

The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS
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C.B.R.
SELL-OUT

**A PROGRAM
FOR THE LEFT**

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THE BERTRAND RUSSELL PEACE FOUNDATION LTD.

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13th December, 1967.

Dear Friend,

We regret that our involvement in the Copenhagen Session of the International War Crimes Tribunal has delayed publication of "The London Bulletin" and has left us out of touch with you for several weeks. In a few days you will be receiving a comprehensive report on the Copenhagen session of the Tribunal as well as other information on the current activities of the Foundation.

We are writing to you at this time to invite you to a meeting in London this Saturday, December 16th at Caxton Hall, S.W.1. at 7.30 p.m. We feel that this will be the most important meeting on Vietnam in Britain this year. It will feature a brief report on the dramatic findings of the International War Crimes Tribunal in Copenhagen, a prize-winning Cuban film on the effects of the war on everyday life in Hanoi and a report by Dr. Francis Kahn.

Dr. Kahn is a French physician who has recently visited areas of South Vietnam controlled by the National Liberation Front. He visited these regions as a member of a small investigating team sent by the Tribunal. This team represents the first opportunity for professional observers from Western Europe to enter these regions. Earlier in the spring of this year, Dr. Kahn travelled very extensively in bombarded regions of North Vietnam. He examined numerous victims of the bombardment, including civilians wounded by napalm and fragmentation bombs. On Saturday, Dr. Kahn will speak at length on his observations in both North and South Vietnam. There will, of course, be opportunities to question him.

We very much want to make this meeting a great success. We hope to see you there and hope also that you will encourage other interested people to attend.

Yours fraternally,

Russell Stetler

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NOVEMBER TRADE FIGURES - THE WORST EVER

The figures given by the Board of Trade for Britain's exports and imports during November of this year are very grim for the Government. Although Mr. Crosland tries to blame the dock strike for the crash in exports (some £86 million down on the average before the dock strikes) this argument, even if true, would not account for the £40 million increase in imports. The basic reason for this position is that the people who run industry - and their political representatives - are unable to modernise Britain. The Wilson Government has tried to do this by imposing higher unemployment and a wage freeze and the result has been to make the position worse. Now voices are being raised in the Cabinet to try to improve Britain's trade position by exporting arms to South Africa.

Everything indicates that the Government will meet the difficulties indicated by these trade figures by imposing further sacrifices upon the British people, starting with the working class. The proposed arms deal with South Africa is part of the same policy. It shows that having rejected the socialist option the Wilson Government has no alternative but to go further and further to the right.

That is why the left must fight the Government and work for the replacement of the present leadership. This latest set of trade figures should spur the left on; under no circumstances should the left rally around Wilson. The fact that the Government is unable to improve the economic position of the country should be seen as an argument for fighting to replace Wilson all the more quickly. Gestures like that of the staff side of the National Whitley Council for civil servants in postponing their wage claim "until the economic situation improves" are pointless and harmful. The bunch in power will only regard action like this as an encouragement to demand other sections make similar sacrifices.

This winter promises to be a hard one for the workers of Britain. It should see the beginning of a struggle to replace the present leadership of the Labour Party and Government. People like John Dickens, M.P., who said that the talk of sending arms to South Africa was the last straw for supporters of the Labour Party, could do much to stimulate such a fight if they were to support the call to fight to replace Wilson and co. That such a fight must be on the basis of a socialist programme is of paramount import.

A PROGRAMME FOR THE LEFT

We have published this week a special six-page article on the question of a programme for the left. This has been also published as a separate pamphlet costing 3d (plus 3d postage for one to three copies; 5d postage for four to six; and over six post free). We will be very happy to have comments upon this pamphlet and to send speakers to organisations.

VIETNAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Conference of Trade Unionists on Vietnam will be held in London on Saturday, March 2nd, 1968. This will open a week of concentrated action against the Vietnam war. The Stop-It Committee, in cooperation with other groups is organising local demonstrations throughout the country aimed mainly at British firms manufacturing material for use by the U.S. and her allies in Vietnam. The American movement is calling another international day of protest in March and we hope that this will coincide with the end of this week of action. The V.S.C. Trade Union Conference is sponsored by Jack Ashwell, T. & G.W.U., George Andrews, T. & G.W.U., Mike Neve, T. & G.W.U., Bill Jones, T. & G.W.U., Lawrence Daly, N.U.M., Hugh Scanlon, A.E.U., Ernie Roberts, A.E.U., Gordon Norris, N.U.S., and Tom Watkinson, N.U.R. (all individuals in their personal capacity).

The conference will discuss means of propaganda in the trade union movement; the collection of medical aid and supplies for Vietnam; and the question of British complicity in the manufacture of war goods for the U.S. Resolutions and proposals for action are invited. Delegates with full voting rights will be accepted from trades councils, trade union branches, shop stewards committees and similar bodies. Other active trade unionists are invited to attend as observers with the right to speak. There will be a delegation fee of five shillings. All enquiries to Sabby Sagall, c/o V.S.C., 49 Rivington St., LONDON, E.C.2.

VIETNAM VICTORY CONCERT

Celebrate the Seventh Anniversary of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam with:

- ADRIAN MITCHELL THE SCREAMING UNDERGROUND EXPRESS
- GERALD FORSYTE COMBO STEEL BAND JAKOV LIND
- GINGER JOHNSON AND HIS MAGICAL AFRICAN MASSAGE CUBAN POSTERS

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE CARTOON ARCHETYPICAL SLOGAN THEATRE

THE MAJESTIC HEADS THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

FOLK SINGERS FILMS REFRESHMENTS (etc.)

AT: the round house, chalk farm, friday, december 22nd.

FROM: 9.30 p.m. - ?? a.m. (note new starting time)

All tickets: 10/- from V.S.C., 49 Rivington St., E.C.2. or at door.

The term "sell-out" is an emotive one and should be used only when the issues are extremely clear. Judging from the statements of the C.B.R. lockout committee, the leadership of the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers deserves the condemnation of the entire labour movement for its action in calling off the 8-month-old dispute at C.B.R. Jersey Mills, Brighton. As readers of The Week will know from previous articles, the dispute started when workers at C.B.R. were locked out for refusing to sign declarations to the effect that they would not join a union. Previously they had been expected to work 72 hours a week at half union rates. Their stand has won respect throughout the labour movement.

Despite the behaviour of the union's leadership, the dispute will continue unofficially, with the support of the Brighton Trades Council. The latter in a press statement pledged full support for the workers involved and expressed disappointment at the outcome. Its official statement complained that "the agreement now reached was made without the slightest consultation at local level." Contributions to the lockout fund are now needed more than ever and should go to: C.B.R. Appeal Fund, 21, Vale Avenue, Patcham, Brighton, Sussex.

According to a press release from the lockout committee, dated 9th December, "Yesterday, the President of the NUHKW came to Brighton to communicate a settlement he had reached with C.B.R., as follows: (1) It is a fundamental right that workers may belong to a trade union. Both parties accept this. (2) It is understood that one of the functions of a trade union is to negotiate on behalf of its members. (3) During the dispute, sufficient labour has joined the company for the plant to be fully manned at present and therefore no employment opportunities exist. (4) The parties agree to use their best endeavours to reach a better relationship. (5) On the basis of the above understandings the parties agree that it is in the interests of all concerned that the present dispute is now terminated.

"The locked out NUHKW members object both to the settlement and to the way it was reached. Firstly, recognition and reinstatement are interdependent. Roffe has never disputed recognition- but he dismisses employees who join a union. The above agreement could have been reached at any time....We object, secondly, that there is no point in ending the dispute at this time. The CBR Lockout has aroused nationwide interest, since at CBR the minimum working week is 72 hours. Last Friday was also the 250th day of the lockout, and we had received many messages of support..." The statement then gives details of messages of support from Ernie Roberts, the president of the N.U.J., etc.

