

The Week

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A news analysis for socialists

There can be no excuse

NOW the Americans are gassing the people of Vietnam and bombing them at random, whether they are combatants or not. We find ourselves at a loss for words. What a savage, filthy parody of American liberalism the Johnson administration has become! The very sight of this empty man, mouthing the words of the martyrs of Selma, "We shall overcome", while, in open and contemptuous cynicism, he marshals all the horrifying, devilish apparatus of modern scientific massacre against the poor peasants of Vietnam, is vile, sickening, un-nerving. No human being should be reduced to the level of a Johnson, which marks out a new depth in witless viciousness. That the American people should find themselves compelled to "choose" his leadership is their crying and disgraceful misfortune. The irony of this choice is not muted by the fact that it was made precisely to avoid the very policies of Goldwater which Johnson has now made his own. Whether the war escalates further or not, the moral crisis of the USA is at its zenith. Its people will awaken from their nightmare the sooner if we here in Britain will only cut loose from its hegemony. Labour must make this break. To walk at the heels of this carnivorous, pathetic creature is no longer simply dangerous. It is demeaning beyond contempt.

Mr. Brown's Incomes Beadle

MR. AUBREY JONES, "at considerable personal sacrifice", has accepted the job of incomes commissioner, at a mere £15,000 a year. This fact gives point to Peter Shore's ill-fated measure to control the emoluments of top management, upon which we commented recently. It is entirely likely that Mr. Jones is in fact taking a severe pay-cut in order to qualify to administer similar medicine to the rest of us. Doctor Beeching, who made similar headlines a little while ago, was by no means the top earner at ICI when he stepped down to draw his pittance as the executioner of British Railways. In the Commons, Peter Shore made the point that the top twenty thousand incomes were quite different from ordinary wages and salaries, in that their recipients, unlike the rest of us, could estimate their own worth. The case for disclosure is overwhelming, if "incomes policy" really is to mean something other than a wage freeze. Mr. Jones has unwittingly underlined it. The government's rejection of such measures, and now, the nature of its appointments, should be taken as a serious warning by the unions. Trouble is in store down Mr. Brown's road.

When the union executive confer on this matter, there are some other matters they should consider. The new commission is to review prices and incomes. But wages are the subject of public negotiations, and these can be influenced quite easily before final settlement is made. Prices, on the other hand, are not negotiable, and so the new commission will be examining accomplished facts when it looks at increases in price-levels. The least the unions can demand is that all price-increases should be subjected to **control**, which means that permission for them must be granted **before they become effective**.

Even if this is done, the unions will be gravely disadvantaged until the accounts of every firm are publicly accessible to the workpeople. Planners cannot plan, and workers cannot control, an economy whose vital data are shrouded in mystery.

Bosses draw up Denby Balance-sheet

by Paul Routledge

ACCORDING to Harold Wincott in *The Financial Times* this week, Britain has a lot to learn from the example of William Denby and Sons. This is the Baildon dye firm which made trade union history by sacking all their Union workers as a reprisal for the walk-out of a few of their mates. That was in October 1963, and since then the firm has 'ignored' a sixteen-month-old strike by engaging new labour, and exercising their "right of selection." There have been several incidents between these newcomers and the regular workers. The Union, the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers has spent £90,000 in benefits since the strike began, and not having the support of the T.U.C., they had to back down. Now along comes *The Financial Times* with a tidy moral from the whole affair. This is that our British economy ought to copy the tactics of this firm. For production, profits and wages have gone up in the last quarter of the year, as a direct result of breaking the power of the Trades Union on the shop floor. *The Financial Times* comments:

"But knowing what we do know — or, more accurately, suspecting what we do suspect — about the widespread misuse of our manpower resources, about the manner in which restrictive practices encourage work-spreading and hold back productivity, about our poor showing in the international league tables, he would be a bold man who said William Denby was an isolated case, or that a great many other British undertakings could not achieve a similar increase in productivity and profitability.

"If that happened, of course, this country's prospects would be revolutionised. There would be no more stop-go, no talk of devaluation, our balance of payments problem would be solved, we wouldn't have to bicker about overseas investment, we should have all the manpower we wanted to modernise our economic and social structure, the national revenue would soar, and so on. We would, in fine, stop being the sick man of Europe and take our rightful place among the industrial nations of the world."

Now we have the panacea for the productive malaise which is holding up increase in productivity. And not only of a better economy, of a

new life, which is announced rhapsodically:

"One question remains in contemplating the possibility of that truly wonderful prospect. Do we, as a nation, have to go through the bitter experiences everyone associated with William Denby had to go through to learn the way to a new life?"

Bearing in mind the way this Labour Government is talking in terms of curbing restrictive practices on both sides of industry, it is interesting to see the off-guard comments of industrialists about the Trade Union oligarchy:

"I believe further that many of our responsible trade union leaders have felt that too often their position has been undermined by management's readiness to concede the demands of irresponsible elements among the workers."

So they are to play their part by suppressing the "irresponsible" element. This in addition to drastic action such as this firm's refusal to take back 110 workers; "The trouble makers were not coming back" said the chairman, Mr. Philip Wright. These men are of course still unemployed, and with such a slur on their record it will be a long time before many of them get a job, as the lesson of Ford's victim sackings has shown.

Maximum publicity is given to the increased production figures. No mention is made of how these figures are arrived at. Certainly William Denby and Sons will have found solid support from local industrialists; they are in the contracting industry. No doubt many frustrated chairmen have been itching to have a similar showdown with their Trade Union men; it certainly makes the casual observer wonder if the whole conflict was not staged. But production has gone up, on the figures published at least. The lyrical chairman remarks:

"The restrictive practices have been swept away. The shop steward's eagle eye no longer spies to ensure that not one piece too many is produced or not even ten minutes' overtime is worked."

In other words, the workers are enjoying a quick financial boom, but they have sold their collective interest to get it. Where does one read about the mess of pottage?

Exhibition Stewards Hold the line

ON February 25th, approximately 3,000 workers in this industry, employed on the erection of exhibitions in the Olympia and Earl's Court Halls, downed tools to attend a meeting in Ravenscourt Park, called by the Exhibition Stewards Co-ordinating Committee. The meeting endorsed the demands set down in the leaflets previously circulated throughout the industry, namely:—

- (1) 10/- and 9/6 per hour for craftsmen and labourers, respectively.
- (2) 3 weeks' holiday with full pay.
- (3) A severance pay scheme.
- (4) An adequate sickness pay scheme.

On March 4th, despite appalling weather conditions and the early publication of the hourly rates (some three weeks earlier than last year), by the National Joint Council — no doubt an attempt to buy off the membership, a crowd of 600 to 700 met at Hammersmith Town Hall. The meeting expressed disgust at the minor increase of 6d. on the hourly rate (at present 8/- and 7/3) and called on the NJC to re-convene immediately.

A resolution was passed called for the ending of overtime, to come into effect on 26th March, when the Ideal Homes Exhibition is due for dismantling. The members agreed to a levy and pledged their support for the stewards' committee. The meeting noted that a large engineering show was to be held in April and was no doubt considered as an important shop window by the employers concerned.

Workers in the industry are often employed in the building industry for part of the year and one of the stewards committee members sits on the Joint Sites Committee. Building workers will, therefore, be interested in the fate of our demands.

Peter Finch (TGWU)

JOHN BAIRD

It was with the deepest regret that we learned, as we went to press, of the death of John Baird. His last action had been to send off the article on Vietnam which we published last week. Written in great pain from his hospital bed, this article showed that he remained a fighter to the last moment. We shall carry a full length article on John Baird's work next week. All that we can say now is that we shall miss him, greatly.

Stan Newens leads Education Study in Bristol

from Tom Nicholls

AN important meeting: "Educational Reform in Britain" will take place in Bristol on Saturday, 3rd April. The venue will be the Co-operative Hall, Prewett Street, Bristol 1, and the meeting is due to commence at 7.30 p.m. The main speaker will be Stan Newens, M.P., and he will be supported by a local speaker.

