

# The Week

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**VIETNAM  
CAMPAIGN  
GATHERS  
STRENGTH**

# **COAL: THE GREAT DEBATE**

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THE RAILMEN MUST FIGHT ON

The only logical conclusion from the whole of last week's talks on the railways, the promises that Mr. Wilson made, etc. is that the incomes policy as present operated by the Government is not the policy that unions like the N.U.R. should support. Only Mr. Wilson's appeal to avoid putting the Government on the spot averted the strike. Just how many times can that appeal be made? Can the railmen be confident that the assurances about looking again at the profitability principle will be met unless their union flexes its muscles? The N.U.R. will be among the first unions to hold its annual conference this year; it would be a very clear warning to the Government if it became among the first to reverse its policy on incomes policy. All those unions that voted for Mr. Brown's declaration of intent thinking that it would apply to everyone except themselves should ponder the sad example of the N.U.R.

THE MINERS LOBBY PARLIAMENT

Again we have the spectacle of one of the traditional sources of support for Labour in conflict with a Labour Government. The banning of overtime by the N.U.M. and the lobby of Parliament fixed for Thursday this week are the first moves in a growing disillusionment with Mr. Wilson's Government. In Belgium the same kind of policy as being operated by our Government has led to riots, deaths, and an incredible embitterment. Mr. Wilson and his team should see this as a grim warning of where the road they are travelling will take them. Again, the whole affair is a warning for the unions: hardly any union in the country has been as loyal to the Government as the N.U.M. - at the Blackpool conference the N.U.M. supported, without qualification, every Government policy. This is the thanks the miners' leaders get for their loyalty. Doubt has been cast on the profitability policy on the railways only when a strike was threatened - will it need the miners to make a similar threat before the Government budges?

A VERY WELCOME DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Gollam's denunciation of the writers' trial in the Soviet Union is to be welcomed by all socialists. It will help the prospects of united action by members of all political tendencies on the left. It will encourage all members of the C.P. to make more objective assessments of other leftists.



The article below was front page news in this month's Humberside Voice. A quite remarkable mobilisation of the port's 3,000 workers behind a militant unofficial port workers committee, which developed during the byelection campaign, but which had roots going back much further, has now exploded into a lightning strike campaign. With extraordinary flair, the committee has rented the palatial dignified City Hall, (Recent scene of some portentous Labour occasions - Harold Wilson last May Day, Kevin McNamara's triumph last month) and packed out meetings of dockers have resulted. The port employers, as well as everyone else, is bewildered by their success, and the former, predictably furious. From the right wing worthies of the Labour Movement, as well as from employers and Tory press, come stories of plots, conspiracies, blind fools of dockers led by blind committee men. No prominent spokesman of orthodoxy in the gigantic Labour Election campaign, running whilst the dockers embarked on their militant one day a week strike action, even dreamed of enquiring as to the cause of the movement, or of seeking to draw political lessons for socialists from it. Instead, in varying degrees, the dreary accusations of 'irresponsible elements' were trotted forth. Yet here, in precise terms, are the facts of the case. It's unlikely to find space outside the Socialist press. Yet Hull port employers bought a big advert in the Hull Mail to insert a most misleading, alarmist 'message to the public.' This is we think, a worthy reply:-

One must ask the question- What are the reasons for unrest in the Port of Hull? Firstly it must be realised that the average docker is very wary of his future in view of the Devlin report, modernisation, etc. He will support any organisation or committee, that will spotlight his fears and draw attention to the many under-rated piece work schedules in the port. These token stoppages, he believes, may prod the Port Employers out of the slow working constitutional procedure they invariably stick to; thus achieving greater security than at present. Unfortunately the Hull docker sees his wage structure decided many miles away in London by a majority of Union officials of London origin. These national agreements seem to leave no redress or rights to adjust to local requirements. An example is the recent Christmas Holiday Agreement, which led to many allegations of a sell out by the Union. Hull dockers see their daily minimum guarantee of £2.1.8. remaining static, until the next national agreement and the only way to earn more is to try the impossible and put more effort into their work to gain extra on piecework. To the dock labourer in Hull, the problem is a simple one, which should not need explaining. He sees the man who does the hard, physical labour in the port continually falling behind others not on piecework; for example:-

Shipping clerks: £3.18.4. plus 15/- on general cargo ships or £1 on timber ships. Foremen No 1: £4.3.2. plus average piece work earnings on the ship. Talleyman: £3.2.6. per day. Lighterman: £3.2.6. per day. This is a brief summary of how the daily guarantee of £2.1.8. affects the ordinary dock labourer.