"Thirdly, the president himself said that it was a fait accompli. We were not consulted, and we were not allowed to discuss the settlement. The men were offered sums of money up to £200 each if they signed a document over a 2d stamp agreeing that the dispute was ended....The president also refused to attend a meeting with Brighton Trades Council, although the Appeal Fund launched by Brighton Trades Council has contributed a third as much financially as the union. The men consider themselves still in dispute with CBR. They will continue..to picket daily. We wish all those who have supported the CBR lockout to know that this settlement is false, unreasonable and undemocratic. We remain members of the NUHKW and will request NUHKW members to question the conduct of union officers..."

RENTS' LETTER SCANDAL

by Ken Varney

The uproar has still to subside over the proposed Tory rent increases in London (and will not subside if the left plays a correct role in harnessing the tenants' justified anger into a coherent opposition). However, Transport House has seen fit to join in the affray and try to decapitate the movement before it gets started. In a letter dated 5th December, which was circulated to all CLPs and Labour Groups in the GLC area, Mr. L.G. Sims, secretary of the Greater London Co-ordinating Committee, wrote:

"We must also consider the part that the Party can play in the GLC estates themselves. There is bound to be strong reaction from the tenants and we must take the initiative in the estates to avoid the more extreme elements 'cashing in' by exploiting the situation and advocating actions which could only result in worsening the position of tenants and lose them public sympathy."

This is obviously an attempt to head-off the left from intervening in the campaign to stop the ridiculous increases (as much as 70%, in some cases). On Sunday 10th December, Robert Mellish called a meeting and outlined his proposals to all London CLP secretaries. When certain Labour Party secretaries formulated militant action against the increases, e.g., rent strikes and the burning of increase notification forms, Mr. Mellish nearly exploded. He warned that action would be taken against extremists.

Obviously, the tenants cannot rely on Mr. Mellish and his cronies to fight the rent increases. However, it would be a mistake to think that the tenants should not try to fight their case through the Labour Party. They must take this course of action if they are to have any chance of winning and action must start soon.

JOHN MACLEAN COMMEMORATED

from N.M.

Last Sunday (3rd December) about 100 people gathered at the graveside of "Red Clyde" leader, John Maclean. This memorial meeting was organised by the recently-formed Workers' Party of Scotland (Marxist-Leninist), and was a resumption of the annual commemorative ceremony held since Maclean's death in 1923 until a few years ago.

The W.P.S. decided last month, after Winnie Ewing's victory at Hamilton, that the time had come when Maclean's ideas and theories, and especially his call for a Socialist Republic of Scotland, should again be recognised for their fundamental worth and value in the present political situation.

Ken Houlison (W.P.S.) chaired the meeting and among the speakers were Harry McShane, Maclean's associate of the "Red Clyde" days, famous Scottish writer and broadcaster, Oliver Brown, George Leslie (S.N.P. candidate in the famous Pollok by-election), and Nan Milton, John Maclean's daughter.

TEACHERS' UNION LEADERSHIP WANT LINK WITH T.U.C. from a teacher

The executive of the National Union of Teachers announced on December 7th that it is to recommend affiliation to the T.U.C. at the union's annual conference, Easter next year. The application will not be made before there has been a referendum of the union's 275,000 members. The teachers' leaders are taking this step because they have no voice in opposition to the wage freeze and other aspects of Government policy.

In the days when Hugh Gaitskell was the leader of the Labour Party, there was a deep split between the Right-wing leadership on the one side and the Parliamentary Left and the Constituency parties on the other. The main cause of the rift was the consensus politics of the leadership, not only in foreign policy, which could be said to be traditional in British parliamentary politics, but also on home affairs. This policy, in fact, had its birth soon after Gaitskell succeeded Stafford Cripps as Chancellor of the Exchequer and was the direct cause of the resignation from the Attlee Cabinet of Nye Bevan and Harold Wilson.

It became known as "Butskellism" because Gaitskell's opposite number on the Tory benches, R.A.B. Butler, pursued roughly the same policy. The basis of Butskellism was that capitalism was here to stay; that, in any case, it had reformed beyond recognition and had nothing in common with the system analysed by Karl Marx in "Capital". Economic slumps and unemployment belonged to the past. The "New Capitalism" was identified with the Welfare State in which life could only get better and better for the great mass of the people. It was summed up by Harold MacMillan in the famous words "You've never had it so good."