The conference has been arranged by the Co-op Political Committee, the Co-op Education Committee, and the Borough Labour Party, as part of a programme of half-yearly conferences on matters of importance to the Labour movement.

Included in the agenda will be a concert, and refreshments will be served during the evening. Stan Newens is well suited to speak on this topic; he is a teacher and has been active in the struggle for better education and better conditions for teachers. It is hoped that all readers of *The Week* will do their best to ensure as big an attendance as possible.

NALSO prepares for growth

THE NALSO 1965 Conference, to be held at Wortley Hall, near Sheffield, from 29th March to 2nd April, will, of course, be the first for many years to take place with a Labour Government in office.

Although the main task of the Conference will be to decide policy, it must also be considered how NALSO can become a more effective organisation both in respect of its numbers and in getting its policies implemented.

NALSO is now in a position to exert influence on a LABOUR Government for the policies of democratic public ownership, social justice disarmament, world peace and anti-colonialism, which it has advocated for so long.

Details from:

Colin Livett, 87 Bawtry Road, Bessacar, Doncaster.

DON'T PUSH DEFLATION TOO FAR Albu tells US Bankers

"WE cannot accept, and we do not think anyone is asking us to accept, that in order to try to secure a temporary improvement in the balance of payments we should push deflation to the point at which it would utterly defeat our long-term objectives."

Mr. Austen Albu, Minister of State for Economic Affairs, told the American Bankers' Association this on March 18.

Speaking at a New York luncheon, he contended that the real needs of the UK economy were consistent and enduring policies which would encourage growth and the modernisa-

tion of equipment and human attitudes "by which alone we can stop these recurring cycles of balance of payments weaknesses."

Mr. Albu maintained that the full deflationary effect of the Autumn Budget had been insufficiently appreciated at the time.

He stated that the Government was conscious of the drag on exports of the pressure on prices and wages which took place in a fully employed economy, but expressed the hope that the National Board for Prices and Incomes would have a "strong moderating effect" on upward pressures.

The recent speech in London by

BERTRAND RUSSELL

in which he examines

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY

is sent to all subscribers of *The Week* with the current issue. The pamphlet has been provided free by the publishers, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, and is one of its series of "Foundation Pamphlets". Other recent pamphlets include:

VIETNAM :

How the war started. Napalm and chemical atrocities. U.S. policy in S.E. Asia.

CONGO :

The full story of murder and pillage from Leopold II to Tshombe's mercenaries.

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Democracy and the Bomb

by Raymond Williams

Why we shall march again this Easter

SOMEBODY said recently that SCND should stop being a mass parade and become a mass study-group. It is a popular idea. The Prime Minister, before taking office, said::

"We want a Britain in which everyone, not a small clique or class, feel themselves to be part of a process of new policy-making, of taking national decisions, where every home, every club, every pub is its own Parliament in miniature — thrashing out the issues of the day. We want a Britain where the ideas and efforts of its citizens are more important to the Government than day-to-day ups and downs in public opinion polls or on the stock exchange."

And he is of course right. We want this kind of society. We still want it, after the election as much as before. The problem is, how to get it.

We can all draw our graph of participation in politics. For a month before the General Election I was out almost every day, like thousands of others: not exactly discussing political issues, except at the odd meeting, but organising the vote. Then from the close of the polling-stations, watching the results on television, still emotionally involved. And since then? Meetings, discussions, protests, but "a process of new policy-making, of taking national decisions"? I remember a photograph of 1945, of Aneurin Bevan going to his first cabinet meeting: hurrying from his car, and without looking round reaching his hand back for a briefcase that was being carried by a secretary. In the last three months I've seen that same scene, over and over: the backs of cars sweeping through the gates of Chequers; the three-second public smiles at the front door in Downing Street; Mr. Mulley dressed as a jungle fighter. The conception of political activity, as it is shown to us again and again, is of this ruling-class kind. It took the Leyton result to get Ministers back on television and at public meetings, explaining their policies. The ups and downs in public opinion polls.

Of course the Government is busy. That is entirely right. But to get

decision-making beyond a "small clique or class" needs more than a declaration of intent. The fact that anyone who can qualify as an expert and who is approximately on the Labour side can be asked up to London is no change. Some of us have rooted objections to becoming, or trying to become, grey eminences or sub-eminences. The point is not that a few new people should be included in the clique. It is, simply and unalterably, that the clique must go, and that the public must decide, not simply at elections, but as the issues actually come up.

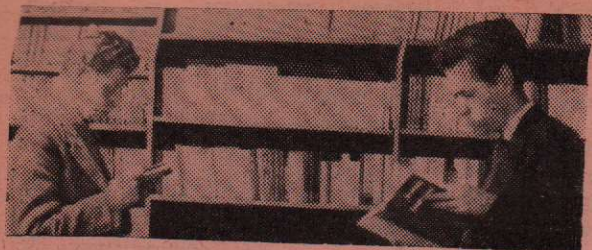
So what does it really mean to tell CND that it should become a mass study-group? Nothing positive, surely, for at its best that is what it has always been. I don't know where else, in meeting after meeting, in the last seven years, the issues of nuclear politics have been repeatedly and publicly studied and discussed. It has been at CND meetings that the microphone has been passed round, for anybody who wants to speak. It has been CND pamphlets and leaflets, handed out in the streets, which have tried to get this mass study-group going. If we haven't succeeded, we can still ask who else has so much tried? Other study-groups have existed, certainly; many of them more expert than our own. But who else has tried, in the sense of Wilson's declaration, to involve everyone in decision-making about the issues of international nuclear politics? Those who say this can't be done, or shouldn't be done, because it leads to simplification and emotionalism, have a right to disagree with us. But those who see, or claim to see, politics in this public way: they, surely, must recognise what we have in fact been trying to do.

Perhaps then the advice that we should stop being a mass parade and become a mass study-group is to be read in a negative way: not so much that we should start studying, but that we should stop parading. And certainly, if we had the choice, that is what most of us would prefer to do. Marching may look or sound glamorous, but those who have actually and repeatedly done it have few

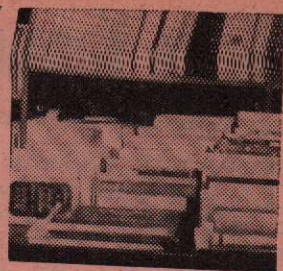
illusions about it. Of course it isn't the best way to deal with political issues, and it is in any case hard and tiring. Why then do we still do it? Because it is the only course open to us. For the choice suggested, by this piece of advice, is in fact illusory. We are a study-group already, and we can hope to become larger and to study more deeply. But this is only a real process if the study connects, in a significant public way, with the actual process of decision-making. It is a parody of democracy — a parody that can easily be offered as a substitute for substance — if all over the country there is study and discussion of national issues, but no connection, and no prospect of connection, between these and the actual processes of decision.

The liberal rhetoric, of "every home, every club, every pub its own Parliament in miniature", is in fact far too easy, and even facile. To make it a reality would mean a transformation of the society, an explicit and revolutionary reversal of all current trends. It would mean ending the massive centralisation and capital-monopoly of our whole system of communications, so that people could have a chance of directly expressing their views in a more adequate form than the occasional vote or reply to a poll questionnaire. It would mean taking seriously the internal democracy of the political parties, starting with the Labour Party, so that the views of constituency members and annual and regional conferences would be taken more seriously, by the Parliamentary Party and the Government, than anyone now even pretends they are. It would mean the extension into every institution and enterprise of the full procedure of democratic discussion and decision. Until there are serious proposals, for changes of this kind, we are bound to take the most liberal rhetoric with a pinch off salt. And we are bound, also, to go on expressing our views through the only public channels now clearly open to us: the streets.

(To be continued next week)



BOOKS IN REVIEW



The Bay of Pigs

by Haynes Johnson, 40/- Hutchinson

THE attempt to destroy the revolutionary government of Fidel Castro claimed many victims: principally the creditability of any pronouncements by the Government of the United States and more specifically the last vestiges of radicalism that clung to Kennedy and to Adlai Stevenson. It was the crisis that saw Stevenson defending on the floor of the United Nations Assembly the proposition that Castro's air force had defected and had bombed Havana only to be given the lie a little later when it was realised that they were CIA planes from Nicaragua. One of the leading participants said, "The trouble was that we were acting like an old whore and trying to pretend that we were just the sweet young girl we used to be."

