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SIXPENCE

MILITANT

FOR YOUTH AND LABOUR

ANOTHER ELECTION 'PLEDGE' BROKEN

LABOUR KEEPS THE BOMB

Rank and file must step up fight for socialist foreign policy

▼
'A nuclear balance is a nuclear nightmare... a simple 100 million ton hydrogen bomb dropped on Britain would destroy nearly all life on the island'.



THE DEFENCE ESTIMATES mark an increase in expenditure on "defence" by the government from nearly £2,000 million under the Tories to over £2,120 million by Labour.

The increases demolish Labour's pledges to cut the monstrous burden of arms on the economy and the drag on increases in the standard of living and the social services which it represents.

In the debate in Parliament on March 3, Wilson tamely declared, "The heat has been taken out of the defence controversy"! A Tory spokesman said the Tories were "99.9 per cent" in favour of Labour's proposals.

The Tory attack on Labour's defence policy was not aimed at the policy itself but at the first few paragraphs of the White Paper on defence which suggested that the previous government had left the armed forces "overstretched and undermanned".

Even nuclear arms are to be retained because of the mythical "danger" of China's nuclear explosion.

The Tory critics were shadow-boxing. They pointed out that the government had taken over their policy on defence which flows from an equally similar approach to foreign policy.

In order to underline the lack of any essential difference between the policy of the government and of the opposition, Wilson made a firm offer of inter-party talks on defence. The correspondent of *The Guardian* wrote that Mr. Wilson made "another determined effort to take Sir Alec and Mr. Soames, the opposition defence spokesman, into the government's confidence on defence matters. . . . The two sides seemed closer together than ever before."

There was the incongruous spectacle of Sir Alec Douglas-Home congratulating Mr. Wilson on adopting Conservative policy almost in its entirety. Quintin Hogg rubbed in the fact

that the left wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party were less enthusiastic about his policies than the opposition.

In the last 20 years, British capitalism has attempted to maintain itself as the third world power next to the super-powers of the United States and the Soviet Union.

That effort has cost more than £35,000 million and has constituted an enormous drain on Britain's industry. It has been utterly futile and a massive blow to the already weakened resources of British capitalism.

Before he came to power, Wilson pointed out that the so-called "nuclear independence" of Britain was a farce.

Britain possessed less than 1 per cent of the nuclear capability of America and the USSR. Even the new Polaris submarines were dependent on supplies of nuclear war-heads from America.

A simple 100 million ton hydrogen bomb dropped on Britain would destroy nearly all life on the island.

The idea of matching Russia's nuclear power is ludicrous and Wilson had to fabricate the nuclear "threat" of China to justify the retention of arms which the party had declared it intended to scrap.

According to Dennis Healey, the burden of defence involves the labour of 800,000 workers in the forces and in industry. The most skilled workers and scientists are used in the vain endeavour to try and keep up with the great powers.

Richard Crossman referred to the hundreds of

millions of pounds wasted on weapons, many of which never leave the drawing board. Many weapons become obsolete with incredible speed and finish on the scrap-heap.

That is especially the case with planes, which have never been replaced by the Americans and Russians.

Healey pointed out in the debate that "Britain was spending a higher proportion of her national resources on defence than any other nation of her size in the world. This expenditure bore particularly heavily on the balance of payments and the resources, both of manpower and manufacturing investment, needed to get the economic situation right. . . ."

Germany has just cut her expenditure on armaments and spends a third less than Britain. Japan spends only 1.3 per cent of her national income on arms in comparison with Britain's 8 per cent.

The result is that Germany has outstripped Britain industrially, and Japan is now the third industrial power of the world, producing last year nearly 40 million tons of steel in comparison with Britain's 26 million tons.

The standard of living in Germany and Japan has been increasing in leaps and bounds in comparison with the slow increase in Britain since the war. One of the main factors has been the crazy increase in the expenditure of arms in Britain which tried to play — in Healey's words the — role of "policeman of Asia and Africa."

continued on back page

RACIALISM

The Tories fan the flames
special article by Roger Protz
see centre pages

Syria moves towards socialism

NEWS OF DEMONSTRATIONS and counter-demonstrations in Syria indicate the development of the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution in that country.

Although not reported in the popular Press but only in the more serious journals of British capitalism such as *The Times* and *The Observer*, these events are of great significance for the fermenting revolutions on the African continent and doubly significant for the countries of the Arab East.

Within a week the capitalists tried to organise a counter-revolution: Merchants and small shopkeepers organised a capitalist "strike" of protest closing their shops and bazaars.

The reactionary heads of the Muslim church in Syria joined in the conspiracy and denounced the government as against "God and religion."

They launched together a campaign of civil disobedience and demonstrations. The government did not flinch. To retreat would have meant collapse of the government and probably execution for the leaders of the Baath Socialists.

"Demonstrators were carted away by the truckload; shops that were

closed were broken open and their stock impounded; 22 leading merchants were stripped of their possessions; the powers of the religious foundations were transferred to the ruling junta — including the power to appoint and dismiss Muslim clergymen and eight 'ringleaders' of an extremist religious organisation . . . were sentenced to death for plotting to assassinate the Head of State, General Hafiz," one report said.

To carry out the struggle successfully the Baath government had to appeal to the workers and peasants of Syria for support. On Tuesday, January 26, in response to an appeal, thousands of peasants flocked to Damascus to demonstrate their fervent support for these measures.

In the early part of January the Baath Socialist Party government nationalised 106 of the biggest industrial concerns and banks with a capital of over £25 million. To break the possible resistance of the capitalists, special courts were organised with powers, including the death penalty, for anyone trying to obstruct these measures.

As *The Observer* correspondent correctly comments, "In Syria, the Baath's survival and stern repressive measures will have profound effects. The private sector has been dealt a mortal blow, at least in so far as any large scale enterprise is concerned. The government has now no choice but to pursue to the end its socialisation of the economy."

The counter-revolution in Iraq under General Aref was a *coup* against Kassem to prevent nationalisation. In order to try and retain

JOHNSON STEPS UP THE RAPE OF VIETNAM WITH NAPALM

Moscow and Peking give paper support to beleaguered Vietnam

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM is striking against the people of Vietnam North and South with the venom of a snake caught in a trap of its own making. Gas, napalm and other horrors are being unleashed against people in the south armed only with the meagre weapons of a guerrilla struggle and in the north with only the resources of a small developing industrial state.

The cold and ferocious cruelty of the American military commanders is a measure of their desperation. Despite 10 years' support of Saigon with civil and military supplies, to the tune of £500 million a year, the rotting capitalist-landlord regime is collapsing. From small beginnings, the guerrilla movement has encompassed the country and two-thirds or more of South Vietnam is in their hands. Except for Saigon and a few other large towns, the "government" of South Vietnam rules only a small part of the country.

The collapse of the Vietnamese dictatorship has been caused by its corruption and the desperate condition of the people. It is the desire for land which

has swelled the ranks of the Vietnamese liberation fighters. Without the support of the people a guerrilla war is impossible.

As every serious commentator in the capitalist press recognises, it is because they are facing the complete collapse of their puppets that the Americans are behaving with the same senseless brutality as the imperialists always reveal in defence of their power, prestige and profits. For more than two generations the American imperialists have posed as the defenders of "peace", of "freedom", of the "rights of self-determination", "the rights of small nations", "collective security", of anathema to all "aggressors", the need to settle all differences by negotiation and debate and, since the Second World War, of setting the United Nations.

Roosevelt declared that the "treacherous" and "undeclared" attack of the tling all disputes through

Japanese on Pearl Harbour was worth 200 divisions in propaganda value. The American imperialists had manoeuvred their Japanese competitors into this attack. Now the Americans have launched "undeclared" aerial war on the North Vietnamese. They attacked without warning. But they attacked in carefully measured doses of death and destruction.

Despite torture, reprisals, terror and murder against the peaceful villagers as well as the Viet-Cong, the forces of the opposition have grown. Even the capitalist press has published pictures of the sadistic treatment of prisoners, of the burning down of whole villages for "sheltering" insurgents. But like the Nazis before them, these Nazi-like methods have merely further reinforced the determination of the people to be free.

All the Great Powers are dipping their fingers in the blood and trying to gain

some advantage for their rulers. The Soviet bureaucracy is manoeuvring to extend its influence in the area. It would like to see an independent non-capitalist system which would lean more to Russia for aid than to China. The Chinese bureaucracy in its turn is mainly concerned with the extension of its influence and power in the region. A secondary consideration is the humbling of American imperialism by defeat in South East Asia.

