

THE WEEK

A news analysis
for socialists

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Leyton Lesson Turn again Wilson!

A VERY serious situation faces the British Labour movement. The defeat at Leyton placed a question mark over the Labour Government. But it did more than that: it signified a state of affairs which could jeopardise the possibility for socialist advance in Britain for a long period. Under the twin pressures of economic crisis and election defeat Mr. Wilson's Government will have to move sharply to the left or right. A right turn would merely pave the way for further disasters; whilst a left turn offers the only possibility of getting out of the mess.

We think most of our readers will accept this bald statement of our opinion; the problem is how to get this across to the mass of Labour Party activists.

It is comparatively easy to demonstrate that, despite some special factors in Leyton, the by-election results were a direct consequence of right wing policies. It was the capitulation to the 'gnomes of Zurich' on the payment of the Old Age Pension increase which led to a decisive swing against Labour in the older generation. Labour's participation in the Congo aggression, carried out to the tune of a hysterical press campaign about 'black men raping, eating and mutilating white people', helped racialism in Britain far more than anything Colin Jordan or Peter Griffiths has done. Labour's insistence on 'carrying out its obligations to Malaysia' (that is, to British big business investments in tin and rubber) and its emphasis on 'Britain's peace-keeping role' (despite the balance of payments crisis) has meant for the British public increased prices and taxation.

Paradoxically enough, it is those sections to whom a 'moderate' policy is supposed to appeal, the new middle class and the technologists, who have been hardest hit. Witness, the 6d. on petrol, the 6d. on income tax (which hits the intermediate salaried sections most—business men can afford to employ accountants to work on their tax returns) and, the final blow, increased mortgage rates.

But it wasn't the loss of middle class votes which lost Leyton. Labour lost because of massive working class abstention. Put simply, Mr. Wilson's problem, if he is to avoid losing his majority completely via inevitable by-elections, is to find a way of rallying and enthusing the working class for active support for Labour. If there is any way other than that of a series of class-orientated measures we invite anyone to name it. In contemporary Britain reforms can only be given at the expense of someone, and the working class will only make sacrifices (which it will do more readily than any other section) if inroads are being made into private profit and property.

We urge our readers to put these arguments forcibly and at every level in the great discussion now raging in the Labour movement. More than the future of the Labour Government is at stake. A defeat for Labour now would mean the return of the Tories under circumstances which would almost certainly lead to a period of reaction.

A Tory Government just now, despite its crisis of policy, would feel confident enough to make a big attack on the working class and its organisations. With the fear of electoral defeat out of the way, with pressing problems both economic and political, a Tory Government would seek to give British capitalism a new lease of life by 'putting the workers in their place.'

—continued over

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Leyton Lesson — continued from cover

If the workers' movement had just suffered a political defeat, whilst the traditional left was in hiding, it would almost certainly be plunged into confusion and apathy. It would be in no state at all to fend off a combined offensive by the Tories and the employers. The most likely result would be that the more militant sections of the working class would fight in isolation and suffer defeat.

The experience of the movement between the wars and since World War Two shows that when the working class becomes disillusioned with the leadership of its parties there is not automatically a shift to the left. The usual result is a swing to the right, apathy and confusion.

The left in Britain must work to swing the balance of forces for a leftward turn by the Government. Even a demagogic turn would stop the rot and enthuse Labour's supporters. It would also set into motion a process which would be difficult to reverse: any move against private enterprise interests would evoke a counter-attack and this counter-attack could only be met by further measures and mobilisation of Labour's supporters. Inevitably, such a process as it developed would bring to the fore those people best suited to carry out a left policy.

Richard Crossman's speech (whilst one can only wince at his references to the Old Age Pensioners) shows signs that the Government may understand, in part anyway, this fact. His reference to "the failure to enthuse the rank and file" can only give us encouragement and stimulus to pile on the pressure. Anyone who talks of 'not rocking the boat' hasn't even begun to understand what Leyton and Nuneaton meant.

To paraphrase one famous speech: Anyone who keeps quiet now and lets things drift will bear a very heavy responsibility before history.

Sir Winston Churchill

SO the old enemy is dead. It would be stupid, and hypocritical, to murmur polite tributes for him on our beads. All his life was devoted to the ascendancy of his class, and around the firm centre of that class, his nation. It is likely that he was incapable of perceiving the ruin into which his cause has fallen, in these later days. As his role in the war came to an end, he was unceremoniously bundled into limbo by the British working class, who would have been able to keep him, his party, his class and his absurd and disgusting national-imperial ideology under control for ever, had Labour found ways to produce strategies, men and means commensurate with the opportunities of

the time. As it happened, he was to return to power for long enough to begin to face the irreversible decline of all the powers upon which he had rested, and the galloping erosion of all the values for which he had stood. As he finally moved on to the position of elder statesman, these processes accelerated at a fierce pace. Now, the mission of his party is a matter for neurotic debate among his political heirs, his class is an object of universal derision, and the national prestige for which he laboured is only upheld when camouflaged as its opposite. It is pointless and unkind to say rude things about him.

If you would seek a monument, look around.

One Brickbat (well deserved)

THERE is absolutely no truth in Tom Nairn's statement that Eamonn Wilson sent me to Ghana to negotiate with President Nkrumah for the establishment of a British base there. I had never heard of the proposal before I read his article. I am a little surprised that THE WEEK should publish this calumny without asking me whether the allegation was true. In fact, my visit to Ghana was in furtherance of an All-African Socialist project which every Left Socialist would endorse.

FENNER BROCKWAY

AN APOLOGY

THE WEEK is very pleased to set the record straight about Fenner Brockway's visit to Ghana. We unreservedly apologise to him for publishing the story about which he complains. There is no excuse. We are sorry. THE EDITORS.

and two bouquets

With the capitalist press, like the pantomime policemen, waiting to take down everything the Labour Government says, alter it, use it against us, to distort our actions, to suppress or trivialise or falsify news; there never was more need for the facts and arguments for Socialists as gathered, analysed and presented by THE WEEK. It supplies the intellectual ammunition we need to fight the Tories and keep the Labour Government straight.

