

THE

Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

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Business Address :
54 PARK ROAD
LENTON
NOTTINGHAM 48369

Editorial Address :
19 GREENFIELD ST.
DUNKIRK
NOTTINGHAM 74069

Editors: KEN COATES, ROBIN BLACKBURN

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ECONOMIC HEADACHES FOR THE TORIES (AND FOR LABOUR?)

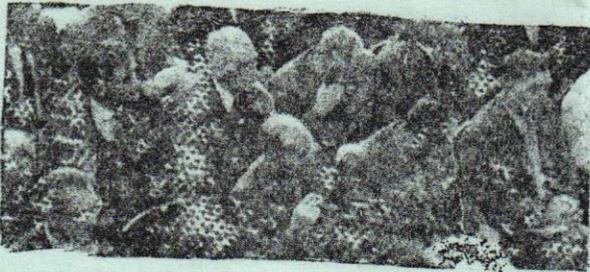
One could almost feel sorry for the Tories; immediately after they had tried to dress up the loss of a seat in Parliament and an average 6% swing against them in a series of by-elections as a comforting change in fortune, they received a series of blows on the economic front. We have already referred to the April trade figures, but more was to come: the announcement of the biggest jump in the cost of living index for two years, the sensational increase in beef prices, the wrangle over the cost of maintaining British forces in Germany, and, then to cap it all, a plunge in the level of unemployment. Those naive souls who think a decline in the number of unemployed is a good thing economically will be disillusioned by the following quote from the Financial Times editorial of May 26th:

"Nobody interested in the British economy can feel more than half pleased with the latest unemployment figures....It is cheering from a human view that people have found work. But (our emphasis) for Neddy's target and the management of the economy, the unemployment total, like the latest export figures, spells trouble." The editorial later suggests that more may "soon have to be done to restrain internal demand..."

The experts are full of gloomy forebodings: the balance of payments is expected to suffer from (a) a drop in the invisible balance because of the higher interest rates on foreign holdings of sterling; (b) increased military expenditure abroad; and (c) a net outflow of capital caused by general election uncertainty. These are quite apart from the difficulties being caused by the increasingly 'protective' nature of the Common Market, and the export drive of the U.S. The cost of living index is expected to jump still further when the figures record the rising meat prices and the Budget measures.

Can Labour draw unqualified comfort from these trends? The answer must be an emphatic NO! Basically these trends arise from deep-seated features of the British economy rather than from "Tory mistakes". A closer look at the figures for imports show that the main culprits in the 16% increase in the first quarter of this year (as compared with the same period last year) were manufactured goods. These rose by nearly 33% or an average of £130 million per quarter. Among the items showing the biggest increases were Iron & Steel, Non-ferrous metals, machinery and transport equipment. Only part of this trend can be explained by the 'stockbuilding' phenomena, and a large part of the explanation is the success that foreign capitalists are having in competing in the British market. This in turn underscores the relatively inefficient state of British capitalism as compared with many of its competitors. Another very important factor is that British imperialism is attempting to undertake 'responsibilities' out of proportion to its actual strength and position in the world of the 60's.

There are only two ways to tackle this problem: either the traditional capitalist one of 'rationalising' and 'modernising' the economy, which must be done at the expense of sections of the working class; or that of using socialist measures, which involve planning for and by the working class. The former method will inevitably lead to large-scale conflict between the employers and the workers, and eventually, the state machine and the workers. This is the reality behind the discussion around an incomes policy. There is no third way, and unless Wilson chooses the latter he will face disaster. Socialist policies are not merely desirable they are absolutely necessary.



Trade union Week

TROUBLE LOOMING IN BRITISH ROAD SERVICES

Motor Transport of 15th May contained the following report:

"The Transport Holding Company, which is not normally involved in the domestic affairs of its subsidiary trading companies, may find itself embroiled in staff troubles over the reorganisation of British Road Services Ltd., the general haulage company. Following failure to reach agreement with the management on aspects of the general haulage reshuffle, the trade unions, I understand, have requested a meeting with Sir Philip Warter, chairman of the T.H.C. The BRS plan is to streamline its top administrative arrangements by merging six divisions and 25 districts into 13 new groupings which will be responsible direct to the headquarters of the company. Later there were announcements of further contractions in the number of accounting points to 10.

The unions charge that little more than lip service is being paid to consultation in connection with the reorganisation, which they feel is certain to result in large scale redundancy of clerical staffs. After discussion on the implementation of the plans was referred from national to divisional level, almost all the divisional committees failed to agree, and the plan was referred back to the national staff council.