If a great war is unlikely over Indo-China, it is no thanks to the actions and cold-blooded calculations of all the Great Powers. Wilson is conducting "secret" diplomatic talks with both the Americans and the Russians. What is there to hide?

The labour movement in Britain must demand that Wilson withdraws his support for Johnson's rapacious policies and calls for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Vietnam.

Vietnam must be free—free to control its own destiny without bloody "advice" from American imperialism or armchair, cynical "support" from Russia and China.

Franco regime is rocked by massive demonstrations

DEMONSTRATIONS BY students and workers in one centre after another have shaken Spain.

The fascist terror and the dreaded secret police have not been able to prevent this new upsurge. In January, workers demonstrated in Bilbao and Barcelona demanding an increase in the minimum wage from 7s. 6d. per day to a minimum of £1 2s.

February saw more demonstrations throughout the country.

In March there were strikes and demonstrations by the students at Madrid university and were followed by similar trials of strengths at the Universities of Barcelona, Bilbao, Salamanca, Seville, Grenada and Oviedo in the Asturias province.

12,000 students took part in the demonstration in Bilbao in the Basque country. In Madrid, despite threats and warnings by the police in the press and on the radio, 5,000 students demonstrated with their professors. They were brutally beaten by the police, armed with batons and water hoses.

The demands of the students are significant. They are asking for the right to elect their own students' council in place of the fascist Falangist appointed one and for the right to discuss without interference by the police. These actions are the culmination of a struggle over the past 10 years for these basic rights. In the demonstrations, the students shouted the slogans "For University Independ-

ence — Democracy, yes; Dictatorship, No".

Five Professors and 44 students were arrested. The most significant aspect of the demonstrations is that it marks the loss of middle-class support for the fascist regime. Only 3 per cent University places are awarded through scholarships. Consequently the overwhelming majority of the students come from the middle and upper classes.

They have compared the conditions in the universities of Western European with the stifling censorship and control of the fascist regime and found in unbearable. The extent of the collapse of their support is indicated by the arrest of Professor Garcia de Veche, the officially appointed political commissar at Madrid University, who, according to the *Daily Telegraph* on March 3 "had gone against his masters in support of the demonstrations. . . ." It is not many months since the arrest of the son of the Minister for Air, who received eight years' imprisonment for being a member of the Communist Party.

The middle class is increasingly finding 25 years of fascist oppression intolerable.

The hierarchy of the Catholic Church, fearful of the effects of the bitter opposition to the regime, has come out more and more in opposition. In March 100 priests demonstrated in Madrid against the arrest of four Catalan intellectuals for signing a petition appealing against pre-

vious arrests.

This marks the beginning of the disintegration of fascist dictatorship in Spain. The revenge of the working class for the terrible defeat and the bloody crimes of fascism is steadily being prepared. It is this that terrifies the fascists most of all. The students demonstrations they can tolerate. But they are afraid of the student movement acting as a fuse to explode the gathering indignation of the workers.

No longer can the fascists use the threat of another civil war and rivers of blood to stifle movements of protest. The new generation of students and workers who never experienced the defeat of the past are awakening to action and revolt.

The heavy boot of fascism is being thrust aside by the militancy re-developing among the working class.

The apathy and despair of the Spanish workers is being shaken off. The 25 years' nightmare is beginning to end.

Great sacrifices have been made by the most militant sections of the working class. The open demonstrations of revolt are taking place after 25 years of fascist suppression of even the most elementary rights.

In the last 10 years there has been an industrial boom, the benefits of which have been enjoyed by the landlords, the capitalists, and the inefficient and corrupt fascist bureaucracy.

Even the better-off sections of the workers and

white-collar workers try to keep two jobs going to maintain decent living standards. In some areas the minimum wage is as low as 6s. per day.

The working class had had to bear the brunt of the repression of the fascist secret police. But now resistance is coming more and more into the open.

Hundreds of thousands of workers have migrated every year, during the last decade, to seek work in France, Germany, Switzerland and other European countries. They have compared the conditions and rights of the workers there with the slavery of totalitarian Spain.

Last year there was the struggle of the miners and the steel and engineering workers in Asturias province, in the Basque country, and Catalonia. In January there was an open demonstration of the workers in Madrid against the fascist-controlled "Employer-worker syndicates" at the National Headquarters of the Falangist Syndicate.

The demands of the workers were for "Free trade unions, the right to strike, no managers and employers in the unions, for a minimum daily wage of £1 2s. 0d. and a 44 hour week." These were expressed in slogans and illegal leaflets. As at every protest there were arrests by police armed with truncheons, pistols, and water hoses.

Señor Solis, the head of the government-controlled corporative "trade union" continued on page 3

MILITANT

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VIETNAM AND THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

THE BRITISH CAPITALIST SPOKESMEN ARE supporting the adventurous policy of American capitalism in South East Asia because of their financial links with Wall Street. *The Financial Times*, organ of the Stock Exchange speculators, speaks openly of this. In an editorial in its March 22 issue it brashly declares, "The Americans have decided on a course of action which they believe offers the best, though not necessarily a very good, chance of improving their precarious position in South East Asia. The British government, whatever its innermost feelings about American policy, has no choice but to back the US.

For a start the burden of gratitude incurred during the autumn when the Americans stood by sterling has to be repaid, especially since American support is still needed in the months ahead. Even more important, though, British foreign and defence policy East of Suez, as defined by the government, dictates the closest possible alignment with the US. An American withdrawal from South East Asia would leave Britain's position in the area hopelessly exposed. The defence commitment to Malaysia would become almost if not wholly impossible to fulfil."

It is the commitment to the moneylenders of Wall Street which dictates policy. More important is the defence of the tin and rubber and other raw material interests of the British capitalists "East of Suez". It is this burden among others which dictates increased expenditure on arms by the Labour government instead of the cuts which were promised before the election.

It is this which has dictated the shameful change of front of Wilson on the question of the American War in Vietnam. He has gone so far in backing the American myth that North Vietnam is largely responsible for the war that even *The Times*, the mouthpiece of big business, has gently rebuked him in its issue of March 16 in an editorial significantly entitled "Facing Realities": "On June 30th last year Mr. Wilson asked Sir Alec Douglas-Home if he would make it quite clear—as we asked him to make it clear in March—that we would not support any extension of the war into North Vietnam." As *The Times* further comments, "The origins of the war remain those of a civil war, and there can be no solution that overlooks this fact." *The Financial Times* says mournfully, "And every day it will become harder for Mr. Wilson to stand up to his Left-Wing critics, though stand up he must."

The movement of protest must be redoubled and really organised. Who decides the policies of the Labour government—the financiers and industrialists or the labour movement? It is not enough for the Left MPs to sign resolutions in parliament. The struggle must be taken to the wards, GMCs, to the trade union branches and factory committees.

The struggle must be round the demand to end support for American imperialist attack on Vietnam, for the right of self-determination of the Vietnamese people and to end the entanglement with imperialist policies "East of Suez".

JOHN BAIRD,
Labour MP for Wolverhampton from 1945 to 1964, died on March 21 at the age of 59.

He was a courageous fighter for progressive ideas in the labour movement. From his deathbed, he issued an appeal to the Labour leaders to cease supporting the war in Vietnam.

He assisted the Algerian struggle for independence from French imperialism. He was the editor of the British organ of the National Liberation Movement, *Free Algeria*.

Before he went to hospital he spoke of the need to organise effective support in this country for the South African Freedom Fighters.

The policies of Militant are reflected in editorial statements; signed articles express the views of their authors and not necessarily those of the editorial board.

He was an internationalist. He fought against any sort of colour bar and introduced a private member's bill against racial discrimination in 1958.

During the last war, as an officer in the British Army, he assisted the Marxist movement in France and Italy.

In the parliamentary Labour Party he always stood on the Left. He gave support to the Marxist tendency within the labour movement. He was an active member of the Labour Party since the 1920s.

The MILITANT editorial board offers condolences to his wife and children.

The labour movement has lost an able fighter and a good comrade.

No wage freeze for union bureaucrats!

by Dave Gallashin

Speke YS

THE EXECUTIVE OF the National Union of Railwaymen, with the evident approval of the General Secretary, Mr. Sidney Greene, has recommended an increase in the salary of the General Secretary from £2,930 to £4,500 a year.

A rise of almost £56 7s. a week to over £86 14s. a week.