Throughout the years the men who have been very poorly paid, the non piece work labourers have been at the forefront of any national negotiations; and rightly so. But this has been to the detriment of the piecework in as much as greater increase on the existing time rate has been agreed. (In hard cash this has not been great). In Hull, mainly a piece work port, only a small proportion of time work is done and therefore it is felt (rightly or wrongly) that the same percentage increase offered to the time worker over/



Hull dockers' fight continued/

Hull percentages are based on 1947:

1947 Daily Guarantee 19/-

1966 Daily Guarantee 41/8 (19/- plus 119.3 per cent)

The pieceworker receives, on any rate that has not been adjusted by local negotiations, the 1947 rate plus 69.575 percent. For example a cargo at the rate of 1/- per ton, per man:

1947 19 tons at 1/-..19/-  
(Daily Guarantee is 19/-)

1966 19 tons at 1/- plus 69.575 per cent..32/- (Daily Guarantee is 41/8d)

It can be seen that the pieceworker must produce about one third more output to reach the Daily Guarantee level than he did in 1947. These are the plain facts of the case. Is the docker the villain of the piece? Or is it the private employer whose profits are hidden under a cloak of secrecy?

MANCHESTER SOCIALIST CONFERENCE ON INCOMES POLICY from Colin Barker

There will be an open discussion conference on Incomes Policy in Manchester on Sunday 27th February commencing at 2.30 p.m. The conference will be held in the A.E.U. rooms, 120, Rusholme Rd., All Saints, and the speakers will be Tony Topham, editor Humberside Voice, and John Forrester, Divisional Organiser, D.A.T.A.

In a leaflet explaining the purpose of the conference the organisers, the Manchester Socialist Conference, say: "Employers make such large investments that they have to plan them well in advance. They want to know what their costs are going to be, so we find they are prepared to accept a certain amount of planning by the state. In particular they need to know what their wage costs will be. That is why there has been a lot of talk now about an 'incomes policy.' As the employers own most of industry, the Government has to seek their co-operation and offer them inducements. The aim is that this should take the form of a controlled growth of wages. They call it an incomes policy." The statement concludes with an explanation of the Manchester Socialist Conference's opposition to the incomes policy.

SOUTH EAST LONDON C.S.E. FORMED

from Inge Westergaard

The South East London Centre for Socialist Education was formed on January 27th. 18 people were present and after hearing Chris Farley outline aims, present organisation and future plans of the Centre, there was a general discussion on possibilities in South East London. It was decided to draw up a panel of speakers and topics to be offered to local labour movement organisations, draw up a list of what expertise there was available locally, and call a further meeting in the fairly near future on the basis of an extended list of potential supporters, at which further proposals for activities would be discussed. Such activities could take the form of both 'education' (in the first place by provision of speakers and by the holding of public meetings) and of 'study' (i.e. of selected issues by active supporters of the local group, meeting on a regular basis. A provisional steering committee was elected, with the following composition: Malcolm Caldwell (chairman), Inge Westergaard (secretary), Tony Stone and John Westergaard. All enquiries should go to me at: 7, The Glebe, London S.E. 3.