KONNI ZILLIACUS, M.P.

THE WEEK is a most useful periodical and provides active people with useful information to carry on the daily struggle. Serious problems face the Labour Party. The 'left' forces must unite before more damage is done, both in the 'House' and in the country.

ERNIE ROBERTS

LABOUR SPENDS LESS THAN OXFAM

SPEAKING in Trafalgar Square recently James Cameron stated that the British Government was spending less in the African Protectorates on belief and relief projects than Oxfam.

Continuing, he said: "If there is an opposite to the affluent society, by God I know it. This is the world we live in. A total paradox. A stinking rich and abounding world where we're all obsessed with some mysteriously incomprehensible thing called a Bank rate while hundreds of millions of people are starving to death and haven't got enough to eat. These people go permanently hungry, not just occasionally or in bad times, but always, day after day, year after year, until the end of their lives."

The speaker claimed that Oxfam and other organisations are holding the fort until the imperfect and crazy world we live in becomes a sane and rational one. He omitted to tell his audience that Britain spends over 2,000 million pounds a year on war preparations and that a reversal of like policies by the so-called great powers could feed the "babies with arms like sticks and bodies like empty gloves" that he said he had held in his arms.

Nationalise says Aviation Voice

The latest issue of *Aviation Voice* contains a review of the industry by Russell Kerr, some thoughts on public ownership and the aircraft industry by Clive Jenkins, a dissection of the Hawker-Siddeley group and an analysis of the TSR-2 crisis.

The case for nationalisation of the aircraft industry is argued by Alan Rooney. In his view, the argument is overwhelming and is very worthwhile pushing (it is already A.E.U. policy).

Aviation Voice can be obtained from 8 Ashkirk St., Manchester 18, and costs 6d.

Sheffield schools reorganize— right reacts

SHEFFIELD will be comprehensive by 1970, according to Councillor Chris Price, deputy chairman of the Education Committee. In an interview with "The Star", the local evening paper, he was quoted as saying: "I would like to see the 11-plus end before 1970 if possible. By then, I hope every grammar school in the area will have taken its place within a comprehensive system." This time-schedule is much quicker than most people expected, and seems that Coun. Price, a teacher himself, has carried the Education Committee away from the normal gradualist approach. Diehard opposition, previously dormant, is now massing. Parents of ex-pupils and pupils of King Edward VII School, a school with 300 years of tradition, close links with Oxford and Cambridge, etc., etc., are forming an organisation which, it seems, will oppose comprehensive schools as such. Even the local Tory Councillors accept the need for comprehensive schools (but want to retain grammar schools alongside them). This extremist organisation from Sheffield's suburbias will probably involve one teacher from the school who described comprehensive schools, at the conference of Assistant Teachers, as "political interference from people who are so uneducated they don't know any better." The teachers at the school are more or less 100% against going comprehensive, and so are 90% of the 6th form, according to a census there. On the other hand, it is significant that there have been no real movements of the old pupils from the school against the scheme. Rather the reverse, in fact, a snap check by this writer of former pupils, many of whom are at university and college, having revealed that they are more or less evenly divided on the issue. These divisions are very important, for it is over the future of King Edward's that the last-ditch battle will be fought before Sheffield goes fully comprehensive.

Steelworkers to lay plans in Sheffield

By Councillor W. MEADE

THERE is a keen interest in the new bill being prepared to bring the Steel Industry back into public ownership.

The journal *Voice of the Unions* in its latest issue has endeavoured to provoke discussion on this important subject, and has sparked off the matter. There is a need for a meeting of interested persons on this question, and various suggestions have been made but no decision or action taken of any kind.

I have therefore taken the responsibility for convening a meeting in Sheffield on **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7th, 1965**, at 10.30 a.m. to which I have invited M.P.s, trade unionists, and a few other interested socialists. A draft statement will be used to open the discussion. Everyone present will have one thing in common, a deep desire for a Bill of Re-Nationalisation, framed in such terms as to leave no doubt in anyone's mind, as to the serious nature of this step and the urgent need for everyone to play their part.

The only qualification anyone needs to attend this meeting is membership of his appropriate union with an interest in the problem and a point of view he feels ought to be put.

Readers who intend coming along should fill in this form and return in good time.

A plan for steel

THE following text has been submitted for discussion at The Voice Steel Conference

ARGUMENT:

- 1 The Steel Industry must be rationalised and concentrated into five or six main groups;
- 2 The Steel Industry must be brought under national control by Parliament as part of the basis of national economic planning;
- 3 The power of the British Iron and Steel Federation (BISF) and the interlocking directors must be broken and private monopoly replaced by public control;
- 4 Steel must be integrated with coal, power, transport, ports, etc., into regional economic planning and development;
- 5 Parliament, the Steel Workers and the Public must be supplied with maximum information on the costings which lead to location, investment and pricing policies; detailed costings to be made available to workers' representatives at all levels;
- 6 Representatives of Trade Unions in steel must be associated at national and plant level, not only with control decisions but directly in management, subject to not prejudicing the present rights of Unions in collective bargaining over wages and conditions.

WHAT TO TAKE OVER:

- 1 All iron ore deposits shall be vested in the nation;
- 2 Any company or section or subsidiary of a company with a capacity for manufacturing half a million tons of steel a year together with its subsidiaries at home or overseas;
- 3 All iron ore working in the U.K. or overseas belonging to British companies;
- 4 BISC and BISC (Ore) Installations, ships, offices, etc.;
- 5 The British Iron and Steel Research Association (BISRA).

COMPENSATION:

To be paid to ordinary shareholders according to average Stock Exchange prices over the last two years and in the form of Government guaranteed fixed interest stock;

To be paid to directors for loss of office (to encourage them to go).