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS PUT IN FOR THIRD WEEK'S HOLIDAY

At their meeting on Thursday 14th May the Agricultural Wages Board for England and Wales resumed consideration of a claim by the workers' representatives for a third week's annual holiday with pay. The reply by the employers' representatives was presented by Mr. G.T. Williams of the National Farmers' Union and was supported by other members of the employers' side. After further discussion the Board adjourned and will meet again on 3rd June. The farmers turned down the claim on the grounds of cost and also because they had already conceded wage increases during the past year. In the absence of agreement the 'independent' members of the Board can recommend a settlement.

The claim was first presented on April 1st, and the present holiday of two weeks was introduced in October 1951. Very strong resistance to the claim is expected.

UNIONS SEEK TO GROUND PRIVATE AIRLINES' PLANES based on Financial Times report

Union leaders are to make another move in their campaign to force independent airline operators to drop their separate negotiating machinery from the State lines - or be grounded. Three test cases are to be placed before the Air Transport Licensing Board, which will then have to decide whether the differences in pay and conditions between State and independent employees disqualifies private lines from holding licences. Leading the attack on the airlines is ASSET. It claims that the Civil Aviation Act specifies ^{that} pay and conditions for similar work should be the same in private lines as in the BEA and BOAC. The union intends to cite pensions as a field in which employees in the independent lines are at a disadvantage.

SERIOUS DECREASE IN NUMBER OF YOUNG SOCIALIST BRANCHES IN THE NORTH

The annual report of the Labour Party's Northern Regional Council reports a serious decrease in the number of Young Socialist branches. Mr. Geoffrey Foster, the Region's youth officer, blames lack of recruiting to replace lost membership. He claimed that the lack of liaison between some of the C.L.P.s and the Y.S. branches led to a position where membership of "Young Socialists' branches had no relation to actual membership of the party." He went on to say "The major problem during the year was to get some members (of the Young Socialists) to appreciate that they were, first of all, members of the Labour Party and...had the responsibility to abide by the party constitution..."

These remarks are presumably directed against left wing members of the Young Socialists and in particular federation organisations. Mr. Foster does not explain how he expects young people to be enthusiastic about an organisation that has clamped down on independently minded activity.

MONMOUTH CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY PROTESTS OVER ADEM

The secretary of the Monmouth C.L.P. has sent a telegram to the Defence Ministry protesting against the use of military force against the peoples of Southern Arabia.

MRS. OLIVE GIBBS DECLINES AN ALDERMANIC SEAT

Mrs. Olive Gibbs, the acting chairman of CND, declined to accept an aldermanic seat at Oxford where she is the senior Labour councillor. She did this because of her opposition to the Aldermanic system. At the meeting where the aldermen were elected Labour gained two seats. This was achieved because Labour councillors only voted for Labour men, whereas the Tories voted for each of the retiring aldermen.

LABOUR'S NORTHERN VOICE EXPANDING

from Alan Rooney

Voice orders have increased by 1,745 this month alone and enquiries have been made for five new local editions. The AEI Voice sold over 2,000 and was very well received. This growth in interest has been brought about by hard work and money. The latest issue of Labour's Northern Voice has an appeal for financial help, it says: ".....Our voluntary team of workers is keen to increase the spreading of socialist news, but we require more funds quickly if we are to do the necessary work before the General Election" Donations should be sent to: Labour's Northern Voice, 8, Ashkirk St., Manchester 18. Among the contributions received in May were: P. Donoghue, prospective Labour candidate for North Fylde, £40; M. Orbach, prospective Labour candidate for Stockport, £2; Lilian Ball, £1; Chatham branch AEU, 10s; Aldridge AEU, 10s; Stockport Poynton, AEU, 10s; and Finniston AEU, £2.

CLIFTON WARD LABOUR PARTY PROTEST OVER CIVIC RECEPTION by Rod Kreizman

At the Clifton & Wilford Ward Labour Party meeting last Thursday (May 21st), strong feelings were expressed deploring the civic reception, for the all-White South African bowls team, to be given by the Labour Lord Mayor of Nottingham. A resolution was sent to the appropriate bodies which was passed unanimously. Councillors present talked of boycotting the affair.