This theory came up against harsh reality even during the Attlee administration. British capitalism, lagging behind its main competitors, the United States, Western Germany and Japan, in technical development, simply could not sustain the draining off of a considerable part of the national resources into the social services. When it came to a choice between the social services and private profits, it was the social services which suffered. Thus Gaitskell prepared the way for National Health charges. When Harold Wilson took over the leadership of the Party, he made it his first task to unite the warring factions. His past reputation assured him the support of the Left and he went out of his way to reconcile the Gaitskellites. While in opposition he was able to indulge in radical sounding phraseology on such issues as racialism, South Africa, the Gnomes of Zurich and many others. In power he came up against the same problem - that you can't have an expanding social service and capitalism, given the facts of capitalism in this country. Swallowing most of his past very rapidly, Wilson became the ardent exponent of consensus politics. The wheel has now turned full circle with the elevation of Roy Jenkins to the Treasury. Jenkins is an avowed Gaitskellite, the best disciple of the late leader. For him consensus politics is not a dire necessity or an electoral manoeuvre. It is something in which he really believes. Unlike some of the other Labour leaders, he does not even pretend to be a socialist. This becomes very clear - if there was ever any doubt - in his reply to the question: "What kind of a socialist are you?", put to him by Kenneth Harris in last Sunday's "Observer". He replied: "I have never been greatly interested in the battle of political labels..to some extent the word socialist tended to become a sort of football which was kicked back and forth between two teams.....this tended to become a slightly meaningless argument and ... I probably don't go out of my way to use the word socialist...."

According to Jenkins, the only difference between the Labour Party and the Tories is that the one is "challenging and optimistic" while the other is "instinctively in favour of the established order, and is pessimistic".

continued over/

In such a conception there is no room, of course, for a class analysis of the two parties and reduces their differences to that which divided the Liberals and Tories in the first two decades of this century - nothing fundamental and therefore nothing which could prevent the closest collaboration between the two parties in times of "national crisis".

Faced with the current crisis of British capitalism, it is easy to forecast the shape of Jenkins' first budget. It will be a sharp attack on the living standards of the workers. Housing, education, transport and the Health services are among those which will suffer. He is also the Minister most likely to lend a sympathetic ear to Duncan Sandys' overtures for Labour-Tory co-operation to save British capitalism. The Left will find it hard to swallow the Jenkins pill and it will undoubtedly lead to a new split in the parliamentary party which will be reflected in the Constituencies. More important, perhaps, it will harden the resistance of the Unions and presages a period of militant industrial action in the coming period.

PORTUGUESE STUDENT LEADER VICTIMISED from a Portuguese correspondent

Jose Bernardino, a Portuguese student leader, was arrested by the Portuguese political police (PIDE) in May, 1962. He was twice tortured, first for 8 consecutive days and nights and then for a further period of 9 days and nights. He was finally tried in May, 1963. During the trial, in response to a signal from the judge, he was savagely beaten up by several PIDE agents armed with blackjacks and was carried unconscious from the courtroom. This incident was witnessed by a British student, ^{over} and two lawyers who reported it at a press conference in London presided by the now Solicitor General, Ellwyn Jones, QC.

The sentence in jail of four years, plus the notorious "security measures" (this allows PIDE to prolong the prison sentence by successive periods of 9 months indefinitely without a further trial), was read in his absence. The four year sentence was completed in November, 1966, and Jose Bernardino is about to begin his third period of "security measures".

A new campaign for the liberation of Jose Bernardino has just begun. Lord Russell has issued a statement from which the following quotations are taken:

"Over 4 years ago I drew attention to an act of flagrant injustice in Portugal. In the course of a trumped up trial, Jose Bernardino was brutally beaten up for opposing/tyranny of Salazar....he has already been in prison for 5½ years and could be there indefinitely...Jose Bernardino is a young married man. His life is being slowly destroyed by incarceration. How much cruelty is the world prepared to tolerate from this unspeakable dictatorship in Portugal?"