WHAT TO SET UP:

A Public Board of twelve full-time members not holding other private directorships, responsible to Parliament through the Minister. Members to retire in rota, after a maximum term of five years but may be eligible for re-appointment. The Vice-Chairman and four members to be appointed like the other members by the Minister but from a panel of names submitted by agreement among the various trade unions engaged in the industry. Fresh panels of names to be submitted at retirements.

The Minister to be responsible for issuing general directives from time to time for pricing and investment policies, taking into account NEDC recommendations, and for ratifying the Group structure which the Board recommends.

WHAT POWERS:

- To mine, import and sell iron ore;
- To manufacture and sell iron and steel;
- To fabricate and sell iron and steel products;
- To manufacture and sell chemicals, gas, electric power, slag and other subsidiary products;
- To operate engineering, processing and other associated undertakings.
- To develop joint operations with state and private companies operating overseas;
- To carry out research;

TO:—W. Meade, 31 Far Lane, Sheffield, 6.

I intend to be present at the meeting on **STEEL NATIONALISATION** which will be held in Sheffield on February 7th (10.30 a.m.)

Name

Address

Union

(Block letters)

To build, own and manage housing, recreational and other allied activities either alone or in association with other nationalised undertakings.

WHAT ORGANISATION:

To rationalise and reform the industry by grouping companies, establishing Group Boards and devolving powers as appropriate to them;

Subject to the above, to retain company and brand names where all the workers desire this; otherwise to introduce new names based on local associations;

To provide for joint conciliation machinery between management and Trade Unions at national, group and plant level;

To provide on enterprise boards and at lower levels of management for a significant element of representation of the workers without prejudice to the negotiating rights of their trade union representatives;

To make the appointment of chairman (or managing director) of Enterprise Boards and of lower management subject to the agreement of representative Workers' Councils and for five years only with the possibility of further terms subject to re-appointment.

To provide for a system of shop, mill or office Committees elected by secret ballot, with all members eligible to vote and stand as candidates. Nominations and elections to be organised by Trade Unions. All workers in nationalised Steel must be members of Unions whether on staff or weekly wage terms of contract. Shop managers' appointment and the deployment of labour, promotion, hiring and firing and safety, welfare and disci-

plinary matters to be subject to ratification by these committees.

Where necessary Department Committees elected from Shop Committees should be provided for with appropriate higher powers to the Shop Committees and with special responsibility also for training and education.

One half of the Workers' Council to be elected through the Shop and Department Committees, the other half through Trade Union branches in proportion to the strength of each Union in the Enterprise. The Workers' Council to be responsible for electing representatives to the Enterprise Board, for ratification of the Chairman's appointment and for receiving reports on all enterprise policies, with power to ask for detailed costings of all departments.

RELATIONS BETWEEN PUBLIC SECTOR AND REMAINING PRIVATE COMPANIES:

A National Iron and Steel Development Council to be set up (A little NEDDY) composed of representatives of the Government, State Corporation, Private Employers and Trade Unions, to review investment and pricing policies, report to NEDC and publish the results of reviews and other reports and statistics;

Regional Iron and Steel Councils to be set up reporting to Regional NEDDYs, to co-ordinate state and private sectors and collect statistics.

Staff for all these councils to be drawn in part from the present staff of the BISF and Iron and Steel Board, to whom guarantees should be given of no worsening of conditions of service.

LCS takes Peace initiative

THE Political Committee of the London Co-operative Society is to convene a special conference on problems of disarmament, jointly with the Labour Party Committee of CND. The meeting will take place on 20th March, 1965. Further details will be announced as they become available.

The LCS is seeking a new secretary for its Political Committee. The post was held until recently by Frank Beswick, a staunch supporter of Labour's Left wing.

New Left Forum

THE Labour Club at the London School of Economics, jointly with New Left Review and NALSO, the Labour Student Organisation, is sponsoring a most interesting programme of lectures and discussions for London students. Under the general heading 'Lectures in Marxism', it will probe into a number of key problem areas of social and political thought.

The first lecturer will be Isaac Deutscher, the world-famous historian, and author of the definitive biographies of Stalin and Trotsky. Mr. Deutscher opens the series with a general introduction, 'Marxism in our Time'. This meeting will take place on Thursday, 28th January, in the Old Theatre at the LSE.

Other speakers who will take part in the series include Eric Hobsbawm, Tom Bottomore, Ralph Miliband. This is a most promising initiative, which could well be imitated elsewhere in London, for non-students. It is high time that London had a socialist forum at which serious ideas could be seriously discussed. Perhaps this is one of the things that should be treated as a priority job by the new socialist educational body which was set up last November at a meeting in London of a whole number of left-wing journals and educationalists.

Labour will never be able to evolve clear-sighted strategies until it can come to grips with the problems of socialist theory, in a vital and creative way.

TSR2 and CND

from ALAN ROONEY

North-West Region of C.N.D. has organised a march in Preston on Saturday, February 13. This will be followed by a public meeting stating C.N.D.'s position of the TSR-2 and the arms bill (The 1965-66 Defence

Estimates are scheduled to be published on Tuesday, February 16th). It is expected that Weybridge and Bristol C.N.D.s will organise activity on the same day.

Price pledge aids monopolies

The City Editor of the *Evening Standard* has made some interesting comments on the declaration by some of the retailing chains that they will not increase prices. He writes:

IT'S all very well to pledge stable prices — but what will it do to profits? That is the plaintive cry one hears from investors as company after company announces that it will curb rising shop prices — despite higher operating costs.

"It's the Government's fault," they say, "that things are going up. Why should we, the shareholders, be penalised for its thoughtlessness?" Well, friends, you can relax. The big retail chains who have made known their brave decision this week reckon it's not going to hurt them at all . . .