FRED LEE - A COMMENT, From Ted Woolley,\*

I really must take issue with your editorial: 'Fred Lee Must Go.' The points made on the previous page and those relating to the need for unity of Miners and Railwaymen, whilst they do not in any way exhaust the subject of an integrated fuel policy, are essentially correct. But why after going so far towards a decent analysis of the situation, prostitute the matter by such demands as those in paragraph six? Is the root of miners' problems today to be seen in the subjective to the firing of Lee? Does Lee in fact make the policy? Are not the real issues the current requirements of British capitalism - the system - posed in contradiction to the happiness and welfare of some half a million mineworkers? And is it not necessary to advance policies, which will draw that half million and their families along the road to the only final solution? Instead you offer a puerile slogan and at least the implied suggestion that 'new strong hands' can reverse the process. It is really here that the greatest affront is made by you. In fact you hereby peddle the view, that the present set up in the Labour machine can, by a few changes of personnel, become Socialist in our sense of the word. This in turn reduces us to Blanquism.

Mechanisation, automation, electronics and finally cybernetics can, in a very short space of time eliminate the need for labour power in the pits. Viewed in terms of health, as miners put it, 'care o' the bone' that is a fine thing. No more lungs solid with coal or silica dust, no more smashed bodies, no more bloody corpses, less bronchitis, arthritis, less old men of 50. And this process, given survival, is inevitable. The question is simply; does capitalism organise the introduction of this new era or does a socialist, working class movement? If it is the former, we shall have repeated the usual callous solution, perhaps modified by a Labour Government, so that the old lads of sixty go out with a couple of hundred pounds and eighteen months dole, followed by P.A. And will this kind of man, then care much, if Lee or Castle perform the funeral rights?

The rationalisation programme, to borrow the coal board's terminology, can have no other effect. Coal will be cheaper and will then rival other power sources in attractiveness, especially when stability of oil sources and balance of payments crises have to be considered. On top of this, the taxpayer contributes the sum of upwards of £250,000 per annum protecting the interests of 'oil imperialism' in fact a hidden subsidy to imperialism. Clearly then coal is an economic proposition, as well as being politically safe. Every issue then of a pit closure or concentration within a pit can raise directly the right of capitalism to survive or not. Our job is to formulate a programme and a policy which takes this potential and converts it to political energy. In all seriousness, do you believe Lee has any major significance in or out of the Fuel Ministry.

\*Ted Woolley is a miner, active in the Lancashire N.U.M.

#### FURTHER VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEETINGS PLANNED

In addition to the Nottingham (February 18th at the Co-op Education Centre, 7.30), Hull (February 20th at the A.E.U. rooms, 7.30), Birmingham (March 1st, Council Chambers, 7.30), other meetings are now in the process of being organised in Bristol, Manchester, Cambridge and Oxford.

STOP PRESS: We now know a meeting is to be held in Colchester University, see notice board for hall, on Wednesday 23rd of February, at 7.30



## FUEL POLICY: THE ANSWERS COME IN

Several replies have been received to the questionnaire we published in a recent issue of The Week. Here is a selection; more will be published next week.

(1) From Eric Ogden, M.P., who is a member of the N.U.M., ex branch official and an N.U.M. sponsored M.P.

Question: Are you satisfied with the present fuel policy which is being carried out by the Government?

Answer: No.

Comment: The Government has given the coal industry a great deal of help and support - much more than is apparently realised outside, but much more support is needed for the next 5-year period.

Question: Do you think that Labour's pledge to carry out an integrated fuel policy is adequately being honoured?

Answer: So far as possible in this short time - yes.

Question: If not, how do you think it should be honoured?

Answer: Integration means that much more intervention will have to be undertaken by Government direct orders to all fuel industries to fit national needs, national interests.

Question: Would you favour Governmental intervention in the oil industry, including the nationalisation of its commanding heights?

Answer: Government have intervened. Would support control at right time.

Question: Do you think it is possible to integrate fuel policy without control of the key oil industries?

Answer: No.

Question: Are you satisfied with the provisions which are being made to assist mining communities which are affected by the closure programme?

Answer: Yes.

Comment: The Government's proposals are practical and comprehensive - capable of adaption to local needs and changes. (We will) have to keep a close watch on the situation.

Question: Under the present policies being carried out, what in your opinion is the future in mining?

Answer: Difficult for the next 3 years - good after that.

