and mal-practices in Northern Ireland.

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The latest issue of International Socialist Review includes the following articles: Crisis over Vietnam; Death of Malcolm X; Malcolm X, the Voice of the Ghetto; Revolt of Peruvian Campesinos; Hugo Blanco Correspondence; Apartheid in South West Africa; Existentialism and Marxism; Book Reviews.

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TROUBLE AT LINWOOD

from a Glasgow correspondent

Readers of The Week will have been disturbed to read of the arrest of 27 workers at the Linwood works of Pressed Steel. The immediate cause of Friday's events was a dispute over the sacking of one man in the die-setting department, where, it was alleged, production had fallen by 50% to 75%. This led to a strike of the die setters, and this in turn to the laying off of other sections. Workers in the final section of the line making Ford Truck Cabins disputed the necessity for a full lay off saying that there remained adequate work in hand for them to do. After reporting for work on Friday they refused to leave the shop and were eventually removed by police. The action was entirely solid and happened in a section where there was a very stable labour force and where there had not been a stoppage for three years. The arrested men have received full moral and financial backing from their union, the N.U.V.B. and from the Stewards' Committee. They are to appear on Friday at Paisley Magistrates' Court charged with a Breach of the Peace. Reaction in the Scottish Labour movement has been immediate and universal condemnation of the action of Pressed Steel management.

However, the problems of the workers at Linwood will not be solved by a successful conclusion to this dispute. The background to this situation lies in the very narrow base of the new industry which has been created in this overspill area 12 miles outside of Glasgow. The Pressed Steel factory is capable of producing a wide variety of pressing for all sections of the engineering industry. But its sole guaranteed customer is the only other major factory in Linwood, Rootes, producers of the Hillman Imp. The very big short-fall in sales of this car - $\frac{1}{3}$ of projected production - and the reluctance of the Rootes management to expand production into other vehicles, has led to chronic instability for all workers at Linwood. This can only be removed by the implementation of Labour election policy on the diversification of industry and the direction of new science based concerns to the more depressed areas of the country - the existence of Pressed Steel makes Linwood an ideal location for this sort of expansion. It might also be considered whether the behaviour of the Rootes' management in their apparent unwillingness to diversify production in the face of falling demand for the Imp does not fall into the category of 'failing the nation' and strengthens the arguments of those who have called for public ownership of the car industry.

A.S.S.E.T.'S STAND COULD BRING 10,000 NEW MEMBERS by a special correspondent

Mr. Clive Jenkins, general secretary of the Association of Supervisory Staffs, Executives and Technicians, told a press conference last week that he would not mind being invited to appear before the new incomes Board to defend his union's militant policies as it might be worth 10,000 new members. He said that his members expected their union to think in terms of 20% increases in wages instead of the 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ %, envisaged by Mr. Brown.

"We're in business to get them that 20% and we are going to do it," he commented. He pointed out that the union's policy of militancy had already paid off in membership. A.S.S.E.T.'s size had doubled in just over four years to over 40,000. In a policy statement issued at the press conference, the union laid down 6 pre-conditions to their support for "wage-planning". These pre-conditions included a demand for "a large and rapid extension of the public sector of the economy."

(Editorial note: the following is the text of a statement sent by Bertrand Russell to the "24-hour action against U.S. imperialism" at the University of California, Berkeley. This demonstration will take place on May 21/22 and it is expected that between 25,000 and 50,000 will take part.)

The world is confronted with a great danger, the danger of subjection for some years, but is has announced that his government anywhere on the counts anybody a Communist. This policy will lead to disaster if it is tried

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t flagrant of United States' dingo. The history of this s been changeable, but we ujillo, who was murdered in . Government easily preserved uthority was to establish a leader of this policy was l election which occurred but he was ousted from t not Kennedy, recognised 's defeat. This Government, rrupt dictatorship complete- revolt against it and in press this revolt that U.S.

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t is determined that the ld be military tyrannies s. Any objection to the oment, has to be permitted made it clear that it awaits t Government on that island. tion of American States to actions in the Dominican ategorically states that the continued over/

American ambition continued/

territory of a state "may not be the object, even temporarily, of military occupation...by another state, directly or indirectly, under any grounds whatsoever."

In San Domingo, the United States, assuming its moral right to control the Western Hemisphere, has acted to preserve this sphere of influence. In Vietnam, the U.S. is waging a massive war on the boundaries of China. China, because it is a Communist country, is not permitted to have a sphere of influence - that would be aggression. There is one law for the United States and another for the rest of the world. Both laws are made in Washington.