"It is the duty of all who respect justice and human rights to demand freedom for Jose Bernardino."

Protest should be sent to the Portuguese Ambassador, 11, Belgrave Square, London S.W. 1.

The Portuguese Students Committee in Great Britain, 11b, Bromley Grove, Bromley, Kent, would like to receive copies of any protests sent to the Portuguese Ambassador.

UNITE AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT UNITE FOR SOCIALIST POLICIES!

The fact that it has been necessary for trade unionists to organise a lobby of Parliament on the question of unemployment is, in itself, a telling indictment of the Labour Government. The Labour Party was created by the trade unions to fight politically for the interests of the working class. One of the main reasons why this was thought necessary was because the other parties - Tories and Liberals - justified unemployment on "economic grounds." Now we have a Labour Government doing exactly the same. Not in an honest way, mind you, but by hiding behind the views of such men as the Governor of the Bank of England. Moreover, the facts speak for themselves: there are more people unemployed in Britain now than at any time since the thirties.

The Government is fond of blaming unofficial strikes and restrictive practices for the country's economic ills. Yet it is true to say that there are more days lost in one week through the Government's policy of creating unemployment than in a whole year through strikes. This fact alone shows the hypocrisy of the Government's arguments. Unemployment is artificially induced for one major reason only: that of helping to keep wages down. It is often argued that it is necessary to keep wages down to stop Britain from being priced out of the export market. This, too, is hypocritical. It is precisely those countries like Japan and Germany, which are driving British goods out of markets all over the world, which have registered the highest increases in wages in recent years.

The basic reason why employers want to keep wages down is so that profits can be higher. This Government, because it has neither the will nor the courage to fight the employers, has to come out in favour of profits. Wilson and co. are dedicated to solving Britain's economic ills; because they have rejected socialist policies they are bound to tread the traditional capitalist path. Yet capitalist measures will not solve Britain's problems: thirteen years of Tory Government proved that. When Labour was elected to power in 1964 the mass of trade unionists and Labour Party supporters expected something different from what they got from the Tories. Yet all we get is the same old medicine in a differently-labelled bottle. When the wage-freeze failed to get Wilson out of the mess he introduced devaluation, a policy which everyone admits will bring about a lowering of the standard of living.

THE DANGER OF THE TORIES COMING BACK TO POWER

The Labour Party is paying dearly for this policy: the present Government has lost more by-elections in the last three years than any Government in Britain's history. If there were a General Election now, Labour would probably do as bad as it did in 1931, after the Ramsey McDonald betrayal, when it was reduced to 40-odd seats. Trade unionists and working class people do not want the Tories back. They know that if Mr. Heath and his gang get back into power the Tories will launch a tremendous attack on the trade unions (using legislation introduced by Mr. Wilson) and the social services. The means test will come back and unions will be penalised in the law courts for strikes. Mr. Wilson uses this fear of a Tory come-back to try to suppress discontent in the Labour Party and trade unions. Many on the left have gone along with Mr. Wilson out of loyalty to the Labour Party. We feel that they are very mistaken. The lack of a fight by the traditional left of the Labour Party and trade unions has only encouraged Wilson to go further and further to the right. On the other hand, because they see no prospect of a fight against right wing policies, thousands of people have left the Labour Party or become inactive.

THE NEED FOR UNITY AROUND A PROGRAMME

The forces opposing the Government's policies are fragmented and isolated. Numerous strikes have been beaten because the workers concerned have been left to fight by themselves. The traditional weapon of the working class has always been unity. It is necessary to re-create that unity which has been shattered by Wilson going over to Toryism and the failure of sections of the left to fight this. But unity cannot be an excuse for watering down one's principles. There are many cases of people who have started off by saying that "we must have a milder programme in the interests of unity" and have ended up in Wilson's Cabinet doing his dirtiest work. We need unity on the basis of a hard, uncompromising programme: one which will mobilise and unite trade unionists in a fight on the issues of the day; yet one, if carried out, which would lead to real inroads into capitalist power. This programme must not be entirely on the defensive, unless we start attacking capitalist power we can never think in terms of building socialism.