Question: Would you advise your son to be a miner?

Answer: If a technical position, Yes!

More fuel policy answers over/

## HARROW G.S.E. INAUGURAL MEETING

from Peter Jenner

Well over 100 local working class organisations have been invited to the the inaugural meeting of Harrow CSE on Friday, February 18th, at the Labour Hall, Wealdstone. Ralph Miliband, senior lecturer in politics at London University, will answer the question "Where is the Labour Government going?", linking his talk to the need for the establishment of a chain of Centres for Socialist Education. In the chair: Geoff Carlsson, chairman of shop stewards, ENV. The meeting will also consider proposals for the operation of the Centre, including debates, study groups, discussions and other activity. A permanent committee is to be set up to plan a detailed programme.



Fuel policy continued/

(2) From G.C. Shephard, general secretary of the Colliery Officials and Staffs Area section of the N.U.M.

Question: Are you satisfied with the present fuel policy which is being carried out by the Government?

Answer: The term fuel "fuel policy" has become one of the most circulated cliches in common use since the end of the war. It is also the one cliché for which it is impossible to find any agreed definition...in fact, those who articulate most under the heading "fuel policy" are the least enthusiastic to attempt a definition. The truth is that to plan or preconceive a role for a nationalised industry, which is by its very nature an industry geared to supplying one commodity of several alternatives, within a free overall economy is a supreme paradox from the outset.

To the extent that Labour's policies are only politically acceptable to the electorate so long as they eschew the totalitarian concept then Labour is highly inhibited in the steps it can take to maximise the usage of indigenous solid fuel as one of the alternative sources of fuel and energy that are available in this generation.

In my view and conscious of the fact that the electorate places a supreme requirement on its "freedom of choice" the Government should take steps on two specific aspects of the problem, as far as coal is concerned:

(i) it should insist that the Coal Board re-orient completely its traditional attitudes that their responsibilities stop at the pit gates and should vigorously assume complete control of the distribution side of the industry; and (ii) should examine the entire economics of the transportation of coal and the structure (concealed as they are) of freight charges on coal: both these issues dwarf the sort of national debate which drags on endlessly about the future of <sup>the</sup> coal industry...such debate, ending as it does, at the colliery precincts.

Question: Do you think that Labour's pledge to carry out an integrated fuel policy is being adequately honoured?

Answer: No! pledges about the integration of fuel and energy sources should not be made except as concomitants of a parallel pledge to nationalise any alternative sources at least at their point of arrival within this country. And it is doubtful if, electorally, such a policy is acceptable...: one discerns no concern within the trade union movement even, to demand the nationalisation of North Sea gas potential or the petrol and oil supply and refining.

Question: Would you favour Governmental intervention in the oil industry, including the nationalisation of its commanding heights?

Answer: Yes, within the only dimension that such a concept is realistic at all, viz.: at the point of arrival in the U.K.

Question: Do you think it is possible to integrate fuel policy without control of the key oil industries?

Answer: No.

Question: Under the present policies being carried out, what in your opinion is the future in mining?

Answer: A future characterised by even more rapid withdrawal to the hard core of highly economic units whence even their future is rendered less certain by the fallacy of the assumption that thinking and policies apropos the coal industry can afford to terminate at the pit gates

continued over/



Fuel policy continued/

Question: Are you satisfied with the provisions which are being made to assist mining communities which are affected by the closure programme?

Answer: No.

Question: If not, what provisions would you recommend?

Answer: A broad declaration from the Board of Trade and other Ministries that certain mining areas are scheduled as Development Districts; that additional factory accommodation is intended; that by a certain year and under the National Plan there will be a manpower shortage of x,000, all require converting into strictly pragmatical steps to deal with the problem of contraction in mining areas. The 1960's call for more sophisticated applications than mere policy declarations; get Ministry of Labour and Board of Trade, and Employer organisations all down to the job at the colliery and within the community concerned and deal with the problem...instead of postulating it.

Question: Would you advise your son to be a miner?