A.S.S.E.T. TO PROPOSE A LABOUR CODE

from a special correspondent

The Executive of the Association of Supervisory Staffs Executives and Technicians is to ask its annual conference to pass an emergency resolution on a Labour Code. The resolution calls attention to the Rookes v. Barnard judgment and urges immediate legislation to "restore the protection of Sections 1 and 3 of the Trade Disputes Act, 1906." It also calls for the eventual introduction of a Labour Code "which would provide affirmative rights for trade unions to be recognised and to bargain collectively." The Executive sees the need and the opportunity for gathering the whole range of present industrial legislation - plus some new ones - into one comprehensive Code.

Clive Jenkins, general secretary of the union, explains that from 20 to 30 different aspects of management-employee relationships would be brought into the code. These would include statutory recognition of unions which had a majority membership within a plant, rules on pensions, and wage-related unemployment benefits. He says that the unions will have to change some of their ways too: the practice of asking for 50% more in pay rises than are actually expected is outdated; the 'ritualistic' early stages of many negotiating procedures should be dropped.

As a precautionary measure, the annual conference will be asked to prepare the 1965 conference to indemnify officials of the union who may be liable for damages as a result of actions carried out for the union.

LANCASHIRE FEDERATION OF TRADES COUNCILS TO DISCUSS ROOKES V. BARNARD

The next delegate meeting of the Lancashire Federation is to be held on Saturday, June 6th, and will discuss a motion, proposed by its executive committee which reads: "The Federation of Trades Councils views with concern the House of Lords decision in the Rookes v. Barnard case, and urges the TUC General Council to press for strengthening legislation to protect the democratic rights of trade unions, and their officials, when engaged in serving the interests of their members."

BRADFORD CONFED. WORRIED BY ROOKES V. BARNARD

At its May meeting the Bradford district committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions passed a resolution which calls upon its executive and the TUC to press the Government to introduce proposals to protect trade unions and their officials from actions in law.

MOVE TO REVOKE BUILDING TRADE LONG-TERM PAY PACT from a Brickie

The annual conference of the Amalgamated Union of Building trade Workers will discuss a large number of motions calling for the scrapping of the long-term pay pact entered into last year, and instead asking for a campaign for a big wage increase. Some branches mention the figures of 1/6 an hour, others for 1/-. The leaders of the union, which is the second largest in the industry, voted against the agreement when it was negotiated. However, they accepted the majority view of the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives. The main criticisms of the agreement are that it widened the differential between craftsmen and labourers, and that it hinders the union in pursuing wage claims at a very favourable time. If the motions are passed it will pose a 'constitutional' problem - the AUBTW delegates are bound by majority decisions in the NFBTO.

PROTEST AGAINST RIVONIA TRIAL IN BRISTOL from Tom Nicholls

Two dozen people carrying banners, drawing attention to the Rivonia trial, kept a silent vigil outside Bristol's Council on Wednesday, May 20th. Miss Joan Bell, secretary of the Bristol Africa Circle, said that the demonstration had been arranged after the circle had been addressed by Mr. Narney Desai, president of the South African Coloured People's Congress. Dr. Ronald Sampson, of Bristol University, told the press: "We are here to protest against the trial and to express our detestation of apartheid and affirm our conviction that justice for all peoples of South Africa must ultimately prevail." He said that there was a real danger that the 9 defendants would hang. Miss Bell said that the aim of the demonstration was to help to influence the outcome of the trial.

ELECTRICIANS CALL FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION TO STOP HANGINGS

A London correspondent reports that the Park Royal branch of the ETU passed, at its last meeting, a unanimous resolution that expressed grave concern at the death sentences and imprisonment meted out to trade unionists and others in South Africa. The resolution called upon the Prime Minister to use his influence to obtain the release of these political prisoners.

MANCHESTER STUDENTS DECIDE TO JOIN ANTI-APARTHEID BY ONE VOTE

Feeling ran high during a 2½ hour debate on a proposition that the Manchester University Students' union should affiliate to the Anti-Apartheid Movement. The right wing had organised all the support it could, but after two recounts, it was declared that the proposition had been carried by 128 votes to 127. Local Anti-Apartheid supporters will have to be on their guard against any attempt to reverse this decision.

ROCHDALE LABOUR COUNCIL BOYCOTTS SOUTH AFRICAN GOODS

Labour's Northern Voice reports: "After very recently taking control of the Rochdale Borough Council, the Labour Majority have followed the lead of Liverpool City Council and passed a resolution banning all goods which are known to have originated in South Africa..