Not content with this luxurious salary, Mr. Greene already has a foothold in the establishment.

He has a part-time post on the Southern Electricity Board. For his part-time services he receives a salary of £1,000 a year—over £19 14s. per week.

The two assistant secretaries of the NUR are also to receive increases. They will be from a salary of £2,214 to £3,500 a year.

This is an increase of £1,286 a year, making an increase for the "underlings" of a little over £24 14s. a week.

This is more than twice the salary of many railwaymen. Compare this with the last meagre rise gained by the railwaymen.

Some trade union officials are opposed to this attempt

to "Americanise" the trade union movement, which can only serve to increase the number of corrupt, venal and time-serving officials.

Ted Hill, President of the Boilermakers' Society, in the March issue of the *Boilermakers' Journal*, declares in relation to the pressure from capitalist circles to increase union leaders' wages, "The stock answer by the huge majority of officials is that they are dedicated to the work and are by and large satisfied with their salary. . . . Our trade union movement cannot afford to fix salaries on a commercial basis because we want officials who are devoted to our cause and secondly because the movement could not afford to pay salaries on a commercial basis without a substantial increase in contributions."

Workers would make sacrifices in increased contributions for a worth-while cause. The lavish collections in solidarity with trade unionists on strike in well-organised factories is an indication of this.

But the most important reason to oppose such increases is that it puts the union leaders, like the inflated salaries of members of parliament, in a different

class from the workers they are supposed to represent.

In time their outlook changes and becomes alien to that of the trade union and labour movement.

Anybody claiming to represent the workers has a claim only to the same standards as a skilled worker gets. Trade union leaders should receive the same salary as skilled workers, as should all MPs.

Beyond this they should have all expenses incurred in the course of their duties and necessary to their duties paid in full.

The labour and trade union movement can profitably shed those who take these positions for "career purposes". We need, in the words of Ted Hill, officials who are devoted to our cause.

Union members should also demand that any extra sums earned as directors or advisers in government or other industries should count against the salaries received. This would be a guarantee against any officials being influenced consciously or unconsciously by big salaries earned outside their responsibility as trade union leaders. Similar provision should be made for MPs.

Franco

from page 2

declared in response to the demands for an organisation separate from the employers: "Agitators and demagogues are fruitlessly aspiring to break the unity of the syndical organisation in Spain."

But now strikes next month are threatened among the engineers, miners and other sections of the workers. The *Daily Express* in a feature article on March 1st admits: "No amount of secret police work can destroy the workers' underground leadership. It is being said openly in Madrid that the fascist system of government-appointed union leadership must come to an end this year. That is what the workers want."

The storm signals have been shown in Asturias, centre of the first workers' republic in Spain, that of the Asturian Commune of 30 years ago. At Mieres, where the revolt of the miners began with their attempt to set up a workers' socialist republic, the movement has begun again.

After the break-up of an illegal demonstration for higher wages on March 13 by the fascist police, the workers replied by storming and wrecking the main police station in the town, demanding the release of arrested comrades. This is the first attack on a police station since the establishment of fascism in Spain.

The Spanish revolution has begun. There will be bigger movements of the

Spanish workers and students in the coming months.

The peasants, at present inarticulate in the countryside, whose conditions are even worse than those of the working class, will be drawn into the movement.

The problem in front of the ruling class is how to replace Franco without precipitating a revolutionary movement from the left. They want reforms from the top to prevent revolution from below.

That is why suggestions of a "constitutional monarchy" have been canvassed during the last few years. But the ruling class has hesitated to act and now even the middle class can bear to wait no longer.

As a student in the Madrid demonstration declared, "We cannot await natural evolution. The liberalisation everyone talks about is purely nominal."

"In Spain there will never be an evolution. We have to act."

Faced with threatened revolution the ruling class is preparing to jettison Franco. They will try to install a monarchy or even a "democratic" republic as they did in 1931.

The revolution in Spain was betrayed and led to the victory of Franco during

1931 to 1937 because it stopped at a capitalist republic. It was the coalition with the Spanish capitalists that prepared the way for the fascist conspiracy and the victory of Franco in the civil war.

The Spanish workers must fight for democratic rights as a step to the socialist republic.

The organisations that prepared the terrible debacle of 1936—the anarchists, socialists and, especially, the Communist Party—still advocate the same policies of collaboration with liberals and monarchists.

Franco was a hired tool of Spanish capitalists and landlords. Only the destruction of their economic and political power can prevent the repetition of the tragedy of 1931-1936.

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IN THE SMOKING rooms of select London clubs, on quiet country estates and in every nook and cranny of the powerful Establishment, all those fine English Tory gentlemen who tell us with profuse eloquence, generation after generation, that they are the educated elite born to rule, have come to perhaps their most erudite, subtle decision, the hallmark of their breeding and political finesse.

They are going to bash "the wog" issue.

Unable to believe at first that the rude masses had turned them from office, the Tories are now desperately seeking ways and means of regaining power at the next election—and the more sordid the ways and the more squalid the means the better.

They have tried, without success, to denigrate the Wilson government's record, but however ineffectual and clumsy Labour's actions have been, 13 long years of Toryism loom larger in the electorate's eye.

Even the traditional forelock tugging Celtic-fringe dwellers have turned to the Liberals, with their woolly programme of "radical" capitalism.

The Tories are desperate and when a ruling-class party becomes desperate it reacts viciously and often brutally.

In deliberately and consciously deciding to play up the question of coloured immigrants (and it is only coloured immigrants who are used—whatever heard a Tory warn of the dangers of Irish immigration?) they know they are pandering to prejudice and ignorance at its most base.

The prejudice is there, at every level of society. The seeds are planted skilfully by an education system that teaches the glories of past empires, the heroic deeds of Englishmen who tore countries from the grasp of black barbarians.

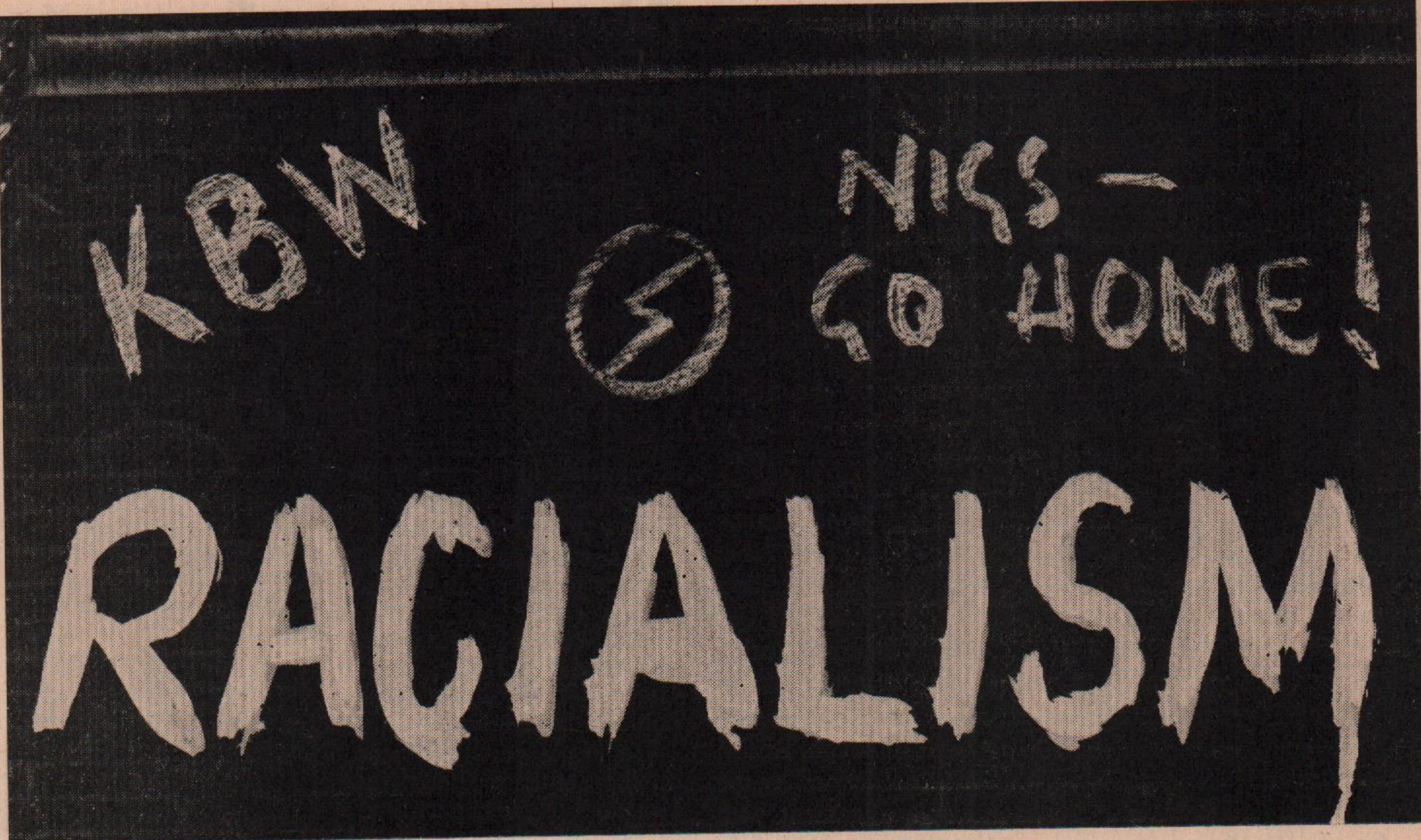
"Wog bashing," we learn from the school history books, was a jolly pastime for solar-topped Englishmen in the bush, whiling away the hours between one pink gin and the next.