"*British Home Stores* told me today: 'We hope it will make no difference to profits. You see, we don't intend to do this pegging completely on our own. We shall go back to our manufacturers and try to get them to streamline and improve their processes so that they won't find it necessary to raise their prices. We've got to maintain profits, otherwise our shareholders don't like us.'

"*Tesco's* Jack Cohen told me: 'I don't think the pledge will interfere with our profit margins at all, if we can do more business with our own brands. Then the proprietary brands will be the only ones to suffer . . .'

"There are, obviously, some interesting implications for the investor in all this. Chief of them, I suggest, is the growing power of the large retail chains. This is likely to increase further rather than diminish: the *Tesco* bid today shows that the big boys mean to grow bigger still—and fast . . .

"The ambitious retailer starts by making a big name with the exploitation of nationally known branded goods. Then, when he has built up a loyal following, he switches more and more to his own branded goods on which the overheads are far less.

"This eliminates his dependence on firms making proprietary goods, and gradually increases his power over the factories who agree to manufacture the things he sells under his own brand names . . ."

In fact the "public-spirited" sacrifices of the big retailing chains are nicely calculated to take advantage of the repeal of the Resale Price Maintenance Laws, to undercut their smaller competitors and to strengthen their control over their suppliers.

Should socialists be enthusiastic about this new wave of "rationalisation"? Clearly not, unless one relishes the idea of the new retailing oligopolies acquiring an even firmer hold on the High Streets. In

the short run this may lead to some price cuts but as soon as competitors are eliminated and the suppliers disciplined the big companies will be able to raise prices even higher. In America this process has already occurred. On the other hand, socialists have no interest in defending the small inefficient retailers or in defending the independent manufacturer. In fact there is no reason to take sides in this rivalry between two capitalist interests — but there is every reason to be clear about what's actually happening. R.B.

Unions are O.K. says Public

SOME eminent trade union chiefs have been telling us that the public image of the unions is tarnished and that, unless we mend our ways, we shall lose any prestige and influence we ever possessed.

But, it seems, these leaders may have been under a misapprehension, for, according to a recent Gallup Poll, "the trades union movement stands in high regard with the public."

Seventy per cent. of those questioned in an inquiry made for the *Sunday Telegraph* thought "trade unions are a good thing—generally speaking." Only once before, in 1954, when 71 per cent. held this favourable view has the movement enjoyed such widespread approval. A report on the inquiry says the view is that:

the power of the unions will increase rather than decrease in the years ahead;

union officials are efficient; and the trend towards larger unions was approved both by the public and by the union members themselves.

The unions lost favour with the public whenever there was:

disagreement between unions or union leaders;

failure to maintain discipline, to contain wildcat or unofficial strikes;

squabbling over political issues; and weakness in pursuing the legitimate industrial aims of the union members.

The report discloses that with all sections of the community, industrial

issues predominate as "the most urgent problems facing the trade unions." Political issues receive few mentions.

As for union objectives, the majority of members, 52 per cent., rate "security of employment" as their main concern. Second, 40 per cent., is "better working conditions" and third, 38 per cent., "profit sharing." Fourth, 21 per cent., comes "better pensions," and fifth, 18 per cent., "higher wages."

A majority of union members are reported to be willing members. Only 12 per cent. say they would leave their union if they were free to continue in their jobs as non-unionists. The majority of union members, 64 per cent., believe that "a worker who does not join a union is evading his responsibilities to other workers."

Most union members, 55 per cent., support the principle of the closed shop and 41 per cent. are prepared to refuse to work with non-unionists to enforce this principle.

About the right to strike, 29 per cent. of the general public are prepared to disallow strikes and make arbitration compulsory. Even fewer, 23 per cent., of the general public are prepared to concede that the unqualified right to strike is an "essential freedom."

The largest group, 34 per cent., believe that "workers should be allowed to strike when arbitration has failed" to bring about a solution acceptable to them.

*From N.U.G.M.W. JOURNAL.

Automation in West Germany

UNTIL quite recently the Trade Unions in the Federal Republic, like those elsewhere, were convinced that, whilst automation would of course threaten certain jobs, nevertheless because of the growing complexity of the machines new trades would emerge, and, in particular, that new chances of promotion for the workers would result. The facts are, unfortunately, presenting a quite different picture, as the Chairman of the Industrial Union of Metal Workers, Otto Brenner, pointed out at a Conference of the German Federation of Trade Unions in Frankfurt. In the West German metal industry alone the percentage of skilled workers fell between 1950 and 1963 from 50% to 41.6%.

Brenner pointed out that, during the last two years, automated machine tools have been appearing which permit mere machine tending by trainees, even in the case of quite small quantities of products. This development can easily lead to radical changes in just those branches which have so far been regarded as secure against automation: the manufacture of machine tools, repair workshops and the manufacture of machines. Practically everywhere it can clearly be observed that in the case of process workers trainees are ousting the skilled worker. Only a very small group of measurement and regulation mechanics and technicians are called upon to develop very much improved skills. But the proportion of such people amounts to only between 1% and 5% of the machine tenders and maintenance personnel.

The increasing use of new materials is also having an adverse effect on employment. This is true in particular of plastics, which are increasingly displacing metal, wood and glass. As an example, our lecturer of today quoted a case in which the manufacture of 45 zinc bath tubs of 60 litres capacity formerly occupied 30 metal workers and 20 sheet metal machines for a full hour. Today one unskilled woman operating a plastics spraying machine can produce 60 bath tubs of the same capacity in an hour.

Similar developments are taking place in offices. It is true that modern techniques have led to an increase of salaried staffs, particularly in the case of technical personnel, since many operations affecting production have been transferred to the technical offices, especially programming. But many firms are already going over to having their programming done by electronic data processing. In other cases automated drawing machines

are rendering draftsmen and constructors redundant. Automation in offices is displacing not only traditional routine tasks but also many jobs occupied by very highly skilled staffs. In some instances it is even threatening the employment of many intermediate and some senior managerial staffs.