64 IRISH M.P.S SIGN ANTI-APARTHEID PETITION by an Irish correspondent

The Irish anti-Apartheid movement, formed in March, has organised a petition demanding the abandonment of political trials and the immediate release of all political prisoners in South Africa. So far 64 members of both the Senate and the Dail have signed. They include Mr. B. Corish, leader of the Irish Labour Party, and the Lord Mayors of Dublin and Cork.

BRITISH INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA based on a Guardian report

Britain has a £1,000 million investment in South Africa and she receives 13% on its net assets in the Republic against 7.2% in the rest of the world, according to the managing director of the Trust Bank of Africa. He puts the American stake in South Africa as £200 million. The yield on direct investment in industries amounted to 12.6% in 1962, against only 6.6% in Western Germany and 2.9% in South America.
COMMENT: These figures show much more clearly than talk about 'harming the native people' the reasons why big business opposes the boycott.

REIGN OF TERROR IN MISSISSIPPI

from SNCC (Atlanta, Georgia)

The director of the Mississippi project for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee testified May 6 that 5 Negroes had been killed in southeast Mississippi in recent months, and called for investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice. Robert Moses, 28, told a meeting of the State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission that no one had been arrested or indicted for the mysterious slayings.

Moses reported that shotgun killings of 44-year-old Louis Allen in Liberty, Mississippi last January 31. Allen was a witness at the 1961 at the 1961 murder of 52-year-old Negro Herbert Lee, who was gunned down outside a Liberty cotton gin by a member of the Mississippi state legislature. Allen later admitted to SNCC workers he had been forced to lie at a coroner's jury investigation into the slaying which set free E.H. Hurst.

In 1962 Allen signed an affidavit that Hurst killed Lee "without provocation." He was warned that local whites were out to "get him". In August, 1962, he was arrested and beaten by a Liberty deputy sheriff who hit with a flashlight, breaking his jaw. "If you give me protection, I'll let the hide fall with the hair," Allen said in 1963. This, and other calls for protection from the U.S. Department of Justice, went unanswered. Both Lee and Allen had been active in a SNCC vote drive.

Moses said that 4 Negroes had been killed in neighbouring Wilkinson County since ^{the} August, 1963, March on Washington. Archie Curtis, a Natchez undertaker, testified he and another Negro had been stripped and beaten by hooded men on a desolate road outside the city on February 15. Curtis said he was lured to the spot by an unidentified caller who told him a woman was dying of a heart attack. He told the committee the beating stemmed from his participation in a vote drive.

A Negro was forced to strip and was soaked in motor oil before being beaten in Amite County, near Liberty, on Feb. 1, Moses said. Another Negro was shot and killed in Tallahatchie County by policemen on Feb. 13. Other witnesses told of cross burnings, threatening phone calls, and economic reprisals for taking part in civil rights and vote activity. Moses called for a "thorough investigation by the Justice Department." Moses and other SNCC staff have issued pleas to that agency numerous times since beginning their vote campaign in 1961.

MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY ESTABLISHED

from C.O.F.O.

Ed. note: the stirring of the American radical and Negro movement is manifesting itself in many forms. We have already covered the steps taken to establish a Freedom Now Party. The following news item from the Council of Federated Organizations shows another method of struggle.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party is the political party for all people in Mississippi who are registered on the Freedom Registration books and is running candidates for Congress and Senate. Why do we have a separate party? Because the local Democratic Party is only for a few white people who have registered to vote under unfair voting laws...We are going to send people to the national democratic convention. We are going to ask the convention to recognize the Freedom Democratic Party as the official group at the national meeting because the Democratic Party delegates are unrepresentative.



A LETTER FROM THE YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

We have received from Peter Camejo, National Secretary of the Young Socialist Alliance, the following letter dated 14th May:

"We would like to receive your publication. Please bill us....We would also like to thank you for your support of our three comrades in Indiana. The case, as you know, well soon be going to the Indiana Supreme Court.

"Enclosed is a brochure of a new student committee being set up to oppose the capitalist parties in the next presidential election here. The candidate we are supporting is the first Negro in the history of the U.S. to get on the ballot. We are sure that many socialists in England will be interested in our campaign even where there may be differences regarding the complete program of the candidates.

"We have already filed petitions in some states such as Michigan (21,000 people) and Pennsylvania (14,000) and will be in many others this summer to place the socialist candidates on the ballot. For more information you should write directly to the Socialist Workers Party.