The Week offers some ideas as to what the programme of struggle should be. We do so in the spirit of not claiming to know all the answers, we would very much like to hear from others what they think of our programme and our proposals for the united front. Concretely, we suggest:

- (1) Immediate abolition of the wage freeze and anti-trade union legislation;
- (2) re-iteration of the principle of full freedom of negotiations by unions;
- (3) a sliding scale of wages to compensate for increases in the cost of living;
- (4) abolition of poverty through increased welfare payments;
- (5) huge cuts in military expenditure;
- (6) nationalisation of the commanding heights of industry under workers' control;
- (7) a workers' plan for the development of the British economy, including the solving of the balance of payments problem by more east/west trade and long term credits and trade agreements with under-developed countries;
- (8) opening of the books of all employers, and workers councils in all places of work to control hiring and firing, welfare allocations, etc.;
- (9) a socialist foreign policy, with Labour on the side of the oppressed; and
- (10) a call for an all-European conference of labour to meet the threat to workers' conditions posed by the Common Market and the greater unity of European capitalism.

CREATE COMMITTEES TO FIGHT FOR THE UNITED FRONT PROGRAMME

At present, because of the disunity of the left, we must create committees around given issues on an ad hoc basis. All future lobbies of Parliament must lead to the creation of committees of support all over the country. An important conference is being called by the Trade Union Defence Liaison Committee on February 17th; committees should be formed in every major industrial town to work to ensure that this conference is as big and as militant as possible. The Week, which goes to hundreds of key Labour Party and trade union activists each week, will do all in its power to help such committees.

COMBAT SECTARIANISM AND OPPORTUNISM

There are those who, while they say that they are in favour of the united front, refuse to work with others because of "revisionism", "Maoism", "Trotskyism", etc. The united front will never be built in this way: there should be one criterion only for bringing people into the united front - will they work for the aims and objectives of the united front with all their might? The Week has been extremely critical of certain trade union leaders and parliamentarians, because they have not fought devaluation. However, we work to bring into the united front anybody who will fight the Government's Tory policies on the basis of the programme of the united front. There are those who claim that they stand for a struggle against Wilson but that it is tactically bad to call for his removal - this is opportunism. A united front struggle must be against Wilson and not aim to give him advice as to how to mend his ways.

IMMEDIATE ABOLITION OF THE WAGE FREEZE AND ANTI-TRADE UNION LEGISLATION

The wage freeze has led to a cut in the living standards of the British people because prices have gone up more than wages. The Government's economic policies have led to other reductions in earnings: less overtime, less work for married women (the real unemployment figure is much higher because this is not taken into account in the Government's figures) less chance for bonuses, etc. The employers will tell you that there has also been a reduction in profits (although the latest figures issued by the Financial Times show that profits are now rising again) but this does not take into account several factors:

Firstly, in many cases total profits have not gone down at all, only dividends. During a period of so-called restraint man employers use the odd dodge of holding back increases in dividends until the pressure is off. Secondly, there is a big difference between wages and profits as a form of income. The average worker needs - and spends - most of his money each week for bare necessities and a small amount on luxury; the employer, on the other-hand, generally has a much higher standard of living and uses the bulk of his income for re-investment to make more profit. When profits go down, a few businesses may go broke but the employers do not go hungry. You very seldom see one of your old bosses joining you at the Labour Exchange. Thirdly, most companies employ people full time to play around with the figures of their profits to reduce tax liability. Thus one never knows the true level of profits of a firm. The worker's income, on the other hand, is completely known through Pay-As You-Earn. This is why no income policy can be fair while the employer's books are not open.

The wage freeze - even if it were accompanied by a dividend freeze - is biased against those who earn/living by wages and salaries. But this Government is so pro-employer that it hasn't even gone through the pretence of subjecting profits and dividends to the same restraint as wages. The policy of trying to hold down wages needs abolishing altogether. Formulae about agreeing to a wage freeze if the employers get the same treatment are no benefit whatsoever.