Brenner issued a warning against a tendency to deceive ourselves about the ultimate effects of automation, merely because the present acute shortage of labour concealed its inevitable results. The IFO Institute estimates that the Federal Republic would be able to continue to produce the Social Product of the preceding year whilst reducing its labour force by 1½ millions annually. In order to find employment for these redundant workers it would be necessary at one and the same time considerably to increase production whilst reducing hours of work. The Trade Unions may therefore justly claim that their policy of negotiating higher wages and at the same time shorter hours have made an important contribution to the present situation in Germany, where despite rationalisation and automation full employment still obtains.

It is true that redundant technical staffs do not always find jobs equivalent to those they have lost. Reduced earnings are often the consequence. The Trade Unions therefore now find themselves faced with the task, through the medium of collective agreements, of protecting the workers against the negative effects of automation.

*From DGB NEWSLETTER, an English language publication of the West German Trade Union movement.

American Unions Boycott Petrol Firm

TWO American oil workers' trade unions, the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) and the International Union of Petroleum Workers (IUPW) have started to boycott the products of Standard Oil of California. In a campaign they are urging their members, members' families and sympathisers to return their petrol credit cards and to stop buying the company's products. The "don't buy" campaign exposes the firm's refusal to grant employees a 4½ per cent. wage increase and other benefits, gained by the unions during negotiations for a new collective agreement last year. Standard Oil of California is the only one of the major oil companies which did not meet the terms of the contract. The boycott has spread to California, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Arizona and other western states of the country.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST JOURNAL

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From the Third

Alexander Appeal: March 2

from Connie Kirkby

READERS of THE WEEK who have supported the work of the Alexander Defence Committee will be pleased to note that a date has been fixed for the appeal, namely, March 2nd. Postponed since last November because the lawyers for the Defence were refused permission to visit the prisoners on Robbens Island to get their signatures and take their statements, the fixed date means that no effort can be spared during the next few weeks to raise money which is required to meet the legal costs.

This retrial of Dr. Neville Alexander and 10 of his associates will investigate whether the chances of the defendants have been diminished through certain irregularities which took place at the original trial, e.g., the unlawful opening of the instructions of the defendants to the defence Counsel. These instructions had not been passed on by the prison authorities to the Defence and when the defendants received the instructions back, they found among them a page in the handwriting of a secret policeman who had interrogated the defendants (in one case under conditions of torture).

Little is known about the personal conditions of the 11 defendants though there is evidence that Neville Alexander was physically assaulted by warders at Robbens Island. This was because of his objection to the brutal and degrading manner in which prisoners are searched. Every day after work the prisoners are compelled to do the "Tausa dance". This involves jumping in the air, clapping their hands, whilst stripped naked and exposing their sexual organs. Dr. Alexander received an injured ear drum as a result of the attack. Lionel Davies, Marcus Solomons and Ian Van Der Heyden who witnessed the assault were placed in solitary confinement. Fikele Bam had the temerity on June 10th, last year, to ask for more food and was kicked

and slapped by a head warder. When he reported this to the authorities the next day they told him that as he is a Kaffir he should be thankful for the food the department of prisons is wasting on him. Don Davies is also reported to have been beaten up by warders.

Reports from South Africa show that Dr. Alexander is anxious to continue his academic work while in prison and has had to get special permission to do so from the prison commandant. Alexander's intention is to continue his work about Gerhart Hauptman — the German dramatic poet — on whom he wrote an excellent thesis during his brilliant career as a scholar at Tübingen University. The National Union of South African Students wanted to help him to do this but has had great difficulties in doing so, because this organisation which fights hard against race discrimination has lost many of its most courageous members through arrests (The NUSAS represents over half of all South African students).

In this country there is increased interest in the case of Dr. Neville Alexander. In the December 31st issue of the *Times Literary Supplement*, which has a circulation of 47,000 copies and is widely read throughout the academic world, Dr. Alexander's study of Gerhart Hauptman, "Studien zum Stilwandel im dramatischen Werk Gerhart Hauptmanns" was reviewed. The review states that "Mr. Neville E. Alexander, whose study was written at Tübingen before he returned to his native South Africa where he is said to be in trouble with the authorities, has produced much the most intelligent piece of criticism for some time . . ."

C. L. R. James, author of *Black Jacobius and World Revolution*, pointed out in a letter to the editor and printed in the January 14th issue of the supplement points out the following facts concerning Dr. Alexander's "trouble with the authorities".

He stated that "Dr. Alexander was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment after one of the Verwoerd government's 'sabotage' trials in Cape Town last spring. The sentence is now under appeal while he is serving his term under the usual severe conditions.

Dr. Alexander wrote this work while in Tübingen on an Alexander Humboldt fellowship, of which he was the first non-white recipient in South Africa. His successor as recipient of this fellowship was a son of Dr. Verwoerd.

It is of interest to recall that the Alexander case aroused considerable protest and substantial aid in German academic circles, where his work is highly regarded. A committee of students and faculty members covering most of the universities in the Federal Republic raised the bulk of the funds to meet the costs of the original trial and are now engaged in a similar effort on behalf of the appeal.

The letter ends by informing readers of the name and address of the Secretary of the British Alexander Defence Committee. Two days after this letter was printed the Secretary received a cheque for £100 from a London donor.

Now that the date of the appeal has been set, the British Alexander Defence Committee intends to intensify its campaign in order that the legal costs of the appeal can be met.

Among the activities of the Committee will be the organising of a dance on Friday, February 5th at Greenwich Town Hall, 7.30-11.30 p.m., tickets costing 3/6 are available from the Secretary. Plans are being made for a demonstration outside South Africa House to be followed by a march to a central meeting hall. It is also planned to hold a meeting and social evening the weekend before the appeal. Details of all these activities will be published in THE WEEK. Readers should send donations to Defence and Aid (Alexander Appeal), 2 Amen Court, London, E.C.4. Messages, suggestions and enquiries should be sent to: Mrs. C. Kirkby, 27 Thursley House, Holmewood Gardens, London S.W.2.