"With comradely greetings....."

ED. NOTE: The address of the Young Socialist Alliance is: P.O. Box 471, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y., U.S.A.; and that of the Socialist Workers Party: 116, University Place, New York City 3, N.Y., U.S.A.

CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO END U.S. INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM from Phillip Luce

Students from at least 12 colleges and universities are among the 87 men of draft age who have signed an advertisement declaring that they will refuse to fight in South Vietnam. The advert, which first appeared in the National Guardian, is patterned on the one that French students and young workers signed opposing the Algerian war. It states: ".....Believing that U.S. participation in that war is for the suppression of the Vietnamese struggle for national independence we see no justification for our involvement..." The signatures include a wide range of political opinions, from 'limited' pacifists to members of the pro-Chinese Progressive Labor Movement.

This move was followed by the first major mass protest in the U.S. against the war in Vietnam. One thousand people, led by students and young people took part in a mass rally in New York City, followed by a protest march through Times Square to the United Nations building. The same day, demonstrations took place in San Francisco, Madison, San Juan (Puerto Rico) and Boston. More 100,000 leaflets were distributed. The outcome of this activity was the formation of the May 2nd Movement.

ED NOTE: Phillip Luce is now under indictment for visiting Cuba last summer, and is treasurer of the May 2nd Movement. Issue 23 will include an extensive summary of the Manifesto of the May Second Movement.

NEW ZEALAND UNIONS CALL FOR "FULL SOCIALISM"

At last week's annual conference of the New Zealand Labour Party, representatives of the Federation of Labour demanded a return to a program of "full socialism." At the Federation of Labour conference a few weeks' ago an executive committee motion affirming its belief in the class struggle and accusing the so-called "new look" Labour leaders of abandoning socialist principles, was passed unanimously. The Federation represents the bulk of New Zealand's trade unions, comprising over a quarter of a million workers. At the Labour Party conference, Federation delegates said that no "new look" could disguise the reality of the class struggle, nor the reality of capitalist exploitation. However, a motion put forward by them to put back into Party policy the "socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange" was defeated. This policy had been dropped from the program 38 years ago. In a contest for the Party presidency, a right wing intellectual was heavily defeated by 40-year-old N.E. Kirk, a vigorous M.P. who has been associated with the industrial left.

At the present time the right wing leadership of the Party is rather discredited. Despite the fact that its tame reformist program was adopted as the platform at the General Election in November last year, the electorate failed to return it to power. The left now have a good chance to devise a socialist strategy for the Party. This strategy will have to take into account that the industrial working class is a sociological minority. Sections of the office workers and farmers will have to be mobilised behind slogans of a sort which will enable a transition to socialism.

ARGENTINIAN WORKERS OCCUPY FACTORIES

Some 7,000 workers occupied 66 factories on May 21st in protest against the rising cost of living and demanding wage increases. The General Workers' Confederation will organise similar occupations in some 600 factories over the next week. According to Times correspondent: "Senor Jose Alonso, secretary of the GWC, said the Government as constituted was inoperative and it was necessary to change the whole system, a statement which the employers' organisations regarded as being subversive... In spite of the Government's repeated assurances that foreign capital enjoys its fullest guarantees, another crisis is developing and what is worrying most observers is that if it continues it might lead to armed intervention." Although the Argentinian working class is displaying tremendous militancy it is unfortunately likely, as before, that the Peronista leadership will fail to give an adequate political dimension to the struggle.

BANK STRIKE DECLARED ILLEGAL IN PERU

When Fernando Belaunde became president of Peru, some circles in Britain greeted this as a victory for democratic socialism. Readers will have read enough of the football disaster, the basic cause of which was the extreme brutality of the police, to realise the nature of the present regime. Additional evidence is given by the Peruvian Government's action in declaring the projected official strike of bank employees illegal. The Government's statement on the strike said that failure to attend work would result in instant dismissal, as would the refusal to work overtime to complete the day's banking operations.

S.S. PLANS "MEMORIAL JOURNEY" THROUGH FRANCE from Mrs. Dales

The former victims of Nazi persecution in France can expect "unpleasant visitors" in the near future. The SS announces a visit to France. The SS newspaper "Der Freiwillige" in its April issue, is recruiting former members of the SS to participate in a "memorial journey" through Normandy. The visit is to take place from June 3rd to June 10th. The announcement says: "First step of the tour is to be Rouen. In Normandy circular tours through various districts of former battlefields will be organised. Each participant will have the opportunity to visit places where he fought and which will be of special interest to him..."