When the Vietnamese finally overthrew their French colonial masters in 1954, settlement was achieved at Geneva. The terms of the agreements made there were entirely admirable. Vietnam was to be neutral and independent. All foreign troops and bases were to be excluded. The country, temporarily divided, was to be re-united and remain neutral, and the Vietnamese were to be permitted free elections for the first time.

Although these agreements had the full support of the Vietnamese, the Chinese, the Russians, the French, and many others, the United States refused to sign them. Dulles, labouring under the delusion that neutralism was immoral, set out systematically to destroy the Geneva Agreements. He quickly created the South East Asia Treaty Organisation to consolidate the U.S. sphere of influence in the area, and without a shred of justification intervened in Vietnam. It was the United States alone that prevented free elections in Vietnam, and it has continued to prevent them to this day. Elections are only permitted if their result is acceptable to the U.S. Government, and as President Eisenhower recognised at the time, at least 80% of the votes would have gone to the national hero, Ho Chi Minh.

From that time the United States became more and more deeply involved in the affairs of South Vietnam until it was clear to the whole world that it was directing and financing a full-scale war of atrocity against the people, whose only crime was that they desired independence, free elections and no military alliance with any nation, East or West.

Washington's argument was simple, if fallacious. We hold, it declared, that the Vietnamese hate Communism. Therefore we shall murder some of them to make their hatred of Communism more evident. Consequently, they will love us. Vietnam became a proving ground for every new weapon. Napalm was showered down from the skies to roast people alive. Chemical weapons, called "defoliants", were used extensively on scores of villages. Peasants had their heads blown off by new bullets or their bodies chopped up by steel splinters. Eight million Vietnamese were herded into concentration camps, called strategic hamlets", and a further half million were conscripted to keep down American casualties. This army, in the name of the Free World, managed to disembowel 3,000 of their fellow countrymen by cutting out their livers whilst they were still alive.

When it became apparent to the United States that not even two million dollars a day could buy enough friends, and the war in the South was being lost, the bombing of the North was started. North Vietnam appears unlikely

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American ambition continued/

to give way in the face of this naked aggression. It is highly probable, therefore, that unless the United States changes its policy China will be drawn in. China has undertaken to protect North Vietnam if necessary, and the United States is ready to bomb China if necessary. Further, the Soviet Union has undertaken to go to war in the defence of China if China is attacked by the U.S. It follows that the persistence of America in its present policy leads to World War III.

World War III, if not nuclear, will lead to undecided guerrilla warfare. How long American will be content with such warfare cannot be estimated. It may be a year, or five years, or ten years, but sooner or later, America will get tired of this indecisive kind of fighting and will resort to nuclear weapons. This will mean the end of civilisation, if not of man. For this reason it is of supreme importance that ways should be found of stopping America before it is too late. I very much welcome the action which you are taking at Berkeley in this cause.

11th May, 1965.

JAPANESE SOCIALISTS AND TRADE UNIONS SUPPORT NORTH VIETNAM

The newly elected chairman of the Japanese Socialist Party roundly condemned Mr. Harold Wilson for "his slavish approval of Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam." In an interview given to the press on May 10, he said: "Wilson's attempt to build a new Britain within the framework of the Commonwealth accounts for the emergence of a sugar-coated colonialism." He urged Mr. Wilson to "turn over a new leaf and become a good socialist." Mr. Kozo Sasaki, former vice-chairman of the party, was unanimously elected chairman at an extraordinary convention in Tokyo on May 6th. He succeeded Jotaro Kawakami who resigned due to ill-health.

Before being elected, Sasaki made a trenchant speech on the Vietnam situation. He stated his opposition to U.S. policy in clear-cut terms. "The United States," he said, "is now baring its barbarian nature of imperialism in Vietnam and trying to expand the war to China while at the same time applying terroristic pressures upon the Dominican people.."

The General Council of Japanese Trade Unions (SOHYO), which represents nearly $4\frac{1}{4}$ million out of Japan's total organised work-force of $9\frac{3}{4}$ million, announced on May 6th that it is sending a mission to North Vietnam. The mission will be an expression of solidarity with the workers of North Vietnam and will work out with the unions of that country how best the Japanese workers can help them.

The announcement was made by SOHYO's general secretary, Akira Iwai, at the opening session of the 28th convention of the Japanese Teachers' Union. He said that SOHYO is planning to send material aid, including medical supplies, to the North Vietnamese workers and peasants.