Answer: No! but he would probably find plenty of vocational scope in the endless manufacture of comment, and policy papers, and publicity mart, all of which place upon coal the virtually impossible role of trying to function as a nationalised industry in a sector of the economy which, at the same time, houses the very citadels of private enterprise in the shape of the oil combines; and having taken on the challenges from those sources the coal industry is required to carry and harbour a distribution set-up which is the very antithesis of what the nationalised concept stands for.

#### INSURANCE UNIONS FORM CONFEDERATION from a special correspondent

A significant development in the growing unionisation of "white collar" workers took place last week. The National Union of Insurance Workers, the Guild of Insurance Officials, the National Union of Co-operative Insurance Society Employees and the Co-operative Insurance branch of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers have formed the Confederation of Insurance Trade Unions. The first chairman of the confederation is to be Mr. Maurice Reynolds, general secretary of the G.I.O., the vice-chairman is to be Mr. Gordon Cree, from the C.I.S., agents' branch of U.S.D.A.W., and the secretary Mr. John Jones, of the Refuge Assurance section of the N.U.I.W.

The decision to form a confederation followed talks about the possibility of further amalgamations among insurance unions. As a first step it was decided to form a confederation and the constitution of the new body was discussed with the T.U.C., which raised no objection to the proposal. There are to be two main objectives for the Confederation of Insurance Trade Unions. The first is to be the discussion of "all matters of common concern to employees in the insurance industry," and "taking of such action arising therefrom as may be deemed fit provided that the confederation shall not take decisions upon any matters which may conflict with the rules of any of its constituent members." The second main object is the organisation of deputations to discuss issues with Government departments and promote propaganda campaigns. There has been talk of the need for common action for some time but the Government's prices and incomes policy has given this more impetus. The T.U.C.'s vetting committee has had to give considerable attention to the insurance world because some of the claims in the pipeline would involve increases of up to 50%. It is to be hoped the new organisation will take a firm line,



## INDIAN WORKERS ASSOCIATION TO SPONSOR VIETNAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The following letter has been received by the Ad Hoc Committee which is running the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign from the secretary of the Indian Workers Association (Great Britain):

"Thank you very much indeed for your letter inviting our organisation to sponsor your campaign for the solidarity with the people of Vietnam. We shall be delighted to do so and wish to send the following message:  
'The Indian workers in Britain pledge their solidarity with the workers and peasants of Vietnam in their heroic fight against the oppression of U.S. imperialism. The Indian workers know that this is a war against their fellow Asians as well as a war against the whole of humanity. Only when this fight has been successfully concluded can the people of Vietnam live without fear and want.'"

### WALL STREET PEACE PANIC

from Dave Windsor

The following most instructive report appeared in last Sunday's issue of the Sunday Times:

"Wall street showed its true colours on Tuesday when news tickers carried a story that Ho Chi Minh was sending a letter to India to initiate peace moves in Vietnam. Though the report later proved to be only an old letter to three Indo-China Control Commission members, the American stock market for an hour or so went into a peace panic.

"Hardest hit on the 'peace scare' were aircraft shares. On the day Douglas Aircraft dropped from  $111\frac{7}{8}$  to 102, Grumman from  $55\frac{7}{8}$  to  $48\frac{1}{2}$ , General Dynamics from 59 to 53, Lockheed Aircraft from  $63\frac{3}{8}$  to 58 and Boeing from  $166\frac{1}{4}$  to  $158\frac{1}{4}$ ."

### VIETNAM - LABOUR'S POLICY IN OPPOSITION

by Tony Morris

The Labour Party's Speakers' Notes for the 1959 General Election (printed and published by Transport House) contains the following extract from the Foreign Affairs section dealing with Vietnam. No comment on the extract is required from me, it speaks for itself: (my emphasis throughout)

#### "Vietnam

A very dangerous situation exists in the former French Indo-Chinese colony of Vietnam. By the 1954 Peace Treaty all foreign troops were to be withdrawn from both North and South Vietnam within a short period and the local troops were to re-group north and south of the 17th parallel. Free elections were to be held by July 1956 to unite the whole country. The British Government, as one of the co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference, has had a special responsibility, together with the International Supervisory Commission, to see that the terms of the Treaty were carried out. Yet what has happened?