Haynes Johnson has written a book that, even while it passionately defends the cause of the emigres and the United States, throws considerable light on the events of that period.

The emigres themselves were a mixed bag. They included the criminals of the Batista regime, the sons of rich landowners and a section of genuinely idealistic young men. By the end of the adventure one thing united them; they felt that they had been betrayed and used shamefully by the CIA.

Johnson is particularly worried by the activities of the CIA during the operation. "The CIA's men in the field tended to take matters into their own hands, to cross over the line from intelligence to the formation of policy. They did this in Miami when they picked and groomed men and dictated to the Frente. They acted for the United States — or implied they did — when dealing with the Cubans and led them to believe much that was not true. Later there was no way for the Cubans to prove they had been promised anything."

Johnson finally suggests that even

if the United States had gone through with all their military promises the result could not have been much different. "The record of factionalism, opportunism, self-aggrandisement and even of corruption that marked the Cuban exile political structure boded ill for the future of Cuba. Something more than the tired, often cynical leadership of the Frente and the Cuban Revolutionary Council was needed to offset the dynamic personal leadership of Fidel Castro. For the populace to rise in support of a liberating army, the masses had to be prepared and stirred as Castro himself had done so successfully."

M. Jackson

The Age of Austerity

IT almost seems like another age but it was only twenty years ago when the war ended and the Labour Government came to power. This collection of essays* succeed in capturing the keynotes of this shadowy era before Mac. and ITV took over. From Snoek to Sir Stafford, and from the heady idealism of July, 1945, to the disillusionment of 1951 it is all recorded. It is so distant that bits are hard to believe. There was a rush on Wimbledon Post Office by terrified Tories who withdrew their savings, fearing that the revolution was nigh. The Tory candidate for Jarrow *did* send a telegram to Winston Churchill saying that "Tyneside would like to touch the hem of your garment on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday of next week," and Woodrow Wyatt *did* ask in the House of Commons, "What is the use of having an orderly revolution if it turns out not to be revolution at all?" Buy this book. You will even find out whether or not Sir Hartley Shawcross said, "We are the masters now."

L. Morgan

*"The Age of Austerity — 1945-51" by M. Sissons and P. French, Penguin, 5/-.

Anti-Fascist classic re-appears

FONTAMARA

THIS is a novel of the 'earth, brutal, intense' are the words on the front cover of this paperback* So it is in some ways, but these are by no means the most striking features of this terrible story. It is told by three survivors from a Southern Italian peasant village, whose inhabitants, trapped by endless measures to destroy their livelihood, and worse still, their dignity, finally protest and are shot down by Mussolini's fascists.

We are shown fascism as its victims saw it, first as yet another form of exploitation, along with the Church, the landowners and previous governments, finally as something utterly destructive, against which there is no protest for the ignorant and helpless. As they realise their helplessness against such monstrous injustice they give voice to it in the newspaper which destroys them: "What are we to do?" is its title and theme, and the only man with an answer has been murdered in prison. But the answer is there: that complete unity between oppressed must be achieved before the oppressors can be defeated.

* "Fontamara" by Ignazio Silone, translated from the Italian by Gwenda David and Eric Mosbacher, Panther, 3/6.

RELEASE INDIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS!
Public Meeting

HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL
on
SUNDAY, MARCH 28,
at 3.45 p.m.

Speakers:
REG BIRCH, CHRIS FARLEY,
ILLTYD HARRINGTON,
ERNIE ROBERTS.

Organised by the Indian Workers' Association, Great Britain.

More thoughts on the City

Ken Tarbuck comments on Tom Nairn's article *The Fetish and the Menace*

TOM NAIRN'S article in the last issue posed very correctly the dilemma facing the Labour Government and the Labour Left. His conclusion, that the Government must break with imperialism abroad if it is to carry out its modest programme at home, is one that needs emphasising. Obviously the roots of imperialism must be struck at here in Britain. However, the target of his attack is rather misplaced. In my opinion it springs from his out-of-date analysis of the condition of the British economy.

He was at pains to single out 'the City' for attack, and posed a dichotomy between that 'venerable institution' and British industry. Today this is far too simplistic an assessment—it would have been more appropriate forty years ago.

Tom Nairn's thesis is built round some rather questionable assumptions. Writing about the trend from industrial to financial accumulation, he says, "The secret of this magic lay in the labour of hordes of men in far away lands, and its corollary lay in the decline of the British industrial economy . . . Out of this possession, the final form of British industrial power, there arose a chronic disequilibrium of the British economy: the sacrifice of industrial capital to financial capital became a way of life."

This needs much comment. The phrase 'labour of hordes of men, etc.' conjures up a picture of British capital exploiting millions of colonial workers and peasants. This is only a partial picture. A considerable proportion of late 19th and early 20th century British overseas investment went to the lands of white settlement, the U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Moreover much of this capital exported had a directly reciprocal effect on British exports of goods. His argument is also based on the assumption that British industry was starved of capital because of capital exports; this, too, is highly dubious. The disequilibrium of the British economy arose from its early dominance of the world market, from its position of semi-monopoly. Britain's decline is partly traceable to this; her early position of power meant that the British industrial infrastructure was built up by the 1870's, so that when competitors began to emerge on the world market, the

British stock of capital was relatively old in the technological sense. But much of it was still highly profitable. Another factor to be considered in relation to pre-1914 Britain was the structure of the capital market. Industry right up to 1914 was dominated by private and family concerns who did not go to the Stock Exchange. They financed themselves.

It could be argued that rentiers had to go in for foreign investment because of the lack of opportunity at home. This throws a very clear light on the urge towards foreign investment, and it does make clear Britain's imperial role at this stage. This arose out of the need to protect the City and find new areas of investment even if these were only to be used in the future. Most of this agrees with Tom Nairn's article, but offers different reasons.

However, World War I was a watershed in many ways; and after that date his thesis becomes less and less tenable. It was in the twenties and thirties that the modern structure of the economy began to emerge. The decline of the old staple industries: iron and steel, coal and cotton textiles, is a familiar story; the decline brought misery to the depressed areas. But alongside this process was the spectacular growth of new industries — motor cars, electrical goods, aircraft, chemicals, etc. This was the rise of the consumer durables. Moreover there was a decline in rentiers' overseas investment; they moved into British equities.

The important thing is that Britain's industrial structure was substantially modified in these years; not only because of the change in products, but also because of the rise of the public companies, with the accompanying concentration and centralisation of capital. British industry became increasingly monopolised and oligopolised. The family firms faded from the picture via mergers.

J. H. Dunning, writing in the April 1964 *Lloyds Bank Review*, estimated that in 1913 40% of British foreign investment was in railways, 30% in government, and only 15% in industry, finance or commerce. By contrast in the decade 1951/61 four-fifths of private overseas investment "took the form of business capital for the establishment and operation of

overseas enterprises and branch plants." What this means is that, apart from government investment, it is mainly British firms who are interested in exporting capital today, and it is here that Tom Nairn's thesis falls down.

What we have to ask is how and why this change comes about. It arises from two contradictory elements. Firstly because of the oligopolised condition of British industry; there is no viable price competition.

The second aspect of this contradiction arises because of competition, on the world market. The manifestations of this can be summarised as:

1. The need for vertical integration; i.e. the need to secure raw materials or distributive outlets.
2. Transport costs.
3. The need to overcome import tariffs and quotas imposed by foreign countries.

The Common Market has given a big boost to number three in the last few years. In this struggle, the need for the giant firms to invest abroad is paramount, indeed for many of them the need to export capital is more important than the export of goods. This can only be sustained by a healthy balance of payments.