The statement seems to indicate that the former SS will be given the chance to refresh their memories of the war. One can only wonder why the tour did not include a visit to the town of Oradour sur Glane, which suffered total destruction and whose citizens were murdered by the SS.

METAL WORKERS UNION THANKS LORD RUSSELL OVER BRANDT RELEASE

At the request of Heinz Brandt, the West German Metal Workers' Union has sent a telegram of thanks to Lord Russell for the part he played in the campaign to get Brandt released. Lord Russell had recently returned an award given to him by the East German Government because he said he could not keep it whilst Brandt was in prison. Brandt is expected to resume his activities in the Metal Workers' Union as soon as he returns to West Germany, before his kidnapping he was editor of the union's paper Metall. A long-time Communist Party member and former leader of the East German Socialist Unity Party, he fled to the West in 1958. He did not, as so many others have, become a darling of the right wing but, instead, maintained a militant political position.

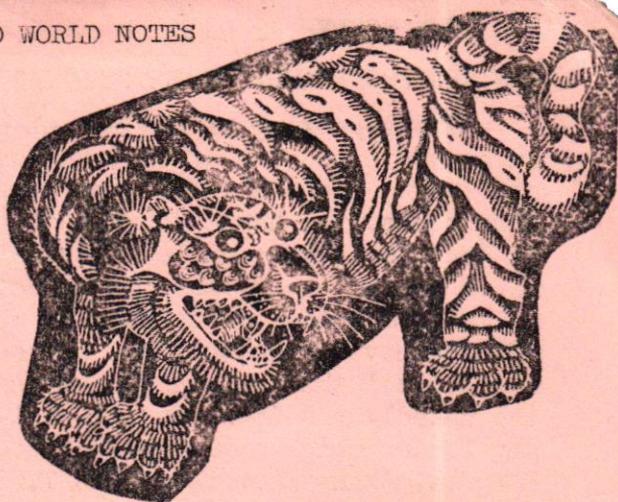
AFRICAN STUDENTS PERSECUTED IN AUSTRIA

Two Nigerian students, Mr. Onodi Bright-Taylor and his wife Mrs. Unokanma Bright-Taylor, gave a press conference in London on May 21, in which they described their experiences in Austria. They had recently been deported from Austria after being held in gaol for ten days. Mrs. Bright-Taylor was until a few months ago president of the Pan-African Students' Union of Austria. This body had been formed in 1961 to combat the growing discrimination against African students in Austria. Africans were regularly thrown out of their lodgings and out of public places merely because of their colour. The police interrogated at length members and officers of PASUA, and eventually the couple were arrested. Mrs. Bright-Taylor says she was stripped naked and beaten with a rubber truncheon during her imprisonment.

FRENCH TRADE UNIONS OPPOSE GOVERNMENT'S PAY PLANS

The Financial Times of May 22nd reported: "The French Government's week-old proposals for giving slightly more flexibility to its wage policy in the public sector, but without allowing any rapid or immediate increase in this year's wages, are totally opposed by the railway, electricity and gas trade unions....the railway unions flatly rejected the Government proposals to postpone any discussion of wage rates until the autumn, and demanded an immediate increase...." Electricity and Gas workers unions have done the same.

colonialism's Week



LIBERATION FORCES' SUCCESS IN THE CONGO

The New York Times of May 19 reported that detachments of the Congolese National Liberation Committee** "stepped up their activities in the interior of the Congo over the week end. They established a beach-head in Uvira on the shores of Lake Tanganyika and closed in on two army posts in Kwilu Province where an anti-Government rebellion broke out early this year." According to the report, the National Liberation Committee forces took Uvira a town of 7,000 inhabitants, without firing a shot. The size of the rebel forces was variously estimated as from 600 to 3,000. The report continued: "Reports of fighting along the 70 mile road north to Bukavu also reached here today. In Kwilu, the 180 man outpost at Gungu in the rebellious eastern part of the province, 'surrounded' by terrorist bands" (propaganda term for National Liberation detachments) "and that it had run out of ammunition. A similar message...was received from Idoofa, another outpost in Eastern Kwilu. About 10 days ago the Congolese army command in Kwilu collapsed. The commanding officer, Major Joseph Tshatshi, left his post because he was 'tired' he said. No one has yet been found to replace him...half a company of troops stationed in Uvira has disappeared. Ten soldiers from Uvira showed up yesterday in Usumbura, capital of Burundi, without arms."