Sadamitsu Miyanohara, chairman of the 600,000-member Japanese Teachers' Union, declared at the opening session that everything concerning Vietnam should be left to the self-determination of the people of Vietnam. He called for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. He called criticised for placing too much emphasis on political struggles, the union would continue its fight against imperialism and for world peace.

A broadly-based British Committee for Peace in Vietnam has been established which embraces all sections of public opinion which desire the end of the war, not only to stop death and destruction in Vietnam, but to prevent the conflict spreading to other parts of Asia, and, indeed, to the world.

The purpose of the Council is not to apportion blame but to bring peace. It proposes to contribute constructively to the realisation of a cease-fire and negotiations for a peaceful settlement. The Council is already receiving wide endorsement from within the Church, the universities, the Labour movement, liberals, youth, women's organisations and peace societies, and distinguished persons in all walks of life have become sponsors.

Support from readers of The Week can be given in three directions:

- (1) By the formation of similarly broadly-based committees for Peace in Vietnam in all localities.
- (2) By collecting signatures to a national petition which will be presented to Parliament at the end of June.
- (3) And, of course, by donations.

Full information can be obtained from the provisional secretary, Mrs. Barbara Haq, 374, Gray's Inn Rd., London W.C. 1. (Terminus 1078).

AUSTRALIAN TUG CREWS BOYCOTT U.S. WARSHIPS from a special correspondent

Australian tug crews in Melbourne have refused service to visiting U.S. warships in protest against U.S. aggression in Vietnam. The decision to apply the ban was made by the seamen's union at a meeting in Melbourne on May 12th.

FILIPINO PAPERS DENOUNCE PLAN TO SEND TROOPS TO VIETNAM by Dave Windsor

From May 1st to 13th, the leading newspapers in the Philippines Republic: The Manila Times, The Manila Chronicle and the Daily Mirror, have published 24 editorials and commentaries denouncing the pressure which the United States' Government is applying to the country to send troops to Vietnam.

There was "rising protest from almost every sector of the community" against the move to send Filipino soldiers to Vietnam, said the Manila Chronicle in an editorial on May 13th. The editorial was criticising the Philippine House of Representatives for passing a bill on May 12 approving the sending of Filipino troops.

These sentiments have been echoed by all other serious newspapers in the country and there is no doubt that this reflects the feelings of the ordinary man in the street. There can be little doubt that the near future will see an upsurge in the mass movement against American domination. Thus the U.S. by applying pressure to help it in its fight against the Vietcong will merely open up a new front against itself.

DEPOPULATION IN THE BORDERS

by Gavin Kennedy

In the past ten years it is estimated that 40,000 farm workers have become redundant in the Scottish border areas. These workers are being replaced by modern machinery and new methods that are keeping this very beautiful part of Scotland in the fore as a rich agricultural district.

But the depopulation is creating problems for the landowners and farmers. Having saved by eliminating unnecessary labour they are now busy lobbying the local councils for remission of rates that they are paying on the hundreds of empty farmworkers' cottages dotted all over the countryside.

This is Sir Alec Douglas-Home country - he farms a big estate in the borders - and with a sum of over £16,000 in rates involved the big landowners of the borders are a powerful lobby. In Roxburgh, where David Steel took the seat from the Tories for the Liberals recently, the agitation from this class of rich suffering gentry is going to the extent of threats to knock in the roofs of the cottages unless the rates are removed. In the Highlands thousands of cottages were destroyed in this way to clear the land for deer shooting or grouse parties.

Ironically many of the empty cottages have been renovated by Government grants, and the National Farmers Union in the borders - dominated by the big landowners, is talking of calculated vandalism at a time when the housing problem in Scotland is growing more acute each month.

The borders are beautiful country. The Government should take over these cottages where appropriate, relieve the landowners of the rates and let the cottages in the countryside to city families for holidays through the summer. It is a tragic thing that many Edinburgh and Glasgow working class families never see anything of the country they live in, even during their holidays because they are herded into the "popular" resorts to be fleeced of their money by the gimmickry of the holiday barons.

CONSUMER PRODUCTION STILL LAGS IN THE SOVIET UNION

A recent issue of Soviet News gave the results of the first quarter of 1965 in Soviet industry. Compared to the first quarter of 1964, the growth of industrial production was 9% - daily output was actually up 11%, there being two less working days and one less calendar day in the first quarter of 1965. The results for various branches of industry varied from a 7% increase in timber and paper, to a 14% increase in Chemicals. Light industry and food (the two were lumped together) did above average with 10%, but when ^{one} examines individual items consumer production is seen to be lagging very seriously behind other branches.