This Labour Government has gone farther in attacking the trade unions than any other for decades. It is monstrous that the party which was created to defend trade unions should now be the party to take the initiative in attacking them. Whilst we have an economy which is dominated by private ownership, trade unions must be completely free and there must be no restrictions on the right to strike. The experience of those countries where capitalism has been destroyed shows that the trade unions must retain their independence even under these circumstances.

A SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES TO COMPENSATE FOR INCREASES IN THE COST OF LIVING

It is totally unfair that if prices rise - through devaluation or stop-go - that workers should suffer a cut in their standard of living. The employers have an easy solution when their costs go up - they simply put up their prices. Workers have to struggle through their unions for wage increases just to maintain their standards. Sometimes months, even years elapse between the time of a claim for higher wages and a settlement. Thus for a whole period there has been a cut in living standards. This should be stopped by a sliding scale of wages to automatically meet any increase

in the cost of living. Trade unionists should insist that all agreements have this provision. However, the sliding scale of wages would not serve this function while we have the present cost of living index. A trade union commission should examine the cost of living index and demand one which reflects the costs of the average worker (unlike the present one which is based upon middle class expenditure.)

Employers and the Government will say that by insisting upon the sliding scale of wages that workers are creating a wages/prices spiral. This is nonsense. The major reason for inflation is not increased wages but the huge Government arms expenditure and the ever-rising bank rate.

ABOLITION OF POVERTY THROUGH INCREASED WELFARE PAYMENTS

One of the arguments advanced for the Government's incomes policy is that it is designed to protect the lower income groups from being left behind because of the power of highly-organised workers. This is one of the Government's most hypocritical claims. Nearly everyone of the Wilson Government's policies has hit the lowest paid more than anyone else. Who can deny that the increase in the cost of living caused by devaluation will hit the old age pensioners and low-wage groups most? Who can deny that the huge rent increases which are taking place all over the country, again directly because of Government policy, will hit the poorer sections of the community more than anyone else?

The Tory answer to this problem is, of course, to bring back the means test. But Wilson has no real answer either and may be forced to accept the Tory Plan. The Child Poverty Action Group has worked out a series of policies which, if implemented, would tackle the problem of poverty. Trade unionists and Labour Party members should struggle for the implementation of this policy which would cost only a fraction of that spent on so-called defence. Again, there should be a sliding scale of benefits to meet rising prices.

HUGE CUTS IN MILITARY EXPENDITURE

In a rare moment of truth, a week or so ago, Anthony Crosland admitted that one of the causes of the crisis which led up to devaluation was Britain attempting to "play a world role." Wilson has described this as trying to play a meaningful role in world affairs. We would describe this in a different manner: the huge arms expenditures are made necessary by British imperialism. The forces in the Persian Gulf are there to protect the investments of Shell, B.P. and other oil firms. The forces which were used in jungle warfare in Malaysia were there to ensure the continued exploitation of rubber and tin by British firms.

As part of a whole new foreign policy, arms expenditure should be slashed to the minimum. All bases maintained by British imperialism should be given up. The arms industry and military depots should be turned over to crash programmes to solve pressing social problems such as housing. Not only would this make huge sums available for social services it would also aid the balance of payments problem. But ending overseas commitments would mean making a decisive break from imperialist policies and neo-colonialism.

NATIONALISATION OF THE COMMANDING HEIGHTS OF INDUSTRY UNDER WORKERS' CONTROL

Because of the ferocity of Tory propaganda and because most nationalised industries are completely bureaucratized nationalisation has become a dirty word. The basic reason for this is that nationalisation has been carried out in order to bolster up and service the remaining private sector. On the other hand, none of things we all want can be achieved without a national plan to replace capitalist anarchy and stop-go. But planning in itself does not equal socialism. Everything depends upon the aim of the plan and its direction. Nationalisation of the commanding heights of industry must have as its aim the elimination of private ownership of the important means of production. It should be directed towards taking over more and more of the economy until the most important sectors are completely socially owned.

Nationalisation has been unpopular with many sections of workers because of their experience in working in nationalised industries. Workers in nationalised industries still feel that they are working for others and the record of these industries in dealing with workers is no better than that of the private sector. The boards of nationalised industries are run by big businessmen, retired generals and aristocrats (with a few ex-trade union leaders thrown in for appearances' sake.) If nationalisation is to be a weapon for replacing capitalist power with workers' power all this must be changed. That is why we pose the absolute necessity of workers' control.