** Some of the leadership of the Congolese National Liberation Front have studied in China.

MOZAMBIQUE LIBERATION FRONT CALLS FOR ARMED STRUGGLE based on Hsinhua report

The Mozambique Liberation Front has called on the people to make preparations for an armed struggle for freedom. This call was contained in an editorial carried in the latest issue of its paper, Mozambique Revolution. The editorial said, "The history of the National liberation movements in the oppressed countries such as Vietnam, Cuba and Algeria shows that in the present international situation, if the people stand up resolutely to struggle for their liberation they will surmount all difficulties, overcome the enemy and obtain final victory." It continued by saying that the struggle of the Mozambique peoples was not only against Portugal but also against other imperialist states with interests in the country including the U.S.

GENERAL STRIKE IN CALCUTTA

A general strike in protest against rising prices and the scarcity of essential commodities was held in Calcutta on May 20th, according to a Times of India report of May 21st. The strike was orderly despite police provocations and many arrests. The police used tear gas on at least two occasions. 351 people arrested on the day of the strike joined some 1,500 people already detained "as a preventive measure."

WESTERN PROPAGANDA ON THE LAOTIAN EVENTS

by James Wilcox

The reporting of the recent events in Laos has completely failed to present an accurate picture of what has happened. To begin with the Laotian "neutralists" have been taken more or less at face value. An interview in Fortune, this month, the house journal of U.S. big business, provides a franker picture of Kong Le, the so-called "neutralist" military chief, as they describe him. He is quoted as saying: "In Korea you Americans finally learned a lesson. It is that Communist force must be met with American force, More recently you seem to have forgotten that lesson." About Vietnam he says: "It is reasonable and logical that you should extend the war to North Vietnam." It is in fact the nakedly pro-American and anti-Communist attitude of the "neutralist" military leader which explains the recent events in the Plain of Jars area held by Kong Le. Many members of his 7,000 strong army became bitterly disillusioned by his shifts to the right and especially by his recent collaboration with the leaders of the rightist coup in the capital Vientiane.

It was these disillusioned elements who initiated his expulsion from the whole Xieng Khouang area. This explains why 225 square miles of territory, including several highly fortified positions, were overrun in barely 24 hours. It also explains why Kong Le has lost the bulk of his army, has lost all his artillery and has lost six out of his seventeen Soviet built tanks. Western reports have feebly tried to suggest that the Pathet Lao liberation forces employed "North Vietnamese artillery we didn't think they has." The truth is that Kong Le's artillery turned against him and made possible the rapid liquidation of his position.

Last week's victory now places the Pathet Lao in a strategic position to liberate further areas from the control of the rightist military group.

ASSOCIATED PRESS SAYS SOUVANNA PHOUMA NOT IN CONTROL

from Pat Jordan

American propaganda has claimed that the 'neutralist' prime minister of Laos has asked for their assistance because of aggression by the Pathet Lao forces. A much more accurate picture of the set up in the country is given in the following A.P. report dated May 23rd: "Since the fighting erupted in the Plain of Jars area, the coup leaders have practically remained in the background. They have left Souvanna to do all the talking in condemning the Laotian Communists and their North Vietnam friends....Some Ministers privately complained that they do not have full control over their ministries and the revolutionary committee is still sending in orders." The report said that the Laotian "rightwingers have agreed to - as they put it - disappear. They merged with the neutralists in one single faction under Souvanna's leadership. This means Souvanna should have become the absolute ruler of the right wing areas including Vientiane. But he is not." It added that "The Revolutionary committee still maintains control of this administrative capital and other areas under right wing control. Souvanna's residence is now guarded by right wing troops." The coup clique continued the censorship on cable including press, private and official dispatches, and the Vientiane radio station was still under their strict control.

It said that Souvanna, despite Neo Lao Haksat (the Laotian left wing party) protests, had sacked two neutralist cabinet members and filled the foreign minister's post. But the right wing coup leaders had demanded that Souvanna make more changes in the Government to include the replacement of Neo Lao Haksat ministers. "Apparently the revolutionary committee is determined to keep pressurising Souvanna for further changes in the Government."

WAGES FALL BEHIND COST-OF-LIVING RISE

by James Wilcox

Between mid-March and mid-April the cost of living rose by 0.9 of a point while wages rose by 0.5 of a point or only just over half as much. The scandalous recent increases in meat prices will undoubtedly accentuate this trend. These figures show that it certainly isn't wages which are pushing up prices.