A selection of items was given with their production expressed as a percentage of the same period last year. Thus we get for Cotton, 102%; Woollens, 94%; Linen, 99%; Silk, 101%; Garments, 97%; Leather footwear, 100.2%; Soap, 104%; Clocks and watches, 102% - in these cases the increase, if any, only kept pace with the increase in population (estimated at 1.4% per year). Some branches did better: Radio sets, 108%; T.V. sets, 115%; Bicycles, 104%; and Furniture, 104%. On the other hand it would appear that Russians are eating much better, with Meat, 115%, Butter, 172%, Dairy products, 126%; Cheese, 149% and Tinned food, 109%.

On Sunday afternoon of the Voice of the Unions school on Industrial Democracy, the final session took the form of a Brains Trust. The panel consisted of:

Clive Jenkins, General Secretary of A.S.S.E.T.;
John Hughes, Ruskin College tutor in economics;
Professor Bill Wedderburn, expert in company law;
Paul Derrick, research officer of the Sunday Citizen;
and a Yugoslav speaker, acquainted with works councils in his own country. Richard Fletcher, editor of Voice of the Unions, took the chair.

All the panelists were allowed time to develop their own ideas on the democratic control of industry and incomes policy, and then the session moved into general discussion for the rest of the afternoon.

As the afternoon progressed it became clear that the usual division of opinion in incomes policy, which is splitting the left in the labour movement, would be central to the debate. Clive Jenkins took the view that the Prices and Incomes Board should be killed off and that trade union leaders should reject an incomes policy until there has been a radical re-distribution of wealth. He emphasised the fact that 2% of the population own 38% of the wealth of the country. Trade union officials should get on with their job and negotiate as much as they could for their members through collective bargaining. He concluded his remarks on the question by saying "I stand on the Labour Party Constitution - that is the policy we should try to get implemented."

John Hughes expressed disappointment and surprise at the speech of Clive Jenkins. Hughes argued (as he had done, jointly with Ken Alexander, in a Fabian pamphlet: "A Plan for Incomes") that the trade unions should go on the offensive on the issues of prices, profits and incomes. Within an incomes policy the labour movement could begin the process of socialising the flow of income and begin democratising economic power. The stages, he continued, would be two-fold: firstly, the Labour Government would be forced to consider a wide approach on the question of social priorities; secondly, he wanted the Labour Government to use the taxation system to carry through a principled and progressive re-distribution of wealth attacking property ownership. "The Conservatives deliberately used taxation to re-distribute wealth in favour of the rich." As an immediate step, Hughes thought that the unions should make their challenge on price determination which he thought as crucial as money income.

Other speakers tended to declare support for one or the other of these views. Ken Coates, while insisting that incomes policy was a neo-capitalist planning device to suit the purposes of big business, stressed that the fight against incomes policy could be used as a lever for social change if it was carried through by positive demands such as 'open the books'. On this point Bill Wedderburn hoped, as a first move, that legislation would be quickly prepared to compel companies to publicly detail their balance sheets. For example, on how they broke down their profits. On incomes policy, he felt attracted to both viewpoints but stressed that the unions should present a positive rather than a defensive approach to the problem.

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Industrial Democracy brains trust continued/

One argument he accepted was that, while the debate was on, this might increase the level of socialist consciousness. Paul Derrick suggested that the success of an incomes policy would depend largely on an extension of the public sector.

Other speakers included Norman Dinning, of the A.F.U., who saw the present incomes policy as little more than a wage freeze. Frank Ward from Tribune thought employees should have access to the 'books' as of right.

Problems connected with industrial democracy, sparked off by the comments of Ian Mikardo on the Sheffield Steel Report on the previous day, brought questions. Clive Jenkins was against any union officials being on the boards of nationalised industries. He did not want them put in a position of divided loyalties. "They have enough to do now. Let them get on with it, in a professional way." Peter Heathfield, a delegate from the Derbyshire Miners, expressed dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the trade unionists that had been put on the boards of the nationalised industries. In a contracting industry, such as mining, he felt that this dual role should be avoided. John Hughes thought the mining industry a special case and could not see how any participation by union officials could be separated from the union structure. The Jugoslav speaker described from his own experience how this problem was dealt with in Jugoslavia. The discussion showed a difference in view of the role of the trade unions in any plan for workers' participation in management.