The whole matter is tied up with the inflow of capital, as well as the export of capital. Estimates put the gross capital private exports from Britain between 1946 and 1959 at well over £4,000 million. Where did all the money come from? The sources can be roughly summarized as follows:

1. Dollar loans and grants from the U.S.A. and Canada, and inflow private investment capital.
2. Sterling Area gold production.
3. Colonial territories, their dollar surpluses and other Sterling areas deficit with the dollar area.
4. Accumulation of colonial Sterling area balances in London.

It should be noted that the tremendous outflow of British capital has been maintained, at least partially, by the sale of large chunks of the British economy. The main areas of investment have been North America, Australia and Europe.

What conclusions can be drawn from the above? I think it reasonable to deduce that the maintenance of a healthy balance of payments and the stability of Sterling are not solely the concern of the City. For the giant oligopolies to survive in international

More thoughts on the City . . .

competition it is necessary to export large quantities of capital and build up their overseas subsidiaries. To enable this to continue it means that large sums of foreign capital must be attracted to Britain, on a long or short term basis. Therefore the position is no longer the City v. the Rest; the situation is much more complex than that today.

There can be no doubt that the policies pursued to maintain the position of Sterling has militated against the overall growth of the economy, but this does not mean that it has slowed down the growth of the giant firms. On the contrary over the last decade this process has been speeded up. The stop-go economy of the Tory government can be laid at the feet of the fetish of Sterling, but it has a very real basis in reality, and is not so irrational as it is supposed.

This brings me back to Tom Nairn's article. The issue is this: the problem cannot be posed as a choice between home and foreign investment, or of curbing the activities of the City. Very often the same people and the same firms are engaged in all these activities today. Given the present structure and ownership of industry there is very little room to manoeuvre when it comes to achieving a balance of payments. The defence of Britain's imperial position is today far more than the defence of the City. It is the defence of all the interests of the British monopolists, because of the fusion of industrial and financial capital.

Industrial Democracy — A Correction

IN common with several other journals we have described the school on Industrial Democracy and Workers' Control (to be held on 7th/8th May) as being sponsored by the London Co-operative Political Committee. In fact, this weekend Conference is being organised by the periodical *Voice of the Unions*.

The Political Committee of the London Co-operative Society has agreed to provide a speaker on 'Co-operation' at one session, and to contribute towards the cost.

British Steel Soggy

Says Time Magazine

Low wages keep Steel Barons in Business

The American publication *Time* carried the following item in its January 22nd issue:

“**B**ITAIN'S Labour Government is determined to nationalize the country's steel industry—or die trying. The formal debate over nationalization has barely begun, but the intensity of the argument outside Parliament foretells a fight that could topple Labour.

“Last week, while Labourites shaped the nationalization bill that they hope to bring before the House of Commons next month, Sir Julian Pote, president of the British Iron and Steel Foundation, charged that a takeover “cannot fail to harm” the industry. Nationalization would mean “disaster for the country,” warned B. Chetwyn Talbot, chairman of the South Durham Steel and Iron Co. Ltd. And Alan James Peech, chairman of United Steel Companies, Britain's biggest steel company, moved on to the next big question: What compensation should the government pay if steel is nationalized? If Labour bases its offer on recent stock prices of the firms, said Peech, it will be guilty of “unfair expropriation.”

“*Second Time Around*. Whatever price Labour finally fixes—provided it can get the nationalization bill passed—will likely owe as much to politics as to a realistic appraisal of Britain's steel industry. Britain has the world's fifth-largest steel industry; after the U.S., Russia, West Germany and Japan. The industry's 260 companies, employing more than 300,000 workers, last year poured a record 26 million tons of steel, 88% of capacity but only 6% of global steel output. In 1951, most of the companies were nationalized by Labour—and two years later were returned to private hands by the Conservatives. This time Labour is generally expected to seize only the ten or twelve largest firms that account for some 80% of industry capacity.

“Labour argues that the industry is a camouflaged monopoly that has grown inefficient behind the cover of

government-sponsored price control. As Labour sees it, the industry needs the swift reorganization that only the State can provide. While Tories and Liberals concede the truth of many Labour complaints, they contend that nationalization is not only ‘irrelevant’ to remedying them, but would also damage the whole economy by putting the nation's most important industry under a change-resistant bureaucracy.

“*Belated Burst*. There is little argument about one thing: British steel, like most of British industry, is not all it should be. In a belated burst of modernization, many British steel companies have caught up technologically with the rest of Western Europe in the last five years, and Britain's low wages (an average of \$41.80 a week in steel) enable them to price some steel lower than Common Market steel. But steel productivity in Britain is lower than in the Common Market and only half of productivity in the U.S. During a strike last year, analysts found that the 17,500-man force at the Steel Co. of Wales could be cut 7,000 without reducing output. Last week both the company and labour leaders agreed that the mill must cut its manpower.

“Because of the plethora of workers and the presence of too many old, small mills, British steel suffers from chronically soggy profits. With Britain's high-grade domestic deposits of iron ore exhausted, the industry must import more and more ore. Yet import quotas rule out fueling British mills with U.S. coal, which is cheaper than British coal. The government sometimes assigns expansion by regions (so much to Scotland and so much to Wales) to increase jobs instead of efficiency. British steel managed to export only 18% of its production last year, despite the nation's need for more exports.” (My emphasis.)

Alec Acheson

VIETNAM: Defeat looms for US terrorists

LYNDON B. JOHNSON, U.S. President, has done what both Eisenhower and Kennedy dared not do, I. F. Stone's Weekly stressed in an article, on March 15, commenting on the landing of U.S. marines in South Vietnam.

The article said: "In 1954, when Nixon, Radford and Dulles wanted U.S. intervention in Vietnam to prevent the negotiation of peace, Eisenhower 'remarked', according to his memoirs, 'Mandate For Change', that 'If the U.S. were, unilaterally, to permit its forces to be drawn into conflict in Indochina and in a succession of Asian wars, the end result would be to drain off our resources and to weaken our overall offensive position.'" Kennedy, it was recently revealed, faced a similar demand and made a similar decision in his first year in office." but, "what both Eisenhower and Kennedy refused to do Johnson has now done. He has landed U.S. combat troops in Asia."

The article ridiculed the allegation of the U.S. government that the landing of U.S. marines was not for combat purposes. It said: "Our general can be as subtle as Greek theologians . . . but the marines are not just going to sit there. They might even go out and do a little shooting on their own. For as the *Baltimore Sun* reported March 9, the two battalions are 'more than infantry'."

The Weekly feared that sending troops to South Vietnam would not

help the US. to win a military victory there. On the contrary, it would wallow ever more in the mire in South Vietnam. "If two battalions of U.S. marines should be overwhelmed by guerrillas, this would be a loss of face for U.S. forces. We would be compelled to send in more troops and urged to do more retaliatory bombing in the north to restore our 'prestige'. Once we begin committing combat troops, we are caught in what the French call the 'engrenage', in the 'gears' that will drag us in further and ever more painfully. The marines are landing at a time and a place that invites a Dunkirk if not a Dienbienphu," it added.

"Danang is set like Dienbienphu in a bowl of hills dominated by the Viet Cong. The only fortunate difference is that it offers a quick escape route by sea. The military situation is everywhere deteriorating . . . guerrillas overran a regional forces platoon only three miles south of Danang runway the night before the marines began arriving. To the south of Danang, guerrillas have cut the north-south railway and the one highway to Saigon," it said. "Heavy U.S. bombings are exacting their toll of civilians, though they have not stopped the guerrillas. The rate of desertions from the South Vietnamese army is rising sharply, and if there is going to be war much longer we are going to have to wage it."

Who stalls when the world cries BOYCOTT

The South African Embassy publication, *Report from South Africa*, contained the following items in its March issue.

LAST month, Sir William Lyons, chairman of Jaguar-Daimler, announced plans that will add Jaguars to the list of South African manufactured cars. These cars have been assembled in East London (Cape Province since 1960 and at present have a local content of 23 per cent. The new plans will push the level up to 45 per cent. by the end of this year and 55 per cent. within three years. Work on an engine assembly plant has already started, and front and rear axles will also be made locally.