U.S. AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY LOSES FORMER DOMINANT PLACE from Tom Nichols

The United Patternworkers Journal of April carried an interesting item about the position of the U.S. aircraft industry;

The U.S. aircraft industry can no longer so easily maintain the leading position which it has held in the world market for commercial aircraft over the last ten years. Exports of American commercial planes and parts have dropped sharply: in 1960 they totalled about 560 million dollars, in 1963 they were estimated at 200 million dollars. By contrast it is likely that airplane imports into the U.S. will soon rise substantially, putting a heavy strain on the nation's balance of payments position.

Even the largest American aircraft companies realise that the development and construction of a new aircraft type is now often outside the financial ability of a single company. It is in fact some considerable time since a commercial plane manufacturer made any appreciable profit on a single model. The number of manufacturers is too large for the relatively small world market. Also, the introduction of the jet in air transport has further reduced the market, since higher speeds mean fewer aircraft are needed. The large American plane makers are no longer prepared to embark on the development of new jet transports without the support of government orders. Thus, for example, The Douglas Aircraft Corporation hesitated for some time before deciding to continue with the development of an aircraft to compete with the British-built BAC-111. This plane, the DC-9, will cost about 3 million dollars to build, while the BAC-111 is said to have cost 500,000 dollars less. Orders worth 50 million dollars have already been received for the DC-9, most of them from American domestic airlines.

However, the flow of orders for these new types is not so great that a steady stream of business can be expected. Many airlines still have too vivid memories of the excess transport capacity which resulted from over-eager buying of 'first-generation' jets to hurl themselves blindly now into the purchase of medium-range jet transport aircraft. The market for this type of plane is generally estimated to be 450 at minimum, and about 1,000 at maximum. The competition, moreover, is not confined to that between the BAC-111 and the DC-9. On certain routes, the French short-to-medium range Caravelle is a rival to the American Boeing 727.

By and large, the American aircraft industry has fallen slightly behind that of Europe in the construction of commercial jet airplanes. This is also true of supersonic jet construction, but the enormous capacity of the American industry should ensure its ability to compete, once the decision to make up the leeway has been taken.

DR. ABRAHAMS APPEALS FOR HELP

Readers will remember the case of Dr. Abrahams, the South African whose abduction from Bechuanaland raised such a furore that even Verwoerd had to bow to world public opinion and allow him to leave South Africa. We have received from some German students the following appeal:

"The German participants in the defence work in the Dr. Neville Alexander case have just received an appeal for immediate financial help in a situation involving a figure frequently named during the trial as one of the inspirers of the movement for which Dr. Alexander and ten other victims were condemned to long prison sentences. This is Dr. Kenneth G. Abrahams, another outstanding intellectual who has dedicated his life to freeing his country from the intolerable racist structure imposed by the apartheid Verwoerd Government.

"Dr. Abrahams was not in the prisoners' dock with his friend Dr. Alexander only because he was outside the country. But before he managed to leave, he and three companions were dragged into a Supreme Court hearing on his political views. Under the fascist-like laws of South Africa, the court ruled that Dr. Abrahams must pay the total costs of the hearing. The bill presented to Dr. Abrahams was £316. 10s. Dr. Abrahams, now a refugee in another country, has no money; and the South African Government has no way of collecting from him. Verwoerd's police thought of an ingenious solution. They have threatened to attach the house which Dr. Abrahams left to his aged parents and eject them unless the money is paid at once.

"We have organised an immediate fund to help pay the ransom demanded by the Verwoerd Government. The address to which contributions should be sent is:

Franz J.T. Lee,
74, Tübingen,
Schwabstrasse 22,
West Germany.

Please use an International Money Order or send a cheque."

Announcing a special scheme to help win subscribers for The Week.

We have, right from the very start of our journal, asked people to send the names of potential subscribers for us in turn to send sample copies. This method has been quite successful and a good proportion of the subscribers we have won has been gained by this method. However, we have found that people are far more likely to subscribe if they receive several copies. This naturally puts up costs, so once again we are appealing to our supporters for help.

The proposal is that you should send us the names of potential subscribers plus 2/6, and we in turn will send them the next six copies of The Week. We are certain that this will lead to good results. After receiving 6 copies people will have a good idea of the range of subjects we cover and the way we react with practical proposals of action to immediate political questions.