When capitalism erected the nation-state in order to do battle for the world's spoils, the myths of "race" and "nationality" were conjured up in order for each nation-state to win more easily the allegiance of its masses.

Language and skin pigmentation suddenly became God-inspired demarcations and unholy wars for land, profit and plunder were staged under the guise of "dealing with the Frogs" or "taming the niggers."

The filthy heritage bites deep into modern, "civilised" society. We hate "yanks" for their bouncy affluence (including 5½ million unemployed?), we suspect the Germans ("they" started the wars), we're uneasy about the French (could it be the garlic?) and we're not too happy about Italians (Wops), Japanese (Nips), Chinese (Chinks) and, of course, Jews, Turks, Greeks, Armenians. . . . Pity the poor Martians.

Now there is a new bogey—the "black man." They



THE TORIES FAN THE FLAMES

by Roger Protz

made damned good servants, but now the rascals are getting uppity and coming to Britain.

They seem to think we owe them a living, because we murdered their forebears, raped their women, grabbed their land and put them to work for our profit and their growing misery.

Before you react too violently to my use of "we" and "our" in this sordid context, I am merely attempting to show how the employers and their hangers-on try to spread responsibility.

"The National Interest" is the slogan that covers a very sectional interest—the right of the capitalists to continue to make profit; the rest of the community is cordially invited to join in this splendour endeavour by providing their labour power in times of peace and their bodies in times of war.

In order to maintain the "national interest," the ruling class, through their control of the mass media—the Press, radio, television and the education system—provide a series of easily recognisable "enemies" whom they

manipulate in the age-old political game of divide and rule.

If they can convince a large proportion of the community that, for example negroes are responsible for overcrowding and slums they will pass the odium for conditions for which they alone are responsible on to innocent shoulders and thus further entrench their positions.

Racialism has been on the increase in Britain since, coincidentally, British capitalism realised it had a crisis on its hands. Faced by the growing discontent of the labour movement, immediate steps had to be taken to head them off.

An openly racist Immigration Control Bill was shoved through parliament and served to spotlight the problems of overcrowding, slum housing and unemployment.

Although some of the less tactful Tory hyenas prattled openly of maintaining a "pure Britain" ("How would you like your

blonde, blue-eyed baby girl to come home with a big buck nigger?" jovially quipped Sir Gerald Nabarro), the more practised spokesman suggested that this was an unfortunate but necessary measure designed to alleviate some of the more severe social problems in the country. Such a large number of people are apparently flooding into this green and pleasant land that we must, so to speak, put the plug in before the bath overflows.

Superficially, this seems a reasonable argument. But it ignores a few pertinent questions, such as who caused the social problems? the Tories, landlords, profiteering employers, land speculators—and is immigration higher than emigration?—no, more left Britain in the ten years prior to the Act and twice as many have left as have arrived in the last two years.

As far as the Tories are concerned, Britain is not overcrowded, period. It is overcrowded—with coloured immigrants and even if a third of the indi-

genous population packed their bags for Australia, they would still denounce the evils of uncontrolled immigration of people whose only crime is to have a slightly different skin pigmentation from ours.

The tactic has worked well. Immigration is now a constant topic of conversation. We are bombarded by television programmes and newspaper articles, by tame sociologists and pundits and all manner of progressives and reactionaries eager to air their views.

The subject has become almost a national obsession and an opinion poll indicates that over 90 per cent of the population want strict controls on the influx of immigrants.

The most meaningful result of this Tory dirty work was the open incitement to racist prejudice in the Smethwick election last October, when Gordon Walker was ousted by a distasteful rag-bag of crypto-fascists and Black Country Ku Klux Klanners.

Many leading Tories confessed themselves shocked at this result, but behind the scenes they have clearly been discussing the

Housing: Labour's welcome measures

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S NEW RENT BILL announced on March 23 should be welcomed by every section of the labour and trade union movement as a step forward. The measures are ideally timed to coincide with the publication of the Milner-Holland Report, a searing indictment of the previous Tory Government's housing policies. Despite its attempt to remain "impartial" the report, in the words of Wilson, is a "masterly and objective condemnation of 13 years of Tory housing policy and of the abuse of private landlordism". Rachman is shown to be no isolated case. Nor is the use of gangster methods to decontrol property the prerogative of the big operator. We see the "small fish" intimidating tenants, including old ladies, with "snakes in baths, slates torn off the roof . . . and a staggering variety of conduct to bully tenants into vacating their homes".

As the Minister of Housing, Richard Crossman, said, these abuses arise directly from the 1957 Rent Act. The new Bill attempts to restore the situation existing before the Act. As welcome as this may be, big loopholes nevertheless remain. For all properties, other than those presently controlled, including those decontrolled since

1957, Rent Officers and Tribunals will be appointed to fix "fair rents". Elsewhere in this issue an article on the eviction bill shows the folly of relying on instruments created by and sympathetic to the capitalist system, to carry out measures aimed against rent, interest and profit.

All positions on the new bodies must be filled by members of the trade union and labour movement. The Bill is only the beginning. The housing shortage will still exist unless a number of important steps are taken immediately. Priority must be given to the homeless and those in desperate need of accommodation. The 1961 census showed that in London alone 20,000 dwellings remain unoccupied yet 7,500 homeless people fill the welfare centres of the LCC. The government should see to it that all unoccupied and underoccupied property is used to house the homeless and those on the local authorities' housing lists. Taking the building unions' proposals for their industry to be brought under public ownership, the Labour government should plan immediately for the building of one million houses a year. This can be the only real solution to the housing problem.

obvious electoral advantages of playing up the immigrant issue to win votes.

On March 2 one of the most right-wing Tories, Sir Cyril Osborne, sought leave to introduce a bill into the House of Commons which would restrict further immigration to a tiny yearly quota—with the following *apartheid*-like appendages: greater health checks, clean criminal record, working knowledge of English, repatriation of immigrants found guilty of crime, prevention of illegal entry into the United Kingdom and assisted passages for those who wanted to return to their native country.

The bill was thrown out, but supporting it were a number of leading Tories who can now unhesitatingly be called racials: Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Mr. Edward Heath, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, Mr. Peter Thorneycroft, Mr. Duncan Sandy and Mr. Enoch Powell. Even the Tory businessman's paper *The Economist* was forced to remonstrate with Home & Co. for supporting this "monstrously extremist" bill.

But they were unashamed. At a meeting of the Tory Central Council a few days later, a few lone voices of reason were drowned in a sickening flood of racist filth, pandered to by Thorneycroft who spoke of the danger of a "head-on clash" (between black and white) over housing.

But where is the brave new Britain promised by Harold Wilson? Where are the humanitarianism and the brotherly love that are the stock-in-trade of every Labour demagogue?

They seem to have disappeared, along with the election pledges.

Labour now unflinchingly supports the Immigration Act and by so doing helps pander to racial prejudice.

Added to this is the new bill introduced by the Home Secretary which conjures up the horrific picture of hundreds of immigrants illegally swarming into the country.

When George Brown stresses the absurdity of demanding increased production while the labour force is decreased, his colleagues uneasily squeak that he is not contravening party policy, which recognises the need for controls.

The racist stirrings must be seen as storm signals by socialists in the labour movement.