On January 30 the first all South African General Motors engine was made. It was a six-cylinder Chevrolet engine and it came from the company's £10½m. engine plant at Port Elizabeth.

The South African Ford company some months ago announced the completion of the 10,000th engine assembled at its new South African engine factory, and the British Motors Corporation plant at Blackheath, near Cape Town, has an engine assembly section for both its Mini and 1100 ranges.

A Board of Trade report says British exports to South Africa have risen by 52 per cent. in the past two years.

Talks between South African mining interests and Belgian and Portuguese companies on a possible participation in the Angolan oil industry start in Lisbon this month.

It is not necessary to comment on these reports — they speak for themselves in showing what forces lie behind resistance to operating the boycott of South Africa.

VERWOERD mourns CHURCHILL

IN his tribute to Churchill, Dr. Verwoerd, Prime Minister of South Africa, said: "In the history of South Africa he also left his mark — not so much because of the adventures of his youth but because of his role in the two world wars, and also because of his understanding and sympathy with South Africa during the past two decades."

SPAIN

Franco strikes out at Student Movement

THE Ministry of Education, in answer to "unauthorised meetings of students," has ordered the closing down of the central building (Philosophy and Sciences) of Barcelona University. Students will lose their right of matriculation in other sciences if by August 22 classes have not been restored to normal.

The same sanction will also be

applied without further warning to students participating in "any type of alteration of academic order" or collective abstention from class-room or lecture attendance. In Madrid some of the University buildings have been closed and reopened several times during the last ten days, but full attendance is now reported from almost all class-rooms.

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WHY MR. WILSON BACKS THE U.S. OVER VIETNAM

from Pat Jordan

Again it is in the columns of the Financial Times that one can read the most clear and cynical statements about Government policy. To many in the Labour Party, Mr. Wilson's refusal to, as the BBC's reporter put it, "be drawn on the question of U.S. use of gas in South Vietnam" is almost inexplicable. Even de Gaulle is critical of American policy in Vietnam, it is argued; "why doesn't Wilson speak out?" people are asking themselves. The daily paper of the City, which doesn't have to cater for a mass audience, puts things this way in an editorial on March 22nd:

"...The British Government, whatever its inner-most feelings about American policy, has no choice but to back the U.S." (over Vietnam) "Internally, this may well pose increasingly awkward problems for Mr. Wilson. The Left wing of the Labour Party has had to put up with a great deal since the Government took office. It has on the whole done so with remarkably good grace. But it does now seem that on Vietnam the Government will come under pressure. To quite a number of people in the Labour Party this is after all the sort of "moral issue" on which they expect Socialist Britain to give a clear lead....."

"This is of course precisely what the Government cannot do. 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 U.S. 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. Any chance of Britain plugging the Indian Ocean gap would disappear.

"....The American bombing raids are designed to restore a situation which, until the raids started, was becoming militarily more and more untenable. They are trying to step up pressure to a degree which the North Vietnamese will find unbearable and yet at the same time stop short of action which might produce a full-scale Soviet-U.S. confrontation.

The Soviet Union for its part has taken the lessons of Cuba just as much to heart as the Americans. It certainly does not wish to get involved in a struggle which would only benefit the Chinese. Equally it cannot stand by forever and be seen to do nothing in the face of "imperialist aggression" since this would provide the Chinese with a formidable propaganda weapon in both the Communist and non-committed world....In such a situation it is always possible that one side or the other may miscalculate, all the more so since it is by no means certain how much influence China in fact exercises over Hanoi or for that matter Hanoi over the Vietcong guerrillas. All that is clear for the moment is that the danger of an escalation of the conflict..must mount with every day that passes. And every day it will become harder for Mr. Wilson to stand up to his Left-wing critics, though stand up he must."

Did something happen to change Mr. Stewart's mind over U.S. policy in Vietnam during the course of Tuesday?

Early editions of newspapers (Times, Financial Times, etc.) reported that Mr. Stewart had not made much public concession to the Left-wing of the Labour Party. In his luncheon speech he said: "I am very well aware that there are many people in my own country and in other countries who are gravely concerned about the continued fighting in Vietnam." But (according to the Financial Times) he showed "no sign of any disposition on his part to read the Americans lectures, nor has the use of non-lethal American gas by the South Vietnam provoked a serious protest from ^{him}". These early reports were presumably based upon a 'handout.' These are normally circulated prior to actual speeches.

However, later editions reported Mr. Stewart as passing on to the United States the "very grave concern" aroused in Britain and other countries by the use of the gas. He is also reported as saying in answer to a question that he was asking the U.S. Government "to display what your declaration of independence calls 'a decent respect for the opinions of mankind'".

What could have brought about this change of mind? Only frantic telegrams from Britain informing Mr. Stewart of the wave of indignation and horror sweeping through British political circles, one is tempted to answer. If this is true, and no other answer presents itself, we are seeing the first dividends of the campaign the left has been waging to change Government policy on Vietnam.

Now is ^{the} time to intensify this pressure. In the fluid situation the possibility exists of the Government being forced to change its whole position (the fact that the question of the use of gas can be used as a get-out for the previous approval of bombing of the North, use of napalm, etc. should be noted and taken advantage of!).

I suggest to all readers of The Week that they take the following steps this weekend:

- (1) Put every kind of pressure upon your M.P. to sign the Noel-Baker motion which has already been signed by a significant number of people who refused to sign the Warbey one;
- (2) To try to get as many public statements, resolutions, etc., over this weekend calling for a complete reversal of the Government policy of supporting the U.S. over Vietnam;
- (3) Intensify the preparations for the Easter March - this march could be the culmination of such a campaign.

We have evidence that the Government is sensitive to pressure and is re-thinking its position; now is the time to absolutely bombard Mr. Wilson and his colleagues with every kind of protest we can muster. A change in the Government's Vietnam policy would have deep repercussions in every field of activity. We must not fail to take advantage of this situation which means we can combine giving the most practical aid to those fighting for a better life in Vietnam with that of radicalising events in Britain.

Editorial note: We should be pleased to hear of all activities on this matter.

NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE: The article on Bahrain was held over for space reasons and will appear next week; the article from Selma arrived too late to appear in this week's issue and has been carried forward. Other articles next week will include an analysis of the forthcoming elections in Ireland, important articles on poverty in New York, NALGO and incomes policy, West Indies, Japan and Australia, etc.

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Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation

THE LABOUR PARTY'S FOREIGN POLICY

A speech delivered at the London School of Economics on 15th February, 1965

by Bertrand Russell

Before his speech, which begins overleaf, Lord Russell made this emergency statement on the situation in Vietnam:

"The world is on the brink of war as it was at the time of the Cuban crisis. American attacks on North Vietnam are desperate acts of piratical madness. The people of South Vietnam want neutrality and independence for their country. America, in the course of a war of pure domination in the South, attacked a sovereign state in the North because the U.S. has been defeated by the resistance of the entire population in South Vietnam.

We must demand the recall of the Geneva Conference for immediate negotiations. I urge world protest at every U.S. Embassy. And in Britain the craven and odious support for American madness by the Labour Government must be attacked by meetings, marches, demonstrations and all other forms of protest.

If this aggressive war is not ended now, the world will face total war. The issue must be resolved without a nuclear war. This is only possible by world outcry now against the United States. The American proposition that an independent Vietnam free of U.S. control is worse than a nuclear war is madness. If America is allowed to have its cruel way, the world will be the slave of the United States.

Once more America summons mankind to the brink of world war.

Once more America is willing to run the risk of destroying the human race rather than bow to the general will.

Either America is stopped now or there will be crisis after crisis until, in utter weariness, the world decides for suicide."

Price 1s.

My purpose in what I am about to say is to examine the relations between the foreign policy of the Labour Party before the General Election and the policy of the Labour Government in regard to international politics. I should like to recall to you, first, the preamble to that section - almost the last - in the Labour Manifesto of last September, entitled "New Prospects for Peace". I take it from The Times of September 12th.