"In both north and south separate governments have been established. The north has continually expressed its willingness to hold all-Vietnamese elections in accordance with the Peace Treaty - again and again the south has refused. Yet not a squeak of protest from the Tories - supposedly the upholders of the 1954 settlement. Indeed, by recognising, and having diplomatic relations with, the south and not with the north, the Tories are conniving at the breach of Treaty.

continued over/



Vietnam - Labour's policy in opposition continued/

"Is all this important? The Labour Party thinks that it is:

1. By refusing to honour a specific treaty obligation to hold free elections, which the Communists may win, in Vietnam, the Western Powers very much weaken their position in demanding, for example, free all-German elections which they expect to win.
2. The 1954 Conference at Geneva was welcome for broader reasons than simply relief that the Indo-Chinese war was ended. It was the first conference between East and West that met with success. It is clearly in the interests of both great power blocs to ensure that once a settlement of a particular problem is achieved it is adhered to. This the only way to ensure a gradual growth of international confidence."

HELP THE CAMPAIGN FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM by Pat Jordan

The Campaign for Solidarity with the People of Vietnam is getting with the job of preparing a broad and representative delegation to the Solidarity Conference (now to be held the week end of the 4/5 June.) The various jobs have been allocated out and all readers are asked to contact the following if they think they can help:

Youth organisations' participation:	Tony Stone, 120, Bournbrook Rd., London S.E. 3.
Students' organisations "	Julian Atkinson, 34, Crown Woods Way, London S.E. 9.
Trade union and Labour Party "	Pat Jordan, 4, Dane St., Nottingham.
Regional meetings	Chris Farley,
London meetings	" " c/o BRPF, 3 & 4, Shavers Place, Haymarket, London S.W. 1.
Immigrants' organisations "	M. Manchanda, 58, Lisburne Rd., London N.W. N.W. 3.
Items for Campaign Bulletin	Bill Vester, c/o P. Jordan.

All the above are anxious to receive the address of people likely to be interested or organisations worth contacting.

INFLATION IN SAIGON

From John Weavers

The following has been extracted from an article by Michael Wall which appeared in the Guardian of 10th February:

"....Today, the most pressing problem facing the Vietnamese Government and the Americans is the terrifying inflationary spiral. In Saigon it has been estimated that, excluding rice and sugar, the price of foodstuffs has risen almost 95% since January 1. In cities outside Saigon the rises have been even greater.

"Salaries of Government officials, office workers, and the armed services have not risen, and there is increasing bitterness against the Government for its inability to do anything, and against the American presence, which is blamed for the price rises. Unless some drastic action is taken, inflation rather than the Vietcong activity could lose the war. Alone, it can sap the will to fight."

Of course, if there is any movement by the workers to put right their grievances it will be blamed upon subversion from the North.



I should like to take up some of the issues raised by Tony Topham and other writers in The Week in regard to the tactics and prospects of the Left.

1) I would argue that with certain minor qualifications the Left in Britain has been in headlong retreat since 1961. In policy terms not merely have we failed to carry the Labour movement on such central issues as neutralism and public ownership, but we have been forced back to fight on issues which at one time seemed barely arguable- eg immigration, union rights. The "reconstruction" of the Labour Party as a modern "classless" electoral machine governed by an opportunistic oligarchy and directed toward neo-capitalist "modernising" objectives has actually gone further and faster under Wilson than under Gaitskell. At the strategic level we have seen the virtual extinction of parliamentary opposition to Labour policy and leadership, a quiescent rank-and-file Left and the collapse of CND, the one great independent mass movement of protest since the thirties. Whole areas of debate that we opened (the Cold War, the role of the U.N., the mass media) are now closed, whole channels of opposition that we utilised (mass demonstrations, civil disobedience) are now disused. It is true that recently the Labour Left has begun to regroup its shattered forces and that, as Tony Topham says, some significant new propaganda and organisational initiatives have been taken. But valuable though these developments are, they are still highly localised, narrowly confined to hard-core Labour activists and in fact represent only the merest beginnings of a counter-attack by the Left. It is surely time for the Left to have learnt that a roll-call of publications and organisations does not constitute a movement.