If the working class is not to be deeply divided, if fascism is not to re-emerge from the slime, if white and black are not to clash in disastrous, bloody conflict—in short, if Birmingham, Warwickshire, is not to become Birmingham, Alabama, within a decade, then a tremendous battle for socialist education and a struggle for real leadership in the labour movement must be waged.

Racism can be turned by us into a weapon against extremism. We can use it to expose the stinking corruption of Tory society that uses such vile methods to maintain its rule.

But we must act fast, before we are drowned in a sea of reaction.

The scandal of the drugs industry — Labour must nationalise

by Arthur Deane

THE TUC HAS RECENTLY asked the Labour government to make an enquiry into the drug industry. In doing so, they hope to lift the lid off an industry whose silence is only a symptom of its brigandry. The government has agreed to set up a committee of enquiry.

The case for nationalisation is unassailable and all those in the Labour Party and the trade unions who are interested in cutting down the enormous cost of drugs to the Health Service and to the working class should move resolutions in their wards and trade union branches demanding the nationalisation of the industry.

The drug industry has fared even better than other industries from the welfare state.

The war found it in a hopeless mess. Very little development had taken place over the years. It rested on proprietary drugs, galenicals, liver pills, cough syrups and medicines of very little or no therapeutic value.

The industry did not only add little to the economy, but plundered the health of the nation.

During the war, however, with great help from the state because of this pitiless condition and because of the needs of the moment—the armed forces—changes had to be made.

Drugs that had been discovered some years before were put into production and a real attempt was made in research to discover other means of fight-

ing bacteria.

It took the situation of war to produce the badly needed drugs. Quackery gave way to science.

In the absence of a National Health Service, the industry had for years broken no new ground. Nor did it desire to do so.

The motive power was not the health of the nation but profit. Without the certainty of a market (for the only constant market was the hospitals, who had very little money, relying mainly on gifts and donations or meagre support from the local councils) the industry was held back in the doldrums.

The discovery of penicillin in the 30s had meant no new breakthrough in the fighting of bacteria because the industry considered that the cost of plant and the development of this new approach too costly because of the uncertainty of the market.

Since the war great strides have been made, but

Table A

	Year Ending	Trading Profit £000
Cyanamid of Great Britain	1958	3,005
	1961	4,598
	1962	5,142
Pfizer	1958	1,399
	1960	3,252
	1961	2,727
Smith, Kline & French	1958	715
	1961	1,374
	1962	1,658
John Wyeth & Brothers	1958	753
	1961	1,094
	1962	1,140

British Firms

	Year Ending	Trading Profit £000
Boots Pure Drug	1959	8,011
	1962	13,137
	1963	13,718
Beecham Group	1959	7,735
	1962	9,451
	1963	9,580
Glaxo Laboratories	1962	8,305
	1963	9,382
	1962	1,307
Aspro-Nicholas	1962	1,720
	1963	2,083

SYRIA

from page 2

power, after the Egyptian nationalisations, Aref, who had taken power to prevent these developments, was forced to adopt the programme of his defeated enemies.

This in turn put the fate of the Baath government in Syria in the balance. To retain power they also were compelled to take action and with the attempted counter-revolution, to take even more drastic measures against capital and the big merchants and their supporters.

The competition between the different military-police regimes of the Arab countries, in the context of the problems and the relationship of forces, has compelled these assaults on the diseased capitalism of the Arab countries.

The Syrian events will have profound repercussions in Egypt, in Iraq, in Algeria and even the semi-feudal regime of Morocco. It will have echoes in many countries on the African continent.

To Marxists this marks a massive step forward, like the Chinese and Cuban revolutions. It puts to shame the cringing and capitulation of the Labour and "Communist" leaders

to the bankers and industrialists in Europe. But like the Chinese and Cuban revolutions, along with its progressive sides it has backward and reactionary features.

Socialism means the conscious participation and control by the working class in the running of industry and the state, right from the beginning of workers' rule. Only then will a conscious movement to Socialism begin.

Socialism also means fraternal and organic internationalism.

The Syrian regime, from its inception, rests on the peasant army. It will lay the basis for an industrial plan by ending the senseless anarchy of capitalism.

"At home this means that power has passed decisively away from the bourgeoisie of the cities to the more radical countryside and to the peasant army on which the regime depends."

These events mark the decisive beginning of the collapse of capitalism in Syria.

What should be the attitude of advanced workers and of the labour movement to these events? First it is necessary to give unconditional support to the measures of the Baath Socialist Party against capitalism in Syria, a weak capitalism dependent on imperialism in the past for its

due solely to the assistance received from the state. Most of the research for which the industry claims the credit has been done by universities or Government Research Departments with public money, and only later handed over to private enterprise for development into mass production.

According to the Advisory Council Estimates, the government is now spending £9,108,000 a year on research into medicine. The Civil Estimates for 1964/65 show a direct grant of £8,518,000 from the government to the Medical Research Council.

This does not, however, include money spent on research by universities, the Ministry of Health Research including Hospital Clinical Research or the Common Cold Research Unit.

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, while excusing the high prices of drugs because of the high cost of research, state in their pam-

phlets that one-third of the research in the industry is paid for by the industry itself. Most of this research is of a development nature after the basic research has been done by the state.

The new drug produced by Glaxo comes into this category. Most of the initial research was done at government expense by the Medical Research Council, and only later, when it became obvious that there was going to be a market for this product (and therefore a profit) did Glaxo really take an interest.

It is interesting to note that against this cost of research, the cost of advertising is much higher. "The Association informed the Ministry that the cost of promoting sales of drugs to doctors was £6½m. in 1961" (Committee of Public Accounts).

Above all, the biggest contributory factor in the development of this industry has been the setting up of the National Health Service.

In 1935 the total production of drugs, medicines and agricultural medicines was £19m. per year. In 1963, however, it was over £215m.

Profits of course have also increased. In 1958 the Industry made £23m. profit. Last year, this was increased to something over £30m.

It is for this reason that foreign firms, particularly American, have found a very lucrative base for operating in Britain, as table A shows.

The National Health Service provided the opportunity for a tremendous growth in profits. But it also meant that the continuous demand for drugs pushed up the price of drugs out of all proportion to the manufacturing costs.

This was demonstrated in the case of Pfizers when they took the National Health Service to court for the infringement of patent rights in the purchasing of the drug tetracycline from Italy. The National Health Service paid less than half the price for the Italian brand of the drug.

There are countless other cases where firms, hiding behind patent rights, are charging exorbitant prices for drugs. The cost to the National Health Service for drugs alone every year is over £100m.

The case for nationalisation is clear. So is the need for an over-all plan of production.

The industry is broken up into many small firms, many duplicating under different names the same products, resulting in a tremendous waste of effort.

It is impossible to have a planned National Health Service without being able to control and plan the manufacture and prices of drugs.

Unless the drug firms are nationalised, the cost to the National Health Service will climb higher and higher. In order to protect the health of the nation, the industry must be taken over.

survival and sustenance.