It begins with a very brief history of East-West relations since 1945 and says that even in "the grimmest periods . . . Labour always regarded the Cold War strategies as second best . . . and remained faithful to its long-term belief in the establishment of East-West co-operation as the basis for a strengthened United Nations developing towards World Government."

It castigates the Tory Government for their old-fashioned policies, especially the Tory failure to relax tensions and to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. "The Labour Government will do all that is possible to rectify these policies."

The Manifesto then considers the means to be taken to "relax tensions". "First and foremost", it says, "will come our initiative in the field of disarmament. We are convinced that the time is opportune for a new break-through in the disarmament negotiations, releasing scarce resources and manpower desperately needed to raise living standards throughout the world."

"We shall appoint a Minister in the Foreign Office with special responsibility for disarmament to take a new initiative in the Disarmament Committee in association with our friends and allies."

"We have," it says, "put forward constructive proposals:

- 1) To stop the spread of nuclear weapons.
- 2) To establish nuclear free zones in Africa, Latin America and Central Europe.
- 3) To achieve controlled reductions in manpower and arms.
- 4) To stop the private sale of arms.
- 5) To establish an International Disarmament Agency to supervise a disarmament treaty."

The Labour Government has, to be sure, appointed a Minister in the Foreign Office with special responsibility for disarmament and even an arms control and disarmament research unit headed by a reader in international relations at the I. S. E. It has, indeed, appointed so many new Ministers and departments for various phases of disarmament and defence and offence that one is hard put to it to know to whom to apply for what.

As to the five proposals. Nothing, so far as the Press has told us, has been done about implementing any of them. Far from taking measures to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, the Labour Government has done quite the opposite. Nor has it taken measures to achieve controlled reductions in manpower and arms - it has turned down any suggestion of reducing the British Army in Germany. Little seems to have come out of the propositions of Mr. Rapacki concerning a nuclear free zone in Central Europe. Chinese proposals - pleas, even - for a nuclear-free zone in Asia and/or the Pacific have been passed over in apparent scorn. I know of no measures taken to stop the private sale of arms or to establish an International Disarmament Agency.

A few lines further on in the Manifesto, the following sentence occurs; "Labour will stand by its pledge to end the supply of arms to South Africa." "Britain," it says, "of all nations, cannot stand by as an inactive observer of this tragic situation." Admirable statements, and backed by previous admirable statements: The Sunday Times of January 26, 1964, reports Mrs. Barbara Castle as saying, in regard to a possible order from South Africa for Bloodhound bombers, "If an order is placed before the election we shall do all we can to stop it." Mr. Wilson

has, in the past, referred to the arms traffic with South Africa as "this bloody traffic in these weapons of oppression," and called on the people of Britain to "Act now to stop" it But, on November 25, 1964, Mr. Wilson announced that the Labour Government had determined to honour the contract entered into during the rule of the Tory Government for 16 Buccaneers for South Africa.

Following the five proposals that I have cited, the Manifesto says: "In a further effort to relax tension, a Labour Government will work actively to bring Communist China into its proper place in the United Nations; as well as making an all-out effort to develop East-West trade as the soundest economic basis for peaceful co-existence." Britain has achieved nothing since the advent of the Labour Government towards the admission of China into the U. S. nor has it appreciably increased East-West trade. Traders are usually ahead of politicians, Tory traders no less than Labour traders.

The Manifesto continues with an item which, in the light of the Government's actions, does not read well: it says, "Peaceful co-existence, however, can only be achieved if a sincere readiness to negotiate is combined with a firm determination to resist both threats and pressures." It is difficult to equate this statement with the refusal, curt and out-of-hand, given by the Labour Government to the proposals of the Chinese Government for summit discussions of disarmament and other international matters which our Press told us took place soon after the Labour Government's advent.

That the Labour Government "will continue to insist on guarantees for the freedom of West Berlin" we do not yet know - the matter has not come to the fore during Labour's rule. Nor do we yet know how far the Labour Government will be able to implement its admirable suggestions concerning the U. N. nor how far it will be able to take us towards world government, which the Manifesto says is the final objective - as I believe it should be. So far, Britain under the Labour Government has done nothing to strengthen the U. N., though it has been, according to the Guardian (27 January, 1965) "giving close study to the question of designating specific military units for potential use in United Nations peace-keeping operations." In the light of events during the past two or three months, I cannot, however, feel very hopeful as I read what the Manifesto has to say on these matters, much as I agree with it regarding them.

I propose to take up further on in my discussion of the Labour Government's policy the question of how far the measures which it has so far indulged in tend to relax the tensions of the Cold War, as the Manifesto says the Party wishes to do. But I will continue for a moment with the next items mentioned in the Manifesto; the Party's "Defence Policy Outline" and its "New Approach" to defence.

It excoriates the "run down defences" of the Tory Government whose wastefulness and insistence upon sticking to such affairs as Blue Streak, Skybolt and Polaris, and whose inefficient policy in regard to the aircraft industry has resulted in our defences being obsolescent and meagre. It proposes to institute a revision of the Nassau agreement to buy Polaris know-how and missiles from the United States. But, in face of the storm about TSR2 bombers and of the fact that it is continuing plans for Polaris submarines and is discussing a nuclear umbrella for South East Asia, one wonders how far the Government intends to go with such plans. It seems extraordinary that, having set itself such a programme as the Manifesto suggests, it had not examined the problems of conversion very carefully and come to some sort of plan to avoid or minimise the hardships that would be entailed in the way of unemployment and waste of machinery and money. But no evidence has been given the ordinary newspaper reader that any such basic studies were made.

It is possible that the Government will strengthen conventional regular forces in order to contribute its share to NATO and keep its peace-keeping commitments to the Commonwealth and the U. N. as the Manifesto says it stresses doing. This seems, however, unless it runs concurrently with cutting down in other quarters, to be contrary to the controlled reduction in arms which it also says it will strive for.

The next item is both bewildering and interesting. The Manifesto says: "We are against the development of national nuclear deterrents and oppose the current American proposal for a new mixed-manned nuclear surface fleet (MLF). We believe in the inter-dependence of the

Western alliance and will put constructive proposals for integrating all NATO's nuclear weapons under effective political control so that all the partners in the Alliance have a proper share in their deployment and control." A little further on, when discussing the folly of the Conservatives in entering into the Nassau agreement and in talking about an "independent British deterrent", it says: This nuclear pretence runs the risk of encouraging the "spread of nuclear weapons to countries not possessing them, including Germany." And yet, when the Prime Minister announced what one must suppose are the "new constructive proposals" which the Manifesto told us to expect, they turned out to be the Atlantic Nuclear Force (ANF). The ANF is to be not merely, as was the MLF, a mixed-manned force of surface ships, but is to include other nuclear delivery systems, including aircraft and submarines. It therefore encourages the spread of nuclear weapons more enthusiastically than does the MLF - which I agree was a deplorable suggestion - and certainly encourages the spread of nuclear weapons to Germany. The remedy is, therefore, far worse than the disaster it professes to correct.

If you would like a glimpse of the chicanery indulged in, I advise you to read the reports of the Parliamentary debate on defence in the week beginning 14th December, and the report in The Times of 18 December entitled "Britain to waive control of Polaris weapons", "Our Bombers over Asia" in the Daily Worker of the same date, and "Britain to retain part of V-bomber force" in the Guardian of the previous day. Amongst other information to be gained from these various sources are the facts that Britain proposes to give a certain number of its ships and V-bombers by devious routes to NATO, but will keep others to be used by Britain outside the NATO area. The Government thereby persuades the populace that it is keeping its promise to do away with its independent deterrent and at the same time can, independently, form "a nuclear umbrella" over South East Asia. By means of the ANF we soothe German feelings, since the Germans will participate equally with us in the control and benefits of this nuclear force and will, therefore, be distracted from pushing for an independent nuclear deterrent of their own. This scheme of the ANF has been put to the public through the Press in such a way that the layman is entirely baffled and cannot understand either what the ANF consists in or how very contrary it is to professed beliefs of the Labour Party as given in the Manifesto or as understood by the lay members of the Party. It is a bare-faced turn-about carried off, in so far as the Government has succeeded in carrying it off, by being wrapped up in a welter of words and the happy slogans that the Prime Minister did not knuckle under to the U. S. in the matter of the MLF and that Britain is once more taking the initiative in constructive pacific proposals.