Steel compensation was mentioned briefly by the platform. Clive Jenkins thought that there was a case for a public tribunal to decide the amount. He was very disturbed by the fact that the price to be paid is 30% above the closing price of steel when the White Paper was published. Bill Wedderburn suggested that the assessment of the value of the companies should be independent of their equity value. The "excessively generous" compensation terms were criticised by Paul Derrick in some detail. John Hughes outlined the danger of steel becoming saddled with a debt which would mean that it would be an easy target for Tory propaganda. The debt that the nationalised industries had to bear had trebled over the years, and this had been accompanied by exploitation from the private sector through low prices, subsidies and back-door deals. Hughes also hoped that the T.U.C. would take the initiative and press for an enquiry into the structure of industry.

The general consensus of opinion was that this was probably the most lively session during the Conference, and it is hoped that this critical debate would be taken back into the labour movement, continued and acted upon.

THE RHONDDA VALLEY PIT DISASTER

The Week joins other sections of the working class movement in expressing its deep grief at the death of the men killed at Cambrian Pit.

About 150 people, many of them official delegates, were present at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday, 8th May, at the start of this remarkable conference on workers' control in industry. Through the offices of the L.C.S., the conference organisers had been able to book a number of unexpectedly sumptuous rooms in the rather chic hotel near Euston, which the society owns; and the elegantly smart surfaces of the premises were in interesting contrast with the blunt and earthy nature of much of the audience and most of the proceedings.

Walter Kendall and Richard Fletcher, representing the Voice of the Unions chain of newspapers, opened the proceedings with conference arrangements. Saturday was to be almost entirely devoted to seminar discussion of Steel, Docks, Mines, Co-operative Movement, Co-ownership and (unsystematically but necessarily) Incomes Policy. At 3 o'clock, when the Conference divided for these discussions, it became apparent how necessary a discussion on incomes policy really was when approximately one in three of the people present opted for that seminar. Not even steel, of immediate and topical import, could match it for interest.

The seminars lasted for one hour, in view of many much too short a time to get one's teeth in. I can only say that the incomes policy group of which I was a member got through a good deal of biting of one sort and another during the sixty minutes, though few issues were chewed right through.

At 4.15 p.m. the conference reconvened for reports back from the groups' rapporteurs. The chanciness of this procedure was reflected in the huge range of quality between one report and the other; from, for example, one dull, rambling and often incoherent contribution, to the crisp, direct, authoritative and very moving summary from a docker. On the whole, the standard of reporting back was agreeably high and there were few complaints of distortion or misrepresentation. Not all of the seminars, however, seemed to have achieved the same level of analysis. In general, to judge from the reports, Docks and Steel would seem to have produced the most detailed and ⁱⁿsightful discussions, while Coal in particular afforded little by way of recommendation or analysis. Significantly, both the steel industry and the docks have their own Voice, in which this kind of debate has been steadily developed over a period of time.

Such clashes as might have been anticipated came predictably over incomes policy, where the principal contenders for the conference's attention were Ken Coates' "Open the Books" thesis, Barratt-Brown's and John Hughes' "Make Prices our Target" line, and a curiously shapeless argument from Tony Cliffe and other "International Socialists" about the need to reject everything in favour of shopfloor negotiation for higher wages and better conditions. Throughout the involved and very honest discussions that ensued, there was a felt need for some unifying approach on incomes policy but very little sense that the conference was providing one. One felt at the end that the June conference at Manchester might usefully devote one of its sessions to the same problem.

Industrial democracy school: the first day continued/

One indication of the importance of the conference was the fact that Ian Mikardo chose it at which to make his attack on George Brown's handling of the Steel White Paper. His statements were sufficiently reported at the time to require no reiteration here. Of infinitely greater importance, however, was his contribution to the discussion on democratic control of the steel industry. Having listened with scrupulous attention to the report of Frank Ward on behalf of the Steel Seminar, he spoke for almost half an hour on the profound shortcomings of the White Paper, and in particular the failure in imagination by the Government in accepting the Morrisonian notion of public ownership as a satisfactory basis for nationalising steel. "Nationalised industries spawned in the image of privately owned limited liability companies, forced to use their profit-and-loss account as the limiting factor on all their activities, are not a socialist answer to the problem of public ownership", he said. It's a pity the national press didn't stay to hear him; or didn't take away with them the really excellent paper produced by the Sheffield Group on which most of the discussion on steel (including Ian Mikardo's) was based.