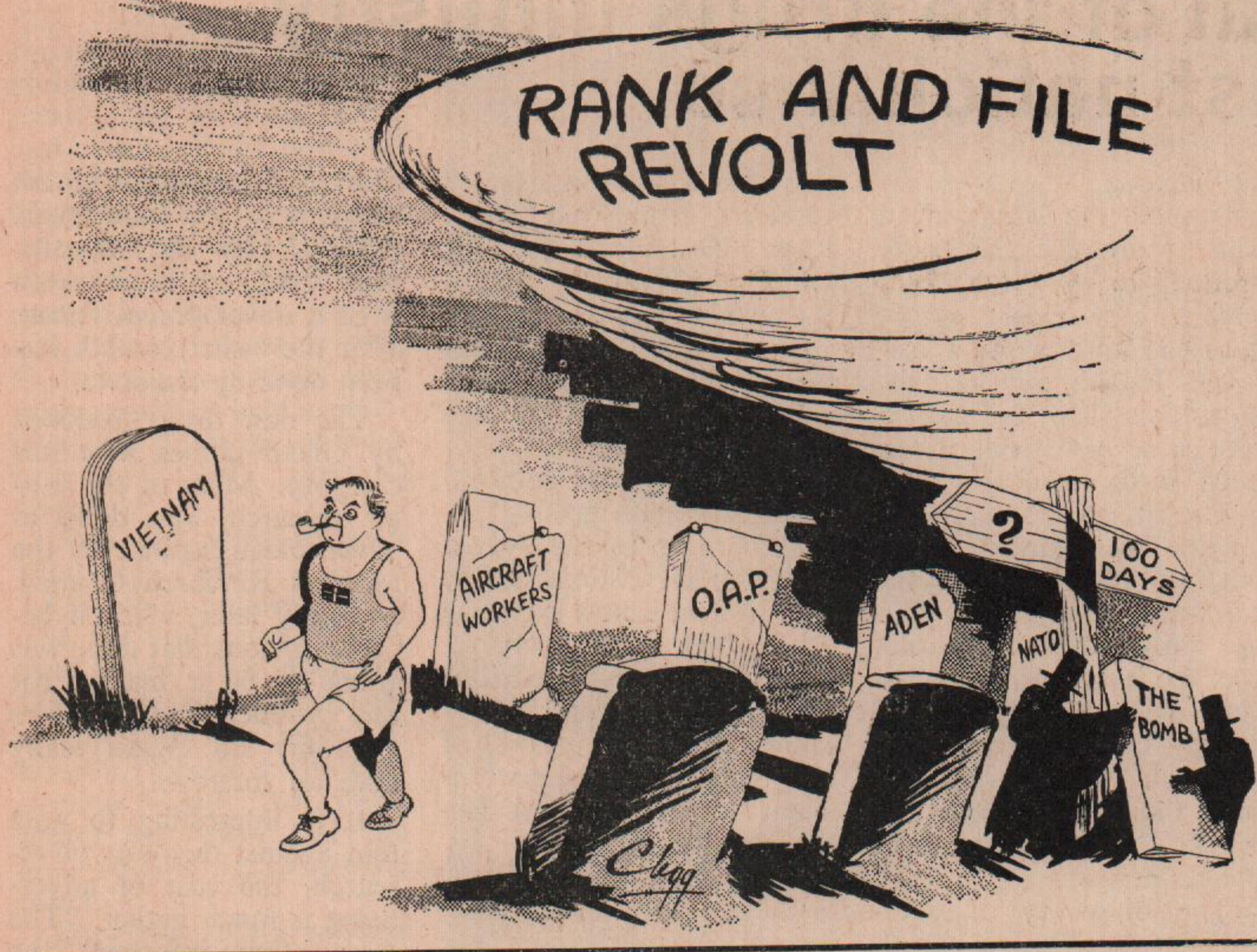
But it is also necessary to understand the background to these events, their limitations, and the future course of the revolution. Since the expulsion of French imperialism from Syria and the ending of the domination of British imperialism in Egypt and other countries of the Arab East, these countries have been in constant turmoil.

In Syria there has been a constant swaying back and forth of reaction and revolution. The move towards union with Egypt was to forestall the mounting revolutionary tide.

But when Nasser began the process of nationalisation, the capitalists organised the break-up of the federation between Egypt and Syria, as a means of maintaining their rule and their property.

In addition there were the clique interests of the national bureaucracies and privileged layers of army officers and professional and technical strata.

All the ills of exploitation of the workers and peasants by the capitalists and landlords were not ended by the expulsion of imperialism. The "national" capitalists demonstrated their incapacity to promote a growth of the economy so as to bring the people from ignorance and poverty to the level of the industrialised states of the West.



HERE and THERE

ATTEMPT TO ABOLISH THE "CITY"

Hugh Jenkins, Labour MP for Putney, introduced a private member's bill in parliament to abolish the Corporation of the City of London on March 17.

He said that "the object was to abolish the City as a municipality. The corporation, an unrepresentative body, governing one square mile containing fewer than 5,000 residents, enjoyed the full powers given to the great new London boroughs containing 250,000 people or more.

"In one ward five councillors represented 50 people, of whom only 10 actually lived there. The corporation was an island of wealth, privilege and corruption."

"It is a rotten core of taxation without representation, at the heart of the Commonwealth. The Lord Mayor, taken by most people in this country and abroad as the representative of Londoners, is, in fact, elected to his high office by 10 residents in the City."

To the shame of the parliamentary Labour Party, permission to introduce this bill was refused by 214 votes to 103 votes. This antiquated representation of the richest square mile in the world, of the bankers and industrialists of the stock exchange, will continue to flaunt wealth and privilege in the heart of Labour London!

DO YOU WANT A HOUSE?

The housing shortage and bad housing conditions highlighted in the Milner-Holland Report will not worry everyone. Seven people are competing to buy the house owned by the late Lord Rootes, the car manufacturer.

The price of the house (Ramsbury Manor, a 460-acre estate situated five miles from Marlborough) is a mere £300,000! It has four-poster beds in the six bedrooms and splendid views over the River Kennet.

As can be expected in the "equal" and "classless" society so beloved of the Tory politicians, the competitors for this prize are press lords, millionaire industrialists and racing magnates.

It is a far cry from a modest council house which millions of workers covet and dream about and are unable to obtain because of the inflated housing lists and the housing shortage. Even the odd individual winning the jackpot on the pools couldn't afford such a house.

A BLOW FOR MOSCOW-TYPE STALINISTS

In spite of, or because of, the persecution by the Indian government in arresting hundreds of leaders and candidates of the Chinese-oriented Communist Party in Kerala, they have scored a big success in the elections in that state.

The Congress Party attempted to whip up chauvinism and nationalism over the Sino-Indian border war but they failed completely.

The section of the Communist Party looking towards Peking gained 41 seats, the Moscow-oriented Communists three seats. Even the former Congress Premier of the Kerala province was defeated by a Communist candidate of the Left faction.

There is a lesson in this for socialist workers and "communist" workers in Britain. The attempt to appeal to nationalism failed against the background of poverty and misery of the Kerala workers and peasants.

How much could be gained by pointing out the simple message of internationalism and anti-capitalism as a guide for the working class?

It is to be noted that the results of these elections were tucked away in the *Daily Worker* in a couple of paragraphs in an unobtrusive corner, without comment.

Police use loophole in Eviction Act to aid landlords

by Roger Silverman
Hampstead YS

OF THE REFORMS that the new Labour government managed to legislate at Westminster in its famous 100 days, by far the most likely to rally the sorely-strained confidence of the working class was the Prevention of Eviction Act.

The act made all evictions from rented property illegal without an independent court order, decided after the tenant has stated his case; he could at worst gain some breathing space in which to look for new premises before the landlord put his threat into operation.

Since all evictions, not only of controlled tenants by Rachmanite thuggery which was technically illegal, but also legally sanctioned evictions of tenants unable to pay suddenly inflated rents to their landlords, were happening by the thousand and had been growing ever since the Tory Rent Act of 1957, and were therefore a continual fear for tenants of all rented properties, the act could have been a great step forward, a progressive piece of legislation giving certain minimum rights to working-

class tenants.

But what has happened to this great reform?

It has been admitted that the police force is refusing to implement the Act. A top police chief has stated that the ordinary man on the beat cannot possibly decide whether the property in question is covered by the terms of the Act or not and cannot be expected to enforce such a complicated law on the spot.

If a family is thrown on to the streets at midnight and a copper is passing, he will be forbidden by his supervisors to make the landlord take the family back and bring the case to court, as decreed by parliament.

The family will probably spend the night in a cell on a vagrancy charge, and the landlord will let the premises to someone better able to pay.

There are two exceptions to the Prevention of Eviction Act.

One is offices, from which families are rarely thrown on to the streets at midnight. The other is luxury property, which is normally not too difficult even for the dimmest cop, to distinguish from workers' homes.

So the only conclusion is that the uniformed mac-

hinery of state, the function of which is to uphold the decrees of parliament, has decided on a course of mutiny. It has refused to enforce a law that gives the least imaginable right to representation before a court before being thrown out of house and home.

The homeless tenant cannot be prevented from bringing action himself. He can walk from his corporation dosshouse to see the nearest magistrate and beg the services of a Legal Aid lawyer, if one is at hand.

He will eventually gain the right to prove that he has fulfilled the letter of his contract and paid his rent on the dot. He may find this difficult; in which case he may even be fortunate enough to be granted a deadline before which to pay his entire debt.

If his home has not already been let, he may well be reinstated; there he will almost certainly be harassed every minute of the night and day by a hostile landlord until he chooses to seek other premises.

It is crystal clear that to prevent sabotage the government must take ruthless action against the monstrously autonomous organs of the state, the bureaucratic police and the profiteering press.