World



TRINIDAD —

Labour Dispute

DR. ERIC WILLIAMS, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, has been accused of violating a collective bargaining agreement signed seven months ago between the Government and the National Union of Government Employees of Trinidad and Tobago. The trade union's claim has been endorsed by the Trinidad and Tobago National Trades Union Congress which denounced the unilateral action of the Government in "abrogating the sanctity of the collective contract" despite assurances given by its representatives to the trade union and to the members of the House of Representatives.

The reason for the dispute was the claim of the National Union of Government Employees for full payment of retroactive wages due to daily-paid government workers covered by the Joint Industrial Council. Despite all attempts by the National TUC to arrive at a satisfactory solution the Government decided to pay out on 18th December, 1964 only 60 per cent. of the amount in cash and to withhold the balance of 40 per cent. in lieu of bonds, against the wishes of the workers.

The Trinidad and Tobago National Trades Union Congress thereupon advised the union to repudiate the concession which had been made to the Government to forego the wage increases for 1965 and 1966 on condition that remaining wages were paid. It is also considering the possibility of taking legal action in pursuance of its claim for full payment to the workers, including a complaint to the International Labour Organisation against violation by the Government of ILO Convention No. 98 on the right to organise and bargain collectively.

Caribbean Unions demand Sugar talks

THE Caribbean Congress of Labour has called on Caribbean governments involved in the serious economic crisis in the sugar industry to meet with trade unions and manufacturers for discussions. In a press statement Osmond Dyce, CCL Secretary-Treasurer, recalled that this had been suggested at a meeting held in Barbados by the CCL in October 1964, when it was agreed that these top-level discussions should take place no later than July 1965.

Describing the position on the world market of sugar produced in the Caribbean countries, the CCL Secretary-Treasurer underlined that sugar workers' wages in these countries are much lower than those paid in Australia, Great Britain, Puerto Rico and Hawaii. Dyce pointed out that an Australian cane cutter earns about 15 pounds ten shillings (74 West Indian dollars) for a five-day forty-hour week, while a cane cutter

in Barbados, the country with the highest cost of living in the Caribbean area, earns 1.55 West Indian dollars per ton of cane cut. Since he can hardly cut more than 6 tons of cane in a normal day the Barbados cane cutter cannot earn much more than 46.50 W.I. dollars a week, which is only two-thirds of the lowest Australian rate. Osmond Dyce stressed that if the cost of producing sugar in the Caribbeans is high, wages are not responsible for this fact.

MALAYSIA —

Borneo Unions

THE leader of an eight-man trade union delegation from Malaysia to Sabah and Sarawak declared in Jesselton (Sabah) on 17th December, 1964, that the labour laws in these two states were "outmoded and colonialistic in nature." Yeoh Teck Chye, President of the National Union of Bank Employees, who headed the mission, added that moves to get these laws changed must be initiated as soon as possible. He said that trade unions in Sabah were not allowed to be affiliated to international bodies while Malayan and Singapore trade unions were not deprived of this right. He expressed the hope that the local laws would be changed. Only then, he stressed, would it be possible to have one national Malaysian body for all the workers throughout Malaysia.

World Unions say boycott South Africa

TRADE Union organisations in Germany, Israel and Argentina have urged their governments to impose an arms embargo and effective sanctions against South Africa in line with a United Nations decision. The German trade union federation DGB, the Israeli federation Histadrut and the Argentine Municipal Workers' Union have stressed the opposition of the trade union movement to all forms of racial discrimination in letters to their respective governments.

WORKERS' CONTROL

by Councillor J. Spencer

Co-operatives in Algeria

THERE exist at present in Algeria, five different types of Co-operatives:

1. *Consumer Co-operatives*: Most of these are small co-operatives, each serving the members of a certain union, e.g., one serving the members of the Union of Post and Telephone Workers. There are general consumers' co-operatives in existence also, which are, however, small organisations. Membership shares are expensive, e.g., 75/- in one case and can be paid in instalments. These co-operatives do not pay dividends owing to the lack of skilled administrative staff, but rather aim at selling cheaply. The A.G.M. elects the board which in some co-ops is honorary and in some paid full time. The shops which we saw looked like L.C.S. grocery shops, some small and old fashioned and some modern.

2. *Artisan Co-operatives*: Such as makers of carpets, builders, plumbers, carpenters, etc., exist in two stages: (a) those where only sale or service contract to the public is on a Co-operative basis, while equipment, material, etc., are owned privately and (b) where equipment, material, etc., are also owned by the co-operative and the members contribute their labour only.

It is hoped that propaganda and example will induce independent artisans to join and stage "a" co-operatives to develop into stage "b".

3. *Farmers' Co-operatives*: The individual farmer owns his field and cattle and uses the Co-op. as sales organisation, like in Denmark. This system is specially in use with regard to tobacco plants. Some Co-ops. share out the profit as divi to members, others — owing to the lack of administrative staff — do not pay divi and aim at paying maximum prices to members.

4. *Producer Co-operatives*: Set up by workers in any trade who possess some money which they put in as loan capital. Irrespective of difference in capital invested, there is one vote for one man and equal share in profit (Interest being paid separately on capital).

5. *"Auto-Gestion" (Workers' Self-Management)*: This is by far the most important application of co-

operative principles in Algeria. It comprises a large sector of the whole economy including large farms and big industrial enterprises.

When the French owners or directors of the industrial or agricultural establishments left the country, in many cases together with their French or foreign specialists, supervisors, administrators, etc., the Algerian workers were faced with the necessity to carry on somehow in order to earn their daily bread. Thus the Algerian form of Workers' Self Management was created, which was regulated later on in a law, according to which, there is a General Assembly of workers comprising the permanent workers of the enterprise. This assembly elects annually the Workers' Council whose members serve normally three years and of whose members a third retire annually. This meets at least once a month and decides on matters of policy, on the admission of new workers, and examines the accounts and elects the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee consists of 3-11 members of whom one third retire every year. It has practically the same function as the board of directors in private industry. It elects a president for one year and it decides on methods of sale, production, purchase, engagement of seasonal workers, etc.