This was a remarkable first day. The chairman's opening words on the need to achieve some sort of constructive harmony within which conflicts of ideas and values could be fruitfully discussed had been followed all down the line. From all the signs, few left the Ambassadors Hotel on Saturday evening without feeling that something useful and significant had happened that afternoon.

INCOMES POLICY FACTS

compiled by Pat Jordan

(1) HOW TO DOUBLE YOUR MONEY TAX FREE

The argument that under the present set-up, unearned income is at a decided advantage as against wages received powerful confirmation last week. The occasion was the bringing before the House of Lords of an appeal by the British South Africa Company from a majority decision of the Court of Appeal in favour of the Crown concerning the taxing of profits made on a share deal. In 1953 the company lent £200,000 to the President Steyn Gold Mining Company at 6% interest, plus a loan-raising charge and an option to acquire 100,000 President Steyn shares at par.

In 1954, when the shares were worth 43s 6d the company exercised its option, taking up 100,000 shares, and the loan was treated as reduced by £100,000. The Crown claimed that the company was liable for tax on the difference between the market and par value of the shares, on the ground that when the option was exercised the company exchanged one trading asset for another with a resultant trading profit of £117,500.

However, after going through several courts and ending up at the House of Lords the British South Africa Company won its case; Lord Morris of Borth-y-Gest, Lord Hodson, Lord Donovan, and Lord Pearson all finding that under existing law this gain was not due for tax. One lord, Lord Guest dissented, but the appeal was carried by 4 to 1. The Crown now has to pay the company its costs in the House of Lords and in the Court of Appeal. It is good that a capital gains tax will limit such evasions, but the average trade unionist, whose whole income is subject to P.A.Y.E., must be somewhat cynical when he reads such reports.

continued over/

INCOMES POLICY FACTS

(2) REAL WAGES DOWN, PRODUCTIVITY UP IN LAST 12 MONTHS

The Economist publishes regularly what it calls "Key Indicators" of the British economy. In its May 15th issue the following figures appeared:

		Previous month.	Percentage change from Three months ago	Percentage change from twelve months ago
Industrial production	February	$-\frac{1}{2}$	$+1\frac{1}{2}$	$+4\frac{1}{2}$
" Employment	March	-0.1	-0.7	+0.8
" productivity	February	$-\frac{1}{2}$	+1	$+3\frac{1}{2}$
Wage rates (weekly)	March	+0.3	+1	+4.1
Retail prices	March	+0.4	+0.6	+4.5

Trade unionists should give these figures close attention. Consider the last column; weekly wage rates, i.e., without allowing for overtime, bonuses, etc., were worth less in March of this year than they were in March of last year. In the same period, however, production went up by $4\frac{1}{2}\%$, of which $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ was due to higher productivity, i.e., workers either working harder or being exploited more efficiently. And all this is before the Budget put 1% on the cost of living.

(3) COMPANY PROFITS 19% UP THIS YEAR

The Financial Times had this to say about the latest figures issued by the Board of Trade on company profits:

"The rising trend in company profits is continuing, according to a Board of Trade analysis of the accounts of companies received in the six months ended March 31, this year. Gross trading profits of the companies included in the analysis, at £572,000,000, were 19% higher than a year ago.The survey covers 624 companies whose accounting years ended in April, 1964, or later. They represent about one-third of all the companies analysed by the Board of Trade, and account for almost one-third of total assets and income..."

But as this journal has pointed out so often it is not only published profits which have to be watched. In the Board of Trade Journal's figures we see that for the 624 firms surveyed, the provision for depreciation has gone up from £210,521,000 to £236,764,000 - an increase of over £26,000,000. It is to be wondered what secrets those figures hold. Again we find that the amount spent on acquiring subsidiaries went up from £60 million in 1963 to £105 million in 1964. The sooner workers have the right of access to their companies' books the better!

(4) JAPAN NO LONGER "A LOW-WAGE ECONOMY"

This is the conclusion of the Tokyo correspondent of the Financial Times, in a recent background article. Pointing out that Japan is just going through the annual "Spring Struggle" by trade unionists to raise their wages, he says: "This year the request is for a 20-25% rise, and it is expected that the final result will be about 10%..." Later in the article he states: "In the past 4 years earnings of regular workers have risen by 11.3%, 10.2%, 10.7% and 10.5...". Let no one kid us that the demands of British workers are hitting exports!