It must appropriate space in all the mass organs of publicity and circulate free bulletins to every inhabitant of the British Isles. It must also assert direct control over all the forces of coercion, especially the police, and sack any officer failing in its interests.

If such measures are needed to end the dictatorship of the landlord over the tenant, none but the landlord can object. The Labour Government can be certain that if it exposes the cloak-and-dagger conspiracies that our enemies have embarked upon, and if it appeals to the people over the heads of the press barons, such hypocritical words cannot hurt it.

Militant Fighting Fund

The Militant Fighting Fund is off to a good start, as can be seen from the list below, but if we are to reach the £500 target every area must put in a great effort.

If your area is not near the top of the list, make sure it is next month.

There are numerous ways of raising the cash. When selling Militant, ask for donations, get Co-op, trade union, Labour Party and Young Socialist branches to make donations, make a collection at your workplace, college or school.

Organise a Militant Readers' Forum in your area. No matter how large or small, we can supply the speakers if necessary.

Write to us for any assistance you require.

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NEWS and VIEWS

Sussex federation snubs sectarians

ON SUNDAY, MARCH 14, a meeting of the Sussex Federation of Young Socialist branches was held in Brighton Labour Club.

A report on the unofficial *Keep Left* conference at Morecambe was delivered by Chris Goldie, in which he attacked *MILITANT* and its supporters and defended *Keep Left's* ultra-left position of pulling the youth out of the Labour Party.

A full discussion on perspectives for the YS ensued and it was evident from several contributions from the floor that the majority of the meeting was entirely out of sympathy with the speaker's contemptuous attitude to the Labour Party.

Delegates pointed out that the disastrous policies of the present leadership gave an even greater urgency to seriously raising the political issues in the wards and constituencies. The YS must fight against the backsliding of the leadership and persistently

pose the socialist alternative on all questions.

Goldie, with a handful of supporters, maintained that they were correct in "removing the YS from the right-wing leadership".

A motion of no confidence was moved in the executive committee (predominantly *Keep Left*), whose political position had been exposed and defeated in the discussion. This was passed by an overwhelming majority.

Despite the ex-chairman's refusal to leave the chair, a new chairman, secretary and executive committee were elected. The new EC now proposes to go forward on the basis of a policy of activity in local Labour parties and trade union branches, centred around the struggle for better conditions and pay for young workers.

STEVE MUSGRAVE,
Secretary, Sussex Federation of Young Socialists.

South London tired of faction fighting

IN SPITE OF THE defection of the comrades around *Keep Left*, all the Young Socialist branches in South-west London except Streatham, which was closed by the Labour Party, are functioning.

Continuous faction fights in certain branches in the past period have meant a slight drop in membership. On the whole, however, branches are recruiting new members and trying to build bigger and more viable branches.

The endless internal squabbling has meant, as in other areas, that there has been no serious drive to go out to the youth and take up the problems that they face under capitalism.

Now there is a growing feeling among members in the area that the more outward-looking branches become, the more useful and relevant they will be.

Approaching people outside on the basis of the policies of the present

Labour government does not seem a very attractive proposition to many Young Socialists. They feel the need for a programme setting out the needs of young people.

MILITANT can help in the formulation of such a programme, which should take into account the various problems which really face young people in this country. Any programme put forward by *MILITANT* will be seriously considered by Young Socialists in the area, as most of them are supporters of the paper.

At a readers' meeting called by *MILITANT*, Young Socialists have called for much more initiative than has been shown so far in organising campaigns against racialism, dead-end jobs and apprentices' conditions. In response to this, the Young Socialist federation is already engaged in a campaign against racialism in the area.

BOB RICE.

Factions

I was recently handed a copy of your magazine and advised to read it with a view to selling it at our meetings. At first I was dubious, but on reading *MILITANT* (March) I was pleasantly surprised by this issue.

But my pleasure turned to dismay on reading the letter columns. The tired faction struggles of the YS had found yet another platform.

I know from first-hand knowledge how bitter differences on the left can get, but these experiences have led me to believe much disagreement has its roots in the personal differences and ambitions of the people concerned.

There is much talent in the labour movement. Your paper is evidence. Do not dissipate it by gearing your energies to struggles within the ranks.

Don't think I am naïve; I know we all have our differences and I know they often make close co-operation impracticable. But keep local differences, especially when they have led to such deep divisions as they appear to have done in London, out of your paper.

Your first duty is to further the labour movement, in this and all lands. Your paper should concentrate on this task.

Please do not spoil otherwise excellent comment by these digressions from the more important aim.

I shall look forward to further editions of *MILITANT*.

S. HAMMOND,
Bristol University Labour Club.

Brighton fact finding

AT FIRST THE AUTUMN flush of election success caused complacency to abound in Brighton YS. But now, some six months later, some action is at last disturbing the dust.

Committees have been established to inquire into the conditions of housing and the employment of young people in the area, with a view to publishing the facts gathered and participating in the struggles of young workers locally. Also, a fortnightly newspaper, run by Brighton YS with some help from Hove and Lewes YS branches, is being started to give the findings of the committees and articles by members giving the true facts about local news; we hope that this paper can be distributed free to all places where young workers can be found.

Our fact-finding committees have been hampered by the lack of statistics available to the general public about industry, and they have drawn up thorough questionnaires for contacts in local factories to fill in.

We think that this scandalous lack of statistical information is a national complaint; this is one area where all YS groups can unite in demanding action from the government.

There are now two Brighton YS branches, Kemptown and the newly-formed Pavilion YS.
MIKE KIMPTON.

Merseyside sees Federation split

THE EFFECTS OF THE unofficial Morecambe conference were felt both at the Merseyside YS Federation meeting on March 7 and the YS Regional Conference on March 13.

The federation meeting started half an hour late, with the secretary, Farley, once again apologising for the absence of the minutes of the last meeting, which it seems this time had been "left on a bus".

Hotfoot from Morecambe, Farley commenced an hour-long contribution in which he eulogised the Morecambe conference and justified the setting up of an unofficial youth movement. An unofficial regional conference was demanded as the next step in "the fight".

Because of the support for the new youth movement by the federation majority and the inefficiency of Farley, the election of a new secretary was demanded. Farley was again elected.

The minority of delegates had no alternative but to withdraw from the meeting. They plan to reorganise the Federation in the next few months.

Attendance at the Regional Conference was down on last year primarily because of the bar placed by regional officials on those branches who had attended the Morecambe conference.

The latter event featured as a priority in discussion. Two contradictory resolutions were accepted, one placing the blame for the present situation squarely on the shoulders of Transport House, the other on the *Keep Left* supporters.

The conference showed confusion—the malaise of the Young Socialists—rather than a shift to the right.

The acceptance of a comprehensive resolution from Walton YS, urging activity on the basis of a series of youth demands, can help in turning the YS in the region out towards the real problems confronting youth.

At its last meeting, Birkenhead Trades Council unanimously condemned government support for US action in Vietnam and demanded the resignation of the Foreign Secretary.

TED MOONEY,
Bootle YS.

Anti-Wilson

The letter "Anti-Wilson?", published in the March edition of the paper, is completely devoid of logic. The author draws two conclusions which cannot be accepted by anyone campaigning for a socialist Britain.

First of all he has the audacity to attack Roger Protz for being highly critical of Mr. Wilson. It is naughty, he argues, to do this because the Premier "commands the support of most of the labour movement".

This is perfectly correct and something all socialists are trying to change. Therefore we are forced to attack Tory policies even when they are introduced by a so-called left winger.

His second point about a Labour victory being a blow to big business is utter rot. On what issue has Wilson attacked vested interests? Why did the right-wing paper *The Economist* urge its readers to vote Labour, before the election?

Wilson's foreign policy bears only slight differences to that of the Conservatives. Indeed, the Tories are content to allow Labour to hoodwink the unions into an incomes policy before they return.

Wake up to reality, Comrade Pyper! The present leadership has had all the chances it deserves.

You accuse Protz of wanting "independence from the working-class movement". Surely Transport House has already achieved this?

I support Roger Protz in his attempts to build up a political awareness in the labour movement and so keep the Tories out for ever.

B. D. COULTHARD,
Leeds.

Militant welcomes short reports and letters for this page. Send your contributions to the Editor.

Churchill

Congratulations to all those working-class organisations—unions, CLPs and trades councils—who, amidst all the adulation and glorification of Churchill by the press and other capitalist institutions, have refused to have anything to do with the Churchill Memorial Appeal, recognising it for what it is—an attempt to paper over the cracks in our class society.