2) Tony Topham and Ken Tarbuck assert that the "main struggle is at home". I take this to be the quasi-marxist formula that domestic or "class" issues are somehow "prior" to international issues. That the struggle against the Cold War against imperialism and racism, somehow takes its "real" form in internal industrial confrontations, that the causes of international peace and freedom are best advanced by tackling the "underlying" causes on the home front. I reject this both as a theory and a tactic. In my view (a) the most serious political issues that face us are precisely international issues war, race and poverty (as the Radical Alliance put it); (b) these international evils are the outcome of a complex of factors- military, political, economic, ideological- which is not reduceable to any simple formula; (c) although clearly "conditioned" by domestic factors, international issues are not mere "reflections" of domestic class needs or divisions but are the outcome of factors lying in the semi-autonomous sphere of "international relations"; (d) socialists in combating international problems must offer international solutions, must organise campaigns specifically directed towards these issues, must argue and propagandise in international terms, must meet the opposing side on each and every level of their defence. The attempt to reduce the struggle over foreign policy to a struggle over domestic concerns in fact means surrendering the foreign policy field to the enemy, abdicating our responsibilities in that sphere. (Incidentally it seems to me astonishing that one has still to make these points after nearly a decade of work by the New Left and CND).

TRADE UNIONS URGE LLANDUDNO BOYCOTT

from a Welsh reader

Colwyn Bay, Llandudno and district trades council has appealed to every trades council in Britain urging that Llandudno and Colwyn Bay be boycotted as conference centres by trade unions. This is because of a dispute over trade union recognition at the Colwyn Bay factory of Quinton Hazell Ltd., manufacturers of motor car components. More than 550 letters to this effect went out on February 10th.



The Vietnam war and the discussion within the anti-war movement has led to a division within the Socialist Party. Along with SANE (editorial note: the nearest approach to CND in the USA) and the Communist Party, the Socialist Party stands on the right wing of the anti-war movement, refusing to support the demand to bring U.S. troops home at once. The SP leadership insists on counterposing a call for negotiations to the demand for immediate US withdrawal. This position has now provoked an opposition within the party.

The issue will be resolved by a membership referendum, according to a report in a recent issue of the party paper, New America. Two motions are being presented to the membership - one for negotiations, the other for immediate withdrawal. The negotiations motion is being presented by Norman Thomas and has already been adopted as official policy by the party's national committee. The motion favouring immediate withdrawal is described as the "Oppenheimer resolution" as "updated and rewritten by NC members Saul Mendelson and Debbie Meier."

The party position, as presented in the Thomas motion, makes clear that while the party leaders would like to see an end to the war, they don't want to see it end in a way that would be a defeat for the Johnson administration which Thomas and most of the SP leaders support as part of their "coalition" policy of working with the Democratic Party. The resolution states: "The Socialist Party calls for an end to the war in Vietnam. We urge the president and the U.S. government to propose an immediate ceasefire and a prompt beginning of negotiations convened by the Geneva nations of 1954 or by the United Nations, in which all parties concerned, including the National Liberation Front, the political arm of the Vietcong, take part."

In an accompanying statement to the motion, Thomas explains why he is against U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. "A simple withdrawal of American forces," he declares, "would almost certainly mean a Communist military victory... We have to recognise the existence of the Vietcong and the reasons for its existence," he adds, "but we are not Communists and we are aware of Vietcong's type of terrorism. We do not want to go out of our way to add strength to a Chinese imperial communism (or to a Russian) in Southeast Asia and that would be the effect of simple withdrawal."