The government appoints a "director" who represents the state inside the enterprise, and watches over the legality of the business activities. He is a specialist and is working full time as the head of the administration. His position, therefore, is comparable to that of a town clerk in a Metropolitan Borough Council. He has one vote on the Executive Committee, and is obliged to carry out majority decisions faithfully, even if he has been defeated on a vote.

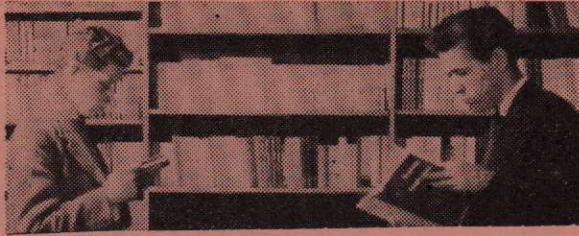
The Members of the Council of Management and of the Executive Committee and the president are carrying on their normal duties as workers. It is laid down by law that they must not receive any remuneration for higher duties. They are being paid for the time spent in exercising their functions at the rate

of their normal job. It is considered undesirable to re-elect persons on retirement from their committees as it is thought that the functions should rotate as much as possible to spread the understanding of the higher problems.

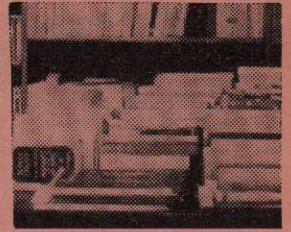
The director can only be relieved of his functions as a result of a grave fault or obvious incompetence or on the request of the Council of Communal Enterprises and Self Management.

I asked the president or a member of the Executive Committee of each "Auto-Gestion" we visited, whether the independent position of the "director" does not lead sometimes to tensions. At all occasions but one, we were assured that the director was working most amicably with his elected colleagues. At one co-operative, however, a member of the Executive told me that workers in his trade were rather backward and uneducated and that it was difficult to reconcile their ideas with those of the specialist of a different background. But he assured us that every issue was finally settled constitutionally.

Share-out of Profit: According to the law, the profit of any "Auto-Gestion" is shared out as follows: One third to the State, one third reinvestment, one third to the members. It is left to the discretion of the members, that means, to the decision of the Workers' Council, whether the workers' share is to be divided equally "one man one share" or according to skill, that means, in proportion to the wages drawn. I found that different management councils have used their discretion in one way or the other. Similarly the workers' councils decide which use is to be made of the funds for reinvestment and frequently proceed with purchase from the profit as they go along, without waiting for a balance sheet. Considering the present emergency and the urgent need to repair war damages and to expand production, the government is encouraging re-investment by the offer of foregoing the state's share in the profit, if the workers decide to reinvest their share. Here again, the decision of the workers' councils differ from place to place.



BOOKS IN REVIEW



The Brainwashers

AN article in the latest issue of the *Harvard Business Review* gives us a disturbing glimpse of the way new organisation capitalism works. The article by Edgar H. Shein is entitled "How to break in the college graduate." Apparently the big U.S. companies are finding that the young graduates they recruit are "too theoretical, idealistic and naive"; apparently these young people ask themselves, "Will I be able to maintain my integrity and individuality? Will I be able to lead a balanced life, to have a family, and to pursue private interests?" They also ask "Will I learn and grow?" Will the job not only provide an opportunity to use my present talents and background, but will it also afford me an opportunity to learn new things and develop new talents?" According to the author, such attitudes come up against the "Organisational realities," which demand the following:

—the necessity for "Loyalty and commitment—to place the goals and values of the organisation ahead of his own selfish motives and, if necessary, sacrifice some part of his personal life."

—"High personal integrity and strength—to stick to his own point of view without, however, becoming a deviant or a rebel (he must know how to compromise when necessary)" The new recruit to the company must "come to terms with . . . seemingly unethical behaviour and apparently irrational behaviour on the part of high level managers."

He must also "come to terms with his own disillusionment."

The author then outlines various "induction" and "integrative" strategies by which the new recruit can be "broken in." The author suggests that the supervisors responsible for "breaking in" the new recruit have much to learn from psychologists expert in the "emotional problem of late adolescence." I would like to quote one more sent-

ence simply as an example of the style the article is written in — a strange combination of dehumanised pseudo-scientific jargon and transparent euphemism, which is typical of writing of this sort:

"To implement such goals would require three to five days of intensive training in which lecture inputs on the problems of inducting a college graduate into the organisation are combined with extensive opportunities for free and guided groups discussion among the supervisors themselves."

The author concludes:

"My basic argument in this article is that the expectations and needs of the college graduate and the expectations and needs of the organisation are sufficiently out of line with each other that a considerable danger exists of both parties landing in the trap of self-defeating induction and training programme. . . . The challenge is to recognise the great potential of the college graduate and to create organisational circumstances for him that will utilise rather than defeat the very qualities which make him valuable—his education and his youthful enthusiasm and idealism."

The recent militancy of Berkeley students leads one to think that the big capitalist concerns are going to find "the challenge" more difficult to digest than this.

R.B.

Slum Study

ALVIN SCHORR has worked in the office of the Commissioner of Social Security in the United States, then came to the L.S.E. to research into housing policy in Britain and is now in charge of Long Range Research in the U.S. Social Security Administration. This background uniquely prepares him for the task he has set himself in this book*: exploring the problems of and the remedies to slum housing in the United States and Britain.