Workers' control has nothing to do with so-called workers' participation, nor is the latter part of a process towards achieving workers' control. They are two diametrically opposed concepts. Workers' control means that the essential decisions (including investment plans) are in the hands of elected representatives of the workers; workers participation means that a few workers are brought into taking some of the responsibility for unpopular decisions. An integral part of workers' control is that all workers' representatives will be subject to recall and will receive no more for their duties than the people they represent.

A WORKERS' PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH INDUSTRY

No one can deny that British industry is backward, under-developed and old fashioned compared with that of other countries. This is the fault of the employers who have preferred to make profits from speculation, exploiting third world countries, etc., to modernising. Their record is such that one can say that they are not fit to run industry. But this does not mean that workers have to come to their rescue and help them to modernise. In essence, whenever you have employers in control, modernisation means helping to cut labour costs, i.e., sacking or more intensively exploiting workers. Such aims are totally alien to the trade union movement.

A workers' plan is only conceivable if it is part of a process of replacing private ownership of the means of production with social ownership.

The coming to power of a Government dedicated to achieving workers' power in Britain would not do away with the balance of payments problem. In fact, this problem would probably become more acute because international big business would make difficulties for the new Government (especially when it set about nationalising foreign investments). But there is no need for this fact to deter us. Small countries like Cuba have shown that it is possible

to stand up to international reaction, headed by the United States. There now exists in one third of the world countries where capitalism has been destroyed, the new Britain would have to form trade links with these countries. There also exists a "third world", made up largely of countries whose economies are backward because of imperialist and neo-colonialist exploitation. These countries are in desperate need of factories, plant, etc., to modernise themselves. Because the prices of their exports have been held down by the neo-colonialist countries, they have not been able to afford to buy the means of industrialising themselves. A workers' Britain would grant these countries long-term credits to help them build their economies.

By these means, British industry could be kept going no matter what international big business did to try to sabotage the new Government. By linking the British economy with other planned economies, the new Government would do much to overcome the vagaries and ups and downs of the capitalist world market.

A SOCIALIST FOREIGN POLICY

All of what is written here would be impossible unless there were a complete re-alignment of British foreign policy. In particular, Britain must leave all the alliances set up by the United States to "contain communism" (that is, to try to hold back the world advance towards national liberation and social progress). But this is not enough - one cannot be neutral in the world today. The new Britain would have to be on the side of the oppressed. Instead of being junior partner to American imperialism, a workers' Britain would assist the peoples struggling for national liberation.

In one sense only is the present Government correct when it says that Britain's future is in Europe. Present national boundaries are becoming more and more outmoded by the development of the means of production. The Common Market is the way capitalists have sought to solve this problem. A Britain advancing towards socialism would be vitally concerned with helping the workers' movement on the continent. Firstly, to assist those movements to resist the growing power of European capitalism, which confronts the workers' movement in a more and more unified manner; and secondly, in order to link up with them to coordinate plans for a struggle for the United Socialist States of Europe. An immediate step towards this should be the call for an all-European conference of labour to meet the challenge of the Common Market. The British Labour movement is well suited to do this because it is not split into religious and political organisations as is the movement in most European countries.

Whilst the new workers' Britain would form close and loyal links with such countries as the Soviet Union where capitalism has been destroyed, it would also have the duty of helping all those struggling for workers' democracy in those countries. A workers' Britain would, indeed, be an inspiring example for those forces.

UNITED FRONT COMMITTEES MUST BE SET UP

Whilst the aims and objectives put forward in this pamphlet must be struggled for principally in the trade union, Labour Parties, trade councils, etc., other forms of organisation are necessary. Many workers' organisations are dominated by completely undemocratic forces. Moreover, it would be utopian in the extreme to think that these objectives can be achieved without a fierce struggle; and many workers' organisations have forgotten how to struggle. United front committees could lead to a regroupment of the left and new forms of leadership.