By raising one of their champions to "national", "classless" status, the ruling circles hope to divert the attention of workers from the great class rifts in our society and from the fact that a truly "classless" society can only be achieved by a concerted action to transfer the wealth and power of the capitalists to the people who actually produce it.

All socialist and working-class organisations must boycott this appeal and expose it for what it is, so reminding those "Labour" mayors and MPs who give their support to the fund that not everyone is as anxious as they to ignore the class differences in society.

The majority of the working class are well aware of these differences, and still hope to eradicate them. It is the job of papers like *MILITANT* to show them how.

DAVE WEST,
Clapham YS.

continued on back page

'Independent' Young Socialists march into the wilderness

by Peter Taafe

AT THEIR UNOFFICIAL Morecambe conference held on February 27 and 28, and attended by 1,000 young people, the expelled Young Socialist National Committee (Majority) formed a breakaway youth movement.

With the acceptance of *Keep Left* as the official paper of the new movement, the organisers have clearly split from the Labour Party. The conference merely consummated a position which has actually existed for some months. The gathering was more a rally to launch the new movement.

A number of London branches such as Clapham and Wandsworth appeared as sponsors of resolutions which they had never seen or discussed. Delegates were present from areas where the YS has been closed down (e.g. Streatham and Birkenhead).

The story appears to have been the same up and down the country. There was one resolution from a branch called Ashton (minority)!

Scarcely a dissident voice was raised in debate as resolution after resolution was accepted with near unanimity. This alone should have warned David Ashby and his committee that this was a gathering of the "faithful", many of whom were unaware of the real issues at stake.

In the debate on foreign policy, a delegate drew whistling and applause when he said that there was an "instinctive hatred of America by the British working class". This display of crude nationalism was corrected, it is true, by

the editor of *Keep Left*, but the very fact that such things could be said and find a response in the conference, is an indication of the flimsy basis on which the new movement rests.

Another subject of mild disagreement was the shabby role of *Keep Left* supporters during the November apprentices' strike.

The delegate from Ashton stirred the conference when he said that "attacks by the National Committee on the apprentices' strike had split the movement". John Robertson, former YS chairman, ignored Ashby and rushed to the platform to denounce the Ashton delegate and the "conscious saboteurs" of the apprentices' movement, i.e. MILITANT and the Young Communist League.

Despite this hysteria, *Keep Left* found it difficult to apologise for the actions of Ashby, Farley and company, who broke the elementary rule of support for workers in struggle.

The advanced members—a minority at this conference—who will constitute the backbone of the new movement, should have been directed towards work inside the Labour Party. Dave Ashby, in a schizophrenic mood, declared at a press conference that the Labour Party is a "political expression" of the working class and yet continued the headlong plunge into the political wilderness.

For the past twelve years, the criticism levelled by the Marxist left at the Labour leadership has mainly been in the realms of ideas. It has now become possible to show the rank and file of the party just what the ideas

of Wilson & Co. mean in practice. A great job of educating the rank and file of the party by contrasting the past words and the present deeds of the Labour leaders should be undertaken by Young Socialists.

At the start of this vital period, *Keep Left* takes outside the Labour Party many comrades who can play an important role in the struggles ahead.

The history of the British labour movement is rich in examples of costly hysterical walk-outs and childish "left-turns" by sects with claims to divine leadership.

Marxists criticised the Independent Labour Party in 1933 for breaking from the Labour Party at the wrong time and on the wrong issue.

The ILP had at that time the support of 100,000 workers, yet the *Keep Left* tendency imagine that 1,000 (in reality a much smaller number) constitutes a viable alternative to the Labour Party.

Just as dangerous is the theoretical cover which is given to this escapade, namely, that the unorganised, unskilled adults and youth will not turn to the Labour Party.

But the Labour Party is not only the political expression of the organised workers, but also of the unorganised and politically backward sections. At times of crisis they will turn first to the Labour Party for solutions to their problems.

The new movement will melt away within a short period, but the existence of a mythical, unofficial, national committee will become the focal point of

walk-outs at every episodic event, both inside and outside the Labour Party. The *Keep Left* tendency are prisoners of these episodic events. They must have an unending secession of pragmatic issues to constantly activate their ranks.

The plight of the old-age pensioners and their scandalous treatment by the Labour government—an important but temporary issue—is built into the new movement's constitution.

Recent experiences should warn those comrades who support the new movement of the folly of their actions. The arch-Conservative *Daily Telegraph* commented: "The breaking away of the extreme left, although temporarily embarrassing for Transport House, may ultimately be the best thing that could happen to the Labour Party".

By the Labour Party the Tory press means the Labour leaders.

After four years of expulsions, proscriptions and bureaucratic stifling, the right wing are quite content to provoke a section of the YS into throwing in their hand. This is what the attempt to form an open youth movement means.

The enthusiasm of the comrades who make up the ranks of the new movement will be dissipated in fruitless campaigns unless they dissolve the organisation and turn towards the real struggle inside the Labour Party. A refusal to do this and join forces with other left tendencies in the struggle for a Socialist programme will doom them to isolation and gradual demoralisation.

Letters

from page 7

Programme

YOUNG SOCIALISTS should not only be a squad of young people who canvass for the Labour Party, as Transport House would wish them to be, or a body of armchair Marxists sitting back waiting for a revolution, or a group of rowdy agitators trying to create a revolution in a non-revolutionary situation.

They should be a political body which is prepared to speak for and represent working-class youth.

Youth is one of the most unrepresented sections of the country. For years adults have discussed and acted for youth without understanding their problems.

Their views on youth are dated by their own experiences. Consequently, changes that have taken place in society since the war have not been taken into consideration by local and national bodies in their decisions and actions affecting problems of youth today.

Young people need a body with political influence to which they can turn. Lewes Young Socialists are trying to become such a body.

By contacting local trade union branches, going to coffee bars, delivering literature in areas where young people live, we are attempting to create political interest among local young people.

We plan to hold several meetings in Lewes to which young people will be invited, to draw up a programme of youth demands which would be presented to the Labour council and other legislative bodies in the area.

This programme would be the basis of local campaigns.

From these meetings and campaigns we hope a strong representative youth movement will grow up in Lewes; but such a movement should not exist in isolation. We appeal to other Young Socialist branches to do the same as us and to try to find out the specific problems of local youth so that a national movement based on youth demands and integrated into the Labour Party can be built up to raise the political consciousness of youth.

MARY FIFTH,
Secretary, Lewes (Sussex)
YS.

LABOUR AND THE BOMB

FROM PAGE ONE

To continue wasting the workers' substance on arms production will undermine the position of the Labour government and reinforce the strength of the Tories. The vital questions are:

Why is there no difference in the policy of the government and of the Tories;

In whose interests is the money being spent and in whose interests does Britain act as policeman of the world?;

What has this in common with socialism?;

What has this to do with the ideals of internationalism on which the labour movement was built?

This alleged defence is the defence of the interests of the capitalists. Every arms race in history has had a class basis.

British workers have the

same interests as their counterparts in Russia, Germany, America, and China.

But what about the "defence of the country"? That cry has always been used to deceive the working class.

In two world wars the workers were pitted against each other on a world scale. The result? More money spent on ghastly instruments of extermination than ever before in history. In comparison, Hitler's rearmament drive seems like the fumbings of an amateur killer. A nuclear balance is a nuclear nightmare. Arms programmes threaten to devour the fruits of civilisation.

The extermination of the human race would be the outcome of a new world war.

The ghastly game of power politics, of bluff and counter-bluff, can only be a nightmare for the labour movement. We must demand a complete break with the politics of the capitalist class.

This can only mean a socialist home and foreign policy, a policy in the interests of the British people and the world's masses.

But what about the threat from the totalitarian systems of Russia and China? In these countries capitalism has been destroyed. Their rulers have usurped power from the workers, but they have nothing to gain from war.

The workers and peasants of Russia and China tolerate the lack of democracy, the brutality and bureaucratic bungling because of fear of attack from the

West.

A truly socialist Britain would not be a threat to them. If Wilson and the Labour leaders took measures to take over the commanding heights of the economy on a socialist basis, the rulers of Russia and China would be forced to support them in face of threats from the United States.

Nationalism has brought the peoples of the world to the edge of disaster. Only socialism can solve the problem of war.

As a first step the labour movement should demand a steep cut in the arms budget.

Not battleships, but factories.

Not guns, but houses.

Not bullets, but an increase in education and the social services.

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