It is probable that the section on Britain will be of more interest to the general reader. Predictably, Mr. Schorr amuses himself with the famous 1955 figure of 850,000 unfit houses. What constitutes unfit? The Liverpool local authority estimated 43 per cent. of their houses unfit while Stretford found only 0.5 per cent. in this condition. Mr. Schorr points out that of the houses regarded as 'fit' over a quarter did not contain a wash basin. He calculates that by the most ludicrously conservative reckoning 250,000 houses a year are required for replacement needs alone. In February, 1963, the Government suggested that over the next ten years London would require 150,000 houses for replacement. Schorr points out that this assumes an expected average life of a London dwelling to be 160 years!

The building industry is savagely attacked: "building to low standards is effectively a book-keeping transaction to shift an expense from a local authority or development corporation to the budget of its tenant. That is, if a new house is built without heat in a bedroom or sufficient hot water or a finished floor, it is fully expected the tenant will provide it."

Schorr also takes a look at the new towns to see if they do effectively provide for the poorer sections of the community. The inescapable conclusion is that those who are in most need are not being served.

In his conclusions, when British and American housing plans are compared, he writes: "The outstanding limitations in the British programme appears to be scant ambition. One limitation the two nations share—the notion that general advance in standards of living will inevitably improve the lot of all. It is convenient to believe this, but it is a fable. In most cases, people die poor because they were born poor. To alter this natural progression requires sustained interest and educated attention."

JULIAN ATKINSON

*"Slums and Social Insecurity," Alvin Schorr, Nelson, 30/-.

International Monetary Fund - A CHINESE VIEW

Since the recent crisis of the pound and the 'great loan' there has been renewed interest in the mysterious workings of international finance. The following summary, which gives the Chinese estimation of the I.M.F., is thought-provoking and cannot be ignored by Labour activists. We would be pleased to learn of the views of readers on this, particularly those whose field of study is economics.

THE International Monetary Fund (I.M.F.), a specialised agency of the United Nations, is a U.S.-masterminded project serving as an instrument for U.S. economic aggression, says a signed article in the *Ta Kung Pao* of January 13.

The article goes on to say that the I.M.F. was established in accordance with a U.S. plan and thus catered to the interests of U.S. monopoly capital. This is manifest in the following aspects:

One: It raised the status of the dollar by making other nations to use it as their reserves as they do gold;

Two: It fixed the official price of gold at the low rate of 35 dollars an ounce in favour of the dollar;

Three: Member nations of the Fund must repay its credits in dollars;

Four: The member nations are called on to liberalise their trade, lift foreign exchange control and change their discriminating foreign exchange rates — all intended to increase the volume of U.S. exports and keep up the export of U.S. capital.

The principal function of the I.M.F. is to provide short-term credits to its member nations by selling foreign exchange to them, whenever these nations suffer from an adverse balance in international payments.

Before 1958 when the West European currencies became freely convertible, the I.M.F. gave credits mainly to the West European countries, the article continues. In recent years, however, the lion's share of its credits went to Asian, African and Latin American countries.

Between 1956 and May, 1964 a total of 34 Asian, African and Latin American countries received credits from the fund. Of the 18 countries borrowing foreign exchange from the I.M.F. during the year 1962-63, 17 were Asian, African and Latin American countries. Of the 21 countries which signed agreements with the fund for stand-by credits, 18 are Asian, African and Latin American countries, the remaining three being the United States, Britain and Japan.

Before granting credits to Asian, African and Latin American countries, the I.C.F. would "investigate" into and meddle with the currency, finance and foreign exchange policy of the applicants. This is done in the name of helping and supporting them in carrying out the stabilisation programme. But actually it is to sweep aside obstacles in the way of the dumping of U.S. goods and export of U.S. capital. The credits sought will be granted only when the applicants promise to fulfil the I.M.F.'s conditions such as abolition of multiple foreign exchange rates and adoption of a single fixed rate, and abrogation of discriminating bilateral payment system and foreign exchange control.

The Fund stipulates that interest on its loans shall be paid in gold—an onerous burden for the Asian, African and Latin American countries, the article continues.

Gold thus obtained was used to back the dollar. Since 1957, a total of 800 million dollars' worth of gold was turned over to the United States as deposits. The dollars obtained have been invested in U.S. Government bonds.

The article points out that the technical guidance and "assistance" given by the I.M.F. to its member nations often serve as a cover for U.S. interference in the internal affairs of these countries.

The "stabilisation programme" imposed by the I.M.F. on the Latin American countries included the following aspects:

One: to compel the "aid" recipient countries to give up the multiple rates of exchange beneficial to their national capital and practice a single free rate of exchange; this was aimed at devaluating the currency of the recipient, pushing it on to the road of inflation.

Two: to abolish or relax the restriction on the import of commodities, thus paving the way for U.S. dumping.

Three: to reduce the circulation of currency and restrict the granting of loans to local national business by the state or private banks of the Latin American countries, this hitting hard at the local medium and small enterprises.

Four: to increase taxes, freeze wages, abolish price control and subsidies to consumer goods, reduce Government employees and raise public utility rates.

Five: to implement policies and decrees beneficial to foreign investments.

The I.M.F. loans which the Latin American countries obtained by accepting the "stabilisation programme" brought along growing financial and economic crises, stagnation, devaluation, soaring prices and marked deficits in international payments and state budgets. This gave U.S. imperialism an opportunity to intensify its penetration and control.

The steady increase of "aid" provided by the I.M.F. and other organisations to the Asian, African and Latin American countries in the last few years failed to bring about any improvement in the international payments of these countries; indeed, it caused a deterioration in some of them. The root cause lies in the fact that these countries have been exploited by the imperialist states headed by the U.S. in the form of exchange of unequal values. The imperialist states have made fortunes from the Asian, African and Latin American countries by means of buying cheap and selling dear under the cloak of "aid", then lending money to them at exorbitant interest rates. Under this double exploitation, the Asian, African and Latin American countries naturally cannot achieve equilibrium in their international payments, and their foreign debts snowballed.