The withdrawal motion is based on two considerations: (1) The negotiations position does not square with the principle of self-determination for all nations. (2) Prosecution of wars such as the one the U.S. is waging in Vietnam is not the way to defeat Communism. The resolution proposes: "The Socialist Party unequivocally condemns the present policy of the U.S. Government in Vietnam... we favour an orderly and unconditional withdrawal of American men and materials of war from the Vietnam area, beginning immediately." The resolution adds: "Our policy has served to resolidify the support of both the Soviet Union and Communist China for North Vietnam and has played directly into the hands of extreme elements of the Communist side." U.S. policy, it says, "can increase popular support for the Vietcong and the N.L.F.. It can increase North Vietnam and the N.L.F.'s dependence on China...." Discussion in the pages of New America indicates some degree of support for the withdrawal position on the basis of respecting the principle of self-determination, although there is no public indication that anyone in the party supports the struggle of the south Vietnamese for freedom as expressed in the National Liberation front guerrilla movement.



Arnold Kettle puts forward a programme for united left action, and many of the points most left-wingers would agree with, but there are a number which raise doubts. For instance "End Britain's Support for U.S. policy in Vietnam". Unless this is firmly linked with not merely being against the Wilson policy but also for a victory of the N.L.F. and the withdrawal of U.S. troops, this could lead to support for 'negotiations'. In the present situation such negotiations would only be entered into by the U.S. to connive at obtaining at the table what they are incapable of obtaining in battle.

When the government is asked to support "Stop appeasing the Smith Government in Rhodesia", it at first evokes a positive response, but does this mean that Kettle is for sending British troops into Rhodesia? Many of us on the left would be against this. I think that they would only go there to act in the interests of British imperialism, for since when has the British Army acted as a colonial liberation force? The proper course is for Britain to aid the Rhodesian Africans to throw out the Smith regime themselves, and to aid them in any way they desire .

Again- what are we to make of "Steel nationalisation as a first step to a systematic attack on the power of the monopolies". We have to ask in view of past experience of nationalisation- is not the proper policy "For steel nationalisation under workers' control". This is a point socialists should be clear on. Nationalisation without workers' control is merely state-capitalism. Furthermore nationalisation must not merely be of one industry but of the real commanding heights. Is the Communist Party for workers' control?

I think the next item is a crucial one for any discussion on the way forward for the left, not only in this country but in the world. Kettle suggests that the united left should demand "New initiatives in foreign policy towards disengagement, disarmament and positive forms of peaceful co-existence". What is meant by peaceful co-existence? Is it possible to coexist with American aggression in Vietnam? Is it possible to coexist with imperialism's attempts to strangle the Cuban or any socialist/nationalist revolution? I think not. If peaceful co-existence leads to such situations as the 1954 Geneva Agreement on Vietnam, I would say the answer to such a policy is daily being demonstrated in South Vietnam. Look at the present plight of the Indonesian Communist Party. Peace is not bought by asking imperialism to stop being what it is by its very nature. It can only be gained by struggle against imperialism until it is defeated. If Arnold Kettle wants to unite the left, let him come forward with a socialist foreign policy of anti-imperialism. Today America is the main bastion of imperialism- this means a policy directed to defeating America and its allies in their overseas adventures.

This reply leaves unsaid many things. However, I will conclude by saying that before Arnold Kettle can think of asking the left to unite with him and other members of the C.P.G.B. in an organised campaign he should put his own house in order. It is not enough at this stage to come forward with suggestions such as he does, because the Left will still be sceptical. This does not mean of course that those on the Left should not work with members of the Communist Party in individual campaigns.

APPEAL SHOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY: K.Y. Kintoul, of Bristol, writes: "The Communist Party's appeal for united action should be seriously debated...It was made in a friendly spirit and should not be hastily dismissed. Labour's left has to fight reaction in many evil forms today and our common cause might be greatly strengthened through co-operation with CPGB even if it were only on a short term trial period before and during the next election. The present political situation is extremely serious and we will need all the help we can get. The spectacle of the railwaymen's struggle - fighting desperately merely to retain what advantages they have...should be a warning to us all of what the Labour movement is up against.