The Manifesto concludes with eight paragraphs in which it first gives itself a reason for not carrying out its promises at once by saying that it does not yet know what damage inflicted upon the country by the Tories it will have to repair. It seems a little odd, perhaps, that the members of the Labour Party who aspired to office were so taken by surprise by the financial state of the country - a situation that was fairly apparent to many laymen - and had not prepared any adequate plans to cope with it. But I do not intend to go into economics and finances here. The Manifesto goes on to say that a Labour Government will first of all have to make itself more efficient than the Government which it supersedes. Presumably the rash of new offices and holders of office in the present Government is its answer to the need of efficiency. Secondly, it says that the Government will seek to establish a true partnership between the people and their Parliament; and thirdly it must foster, throughout the nation, a new and more critical spirit. "The Government can give a lead," it says, "by subjecting to continuing and probing review of its own Departments of State, the administration of justice and the social services." And here I should like to recount an experience of mine that appears to run counter to the promise contained in the statement from the Manifesto I have just cited. Three eminent Russians were appointed by the Russian Government to discuss various topics of international interest with me. In November these three Russians applied for visas to enter Britain. The Home Office at first refused visas for all three, but after protest, allowed visas for two of them. In regard to the most eminent of the three, the Chief Archivist of the Supreme Soviet, the Home Office remained adamant. I wrote to the Home Office - and I am, of course, speaking of the Labour Home Office - begging them to rescind their ban upon a visa for the Chief Archivist. After many weeks during which I was unable to learn anything of the fate of my letter, I received a reply from the Home Secretary saying that he did not feel able to grant my request. I wrote again and wrote also to the Prime Minister. After some time, I received from the Home Secretary the same reply as before, and from the Prime Minister a notification that he agreed with the Home Secretary and would not ask him to reconsider. On no occasion

from beginning to end, has any reason been given to me or to the Russians for the ban. If this experience is typical, it hardly bears out the claim of the Manifesto that the Government would, or does, welcome criticism or open discussion with its electors and members of its Party.

The Manifesto ends with a stirring pronouncement that the Labour Government "must put an end to the dreary commercialism and personal selfishness which have dominated the years of Conservative government" and says that "the Labour Party is offering Britain a new way of life that will stir our hearts."

There is a lot of ironic fun to be got out of that Manifesto now that we have seen its fruits.

So much for the Manifesto upon which the present Government was elected and for how far it has carried out its promises in certain respects. I propose now to return to one of its most important promised intentions: its determination to relax the tensions of the Cold War. And I beg of you to ask yourselves, as I recount what has been happening in certain areas of international activity, whether you consider that this activity to which the present Government has contributed and proposes to continue to contribute is calculated to relax any tensions whatever.

You doubtless know a good deal about the war in South Vietnam, but I will give a very brief outline of its progress and character. South Vietnam was part of French Cochinchina, but after a long process of civil war, the French were excluded from the whole region. A conference was summoned to meet at Geneva in 1954. The conclusions reached were sensible, and, if they had been carried out, no trouble would have arisen. Vietnam was to be independent and neutral, and was to have a parliamentary government established by a General Election. The Americans did not like this. They professed to suspect that Vietnam would become part of the Communist bloc if left to itself and that North Vietnam was already, and has continued to be, part of the Communist bloc, in spite of reiterated statements by the Government of North Vietnam that they are and wish to be neutral.

The Americans sent observers who decided that South Vietnam was too disturbed for a general election. There were in South Vietnam three parties; the peasants, who constituted the large majority; the Buddhists; and a tiny minority of Christians, who had been supporters of the French. The Americans decided to support this small faction. They did so at first by sending technical aid and material and "Advisers". It was soon seen, however, that the "Advisers" were taking far more than a passive part in the war that ensued between the American-supported minority and the Buddhists and peasants. The war has continued now for many years and the American-supported Government - or, more outspokenly, the Americans - have steadily lost ground. It has been warfare of an incredibly brutal kind, brutal to a degree seldom equalled by any civilised Power.

Eight million people have been put in barbed wire concentration camps involving forced labour. The country - civilians, animals and crops, as well as warriors and jungle - has been sprayed with jelly gasoline and poison chemicals. Fifty thousand villages were burnt in 1962 alone. The following account was published in the Dallas Morning News on January 1, 1963: "Supposedly the purpose of the fortified villages is to keep the Vietcong out. But barbed wire denies entrance and exit. Vietnamese farmers are forced at gunpoint into these virtual concentration camps. Their homes, possessions and crops are burned. In the province of Kien-Tuong, seven villagers were led into the town square. Their stomachs were slashed, their livers extracted and put on display. These victims were women and children. In another village, expectant mothers were invited to the square by Government forces to be honoured. Their stomachs were ripped open and their unborn babies removed." And the anti-Communist Democratic Party of Vietnam told the International Control Commission that: "Decapitation, eviscerations and the public display of murdered women and children are common." It is, as the Nation of January 19, 1963, called it, "a dirty, cruel war," and one can only agree with the leader of the Vietnamese Democratic Party when he said in an interview on C. B. S. (reported in the Vietnamese Democratic Bulletin for September, 1963): "It is certainly an ironic way to protect the peasant masses from Communism."

It is generally admitted that there is no hope that the Americans can win this war.

Obviously failing in South Vietnam, they are now considering extending the war to North Vietnam in spite of the fact that China has declared its support of Vietnam if that should happen, and Russia may follow suit. The Labour Party had, hitherto, been opposed to this policy which involves risk of world war. As late as June 4, 1964, the Daily Worker said that Mr. Wilson, at the end of talks in Moscow, was opposed to carrying the war into North Vietnam as well as to North Vietnamese infiltration into the South. But, since the formation of his Government, the Labour Party has agreed with America to support that country in its war of conquest. The Guardian reports on December 10, 1964, that Mr. Wilson told President Johnson that Britain wholly supported the legitimate role the United States is playing in South Vietnam. The Labour Government is doing this in spite of the fact that the vast majority of the inhabitants of South Vietnam are opposed to this American war and want to achieve peace and neutrality - as the North Vietnamese have repeatedly asserted that they also wish - and in spite of the extreme unparalleled brutality of the war, and in spite of the fact - and this is to be noted - that the Americans have no shred of right in South Vietnam and are conducting a war of a type to which the Labour Party has always been passionately opposed. Moreover, if the Americans extend the war to North Vietnam, as they threaten to do, we and they will be involved in a war with China of which the consequences are bound to be horrible - possibly all-out nuclear war. For all these consequences, the Labour Government will share the responsibility.

A similar situation is developing in the Congo. Katanga is incredibly rich in valuable minerals, especially cobalt. Cobalt would be necessary for the Doomsday Bomb. When the Congo became independent, the Western Powers, especially America and Belgium, made a determined effort to preserve for the West the products of Katanga. Lumumba, who was the Congo's choice as Prime Minister, was murdered, and Tshombe, under Western pressure, was made Prime Minister of the whole country. The country rose against this decision, and the Americans and Belgians sent a military expedition to enforce their will. This expedition, the British, under the leadership of the Labour Government, supported, and they allowed it to use Ascension Island as a convenient spot from which to conduct the invasion. There is, in consequence, a war of devastation in progress throughout the Congo. The likelihood is that this will degenerate into guerilla warfare which will continue without securing victory for the West. Perhaps an excerpt from the writing of one of those who was a mercenary fighting for the West in the Congo would bring home the sort of war we are supporting there. I quote this from News of the World for 22 November, 1964:

"On the way to Stanleyville one of our vehicles broke down. We took our gear off it and retreated into the bush. Late in the afternoon we went back to the vehicle, but found it completely wrecked

"The young English lieutenant was furious. 'We will give the bastards a real lesson.' He ordered us to move at once on the nearest village and take it apart.

"It was a familiar enough command. It seemed to me we had been taking villages apart, innocent villages of peaceful farming folk who did not want any part of this war, all the way along the track from far down in the south.

"We would turn up unexpectedly, open fire without warning, race through the place, burning every pathetic shanty and shack to the ground regardless of who might be inside. The idea was to spread the image of our determination and ruthlessness; to terrorize the whole area; to give the rebels an example of what they were in for

"It seemed almost certain that the villagers knew nothing about the activities of the rebels. I doubted they even knew the lorry had been destroyed.

"It was just before dusk when we came. Unsuspecting women were hustling around, carrying water and doing about the last of their day's chores. Children were playing in the dust, laughing and shouting to one another.

"We paused for a few minutes, and then came the order to fire.

There was a great crackle of shots from machine guns and our deadly new Belgian rifles. Women screamed and fell. Little children just stood there, dazed, or cartwheeled hideously as bullets slammed into them.

"Then, as usual, we raced into the place, still firing as we went. Some of us pitched cans of petrol on to the homes before putting a match to them. Others threw phosphorous hand grenades, which turned human beings into blazing inextinguishable torches of fire.

"For a while, as we raced along, there was bedlam. Shrieks, moans, shrill cries for mercy. And, above all, the throaty, half-crazed bellowing of those commandoes among us who quite obviously utterly loved this sort of thing.

"Then, as we moved away beyond the village, the comparative silence, the distant, hardly distinguishable cries of the wounded, the acrid smell of burning flesh."

The account continues, but I do not think that I need pursue it to illustrate my point. The cardinal point in the training of these mercenaries - and again I quote - is "that never, in any circumstances, should prisoners be taken. 'Even if men, women and children come running to you', I was told, 'even if they fall on their knees before you, begging for mercy, don't hesitate. Just shoot. To kill.'"

I need hardly say that this young man was sickened of being a hired assassin and ceased to be one. But, in England, under the aegis of the Labour Government, we are continuing to support this slaughter. On November 20, 1964, The Times announced that Mr. George Thomson, our Minister of State at the Foreign Office, was informed during the previous week by the Belgian Government that they were engaged in contingency planning with the U. S. Government. Britain then gave her permission to use Ascension Island. The Times also announced that Belgian troops were flown to Ascension Island with British permission. The Daily Express of 30 November, 1964, reports: "At one stage the Cabinet considered sending British troops. Britain was the first to suggest armed intervention to Belgium. But officials in Whitehall now say that the terrain in rebel-held areas prevents large-scale troop landings." And, on December 15, 1964, Mr. George Thomson stated: "We give outright support to Tshombe." Yet, two days later our Minister of Defence (one of them, anyway) "referred to 'primitive barbarism' in the Congo and said that we had to see that other parts of Africa and Asia were not plunged into 'a similar state of chaos.'" Does this mean that we are to uphold similar bloody and unjustified slaughter elsewhere in Africa, carried on with the permission and help of the Labour Government? The record is one of which I as an Englishman cannot be proud. As a member of the Party responsible, I am sickened.

But to move on: Similar troubles are being stirred up by British initiative in the war between Malaysia and Indonesia, a war likely to be as bloody and atrocious as the two of which I have been speaking and to last as long, with no victory possible. On page 65 of the report of the 62nd Annual Conference of the Labour Party, July, 1963, you will find that Labour supported the Malaysia Bill for the relinquishment of British sovereignty over North Borneo, Sarawak and Singapore. Labour felt - and I quote - "that the federation of Malaysia would play an important stabilising role in S. E. Asia." On December 10 of this last year, the Guardian reports that Mr. Wilson told President Johnson that Britain has 8,000 troops in Borneo, 20,000 in Malaysia as a whole: and the New Statesman of January 15, 1965, says that "the bulk of Britain's fleet, some 700 ships including a Commando 'bushfire' ship and aircraft carriers" are now in the waters near Malaysia and Indonesia. "The Commonwealth Brigade is in Malaya facing Sumatra."

But these are not the only places where the Labour Government is supporting Western imperialism. In both British Guiana and Aden and the South Arabian Protectorates it is following the policies of the Tory Government although it has sent its Colonial Secretary travelling to the trouble spots to study the situations once again.

All these are shameful attempts to support the tottering supremacy of Britain and America against the wishes of the populations concerned, and against the vast movement for

independence which is agitating formerly subject peoples. It is a terrible fact that the Labour Government is supporting these hopeless and cruel attempts at subjugation. It is an almost worse fact that it is running the risk for us of these wars escalating to large nuclear wars. Its reception of China's overtures towards peace and disarmament is a dreary pointer to its attitude. Soon after the Labour Government took office, Premier Chou En-lai wrote to our Prime Minister proposing that the governments of the world should undertake not to use nuclear weapons, and suggesting a summit conference. Mr. Wilson replied: "I do not believe the procedure you have suggested is the best way to make progress in present circumstances." "He criticised China on two grounds: for carrying out a nuclear test in the atmosphere and for her approach being 'not realistic'." This attitude on the part of the Prime Minister hardly seems a means of relaxing tensions or of resolving differences between East and West or of halting the spread of nuclear weapons - all of which the electoral Manifesto said the Labour Government would try to do. Again it is following the dangerous policies of the past. In the past few years the West has rebuffed several overtures made by China towards nuclear disarmament and denuclearised zones. If China is not included in disarmament discussions there is little hope for peace in the world. The Labour Government might have taken - might still take - a new and more realistic attitude, taking the promises of the East, as well as the West, at face value, at least as a basis for discussion, until they have been proved to be hollow. But our new Minister for Disarmament seems to be interested chiefly in how to keep up our armed forces more cheaply than hitherto. (See his speech at Salisbury, 2 February, 1965, and the extracts from it which the Labour Party appears to think important).

In none of the actions of the Labour Government has there been evidence of the promised effort to relax the tensions of the Cold War.

What the Labour Government has accomplished in the way of carrying out the promises made in its electoral Manifesto is to appoint a Minister for Disarmament in the Foreign Office. Possibly, also, it has made the Government more efficient by the vast proliferation of new offices, ministries and committees which it has instituted.

It has done nothing apparent to implement Labour's promises in the very important fields of disarmament negotiations, the establishment of nuclear-free zones, the reduction of man-power and arms, the private sale of arms, a drastic re-examination and modification of our defence policy, a re-negotiation of the Nassau agreement, the admission of China into the U. N., or the revivification of the morale and the increase of the powers of the U. N. Nor does it show any signs of the self-criticism or of the welcome to criticism by their fellow Labour Party members which it advocated.

Moreover, it has directly contravened its definite statements in regard to arms for South Africa and to opposition to the spread of nuclear arms. And, perhaps worst of all, it has increased by many times and in many ways the Cold War tensions between East and West.

What are we to think of this betrayal? Is it the result of a kind of blackmail owing to the parlous state of the economy and finances of the country? But, surely, those who were about to take office must have examined the economic and financial condition of the country and the extent of its dependence upon the United States, and made plans to carry out their promises with the results of their examination in mind. Had they not the courage to attack their problems boldly - or, indeed, with the probably end-results of their actions in mind, realistically?

What hope is there for Parliamentary democracy when the leaders of a Party, upon achieving office, act in direct contradiction to their electoral promises? Those Labour Party members who do not like treachery have hitherto kept quiet in the interests of unity. But what is the use of unity in evil? The cardinal virtues in gangs of criminals are unity and loyalty. Before we are committed irrevocably - and we are rapidly being so committed - to policies leading to disaster for ourselves and for all the inhabitants of the world, we should make known in unmistakable terms our abhorrence of present policies. To wait much longer will be to wait too long. If the Labour Party is to regain any part of its former championship of vitally necessary reforms, those who voted for it on the basis of its electoral Manifesto will have to insist that the leading members of this present Government must lose hope of ever holding office again. Whatever they may have done or not done in regard to their pre-election promises, they have got us into, and propose to keep us in, at least two of the most cruel and useless wars that there have ever been - wars of extermination. Against this policy we must protest in every possible way.