

# The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS  
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# THE SOUTHALL STRIKE

## A LESSON IN SOLIDARITY

**Sponsors:** Frank Allaun, M.P. - Perry Anderson - Chris Arthur - Julian Atkinson - Michael Barratt Brown - Malcolm Caldwell - Neil Carmichael, M.P. - Raymond Challinor - Henry Collins - Lawrence Daly - John Daniels - Peggy Duff - Ray Gosling - Richard Fletcher - Trevor Griffiths - Eric Heffer, M.P. - Ellis Hillman - Dave Lambert - Ralph Milliband - Stan Mills - Jim Mortimer - Tom Nairn - Dick Nettleton - Stan Newens, M.P. - John Rex - Ernie Roberts - Alan Rooney - David Steele - Professor E. A. Thompson - E. P. Thompson - Tony Topham - William Warbey, M.P. - Raymond Williams - Bert Wynn - Konni Zilliacus, M.P. - Robin Blackburn - Ken Coates - Chris Farley - Ralph Schoenman - Earl Russell, O.M. - Tom Swain, M.P. - Tony Brewer - Alan Sillitoe - Sydney Silverman, M.P. - Ann Kerr, M.P.

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A RAIL STRIKE?

Two regional councils of the N.U.R. have called upon their Executive to call a rail strike in protest against Government policy towards their wage claim. This development is of great interest to socialists on more than one account. It is to be hoped that the N.U.R. leadership draws the lesson from their previous brushes with the Railways Board that moderate policy encourages intransigence from the employers and the Government. It is also a warning to the Labour Government that its policies (and especially the incomes policy) are in danger of making 1966 a year of clashes between the Labour Government and the trade unions. That development could do no other than cause disenchantment of sections of the working class which hitherto have been traditionally Labour. Today it is the railmen, tomorrow it will probably be the miners....and so on. Mr. Wilson and his team should ponder on the electoral consequences of such a situation. If Labour suffers politically from a series of strikes it will not be the fault of the strikers. The middle class types that Mr. Wilson may hope to impress by acting tough with the unions will be easy prey to Tory propaganda in such a situation. By acting firm the unions can drive a lesson home to the Government that their present line is not only a betrayal of socialist principles but electorally disastrous.

INTOLERANCE IN NORTH HULL

Hull readers have informed us of the disgraceful treatment of Mr. Richard Gott at Labour Party meetings. Now this kind of intolerance is being extended to members of the Labour Party who are, indeed, working for the Labour candidate and may be persuading some of Mr. Gott's potential voters to support Labour. We understand that well known members of the Labour Party have been prevented from asking questions at meetings and that at least one election rally meeting had to be closed down because of the situation caused by stupid and ill-mannered chairmanship. This is not the way to win a vital by-election. Such intolerance can only come from a feeling of fear, uncertainty and general lack of confidence.

WELCOME TO ANN KEER

We are delighted to welcome another member of the Parliamentary Labour Party as a sponsor to our journal. Mrs. Kerr hasn't been in Parliament long but she has quickly made a name for herself as a supporter of left wing causes in the House and in general political circles. Because of this she scarcely needs an introduction to readers of The Week - all we have to say is that we are both pleased and proud to add her to our list of sponsors.

## HULL C.S.E. FOUNDED

from Colin Stoneman

The inaugural meeting of Hull CSE was held on January 13th and was attended by about a dozen members, mostly trade unionists and teachers, and by four observers from the University Socialist Society who are to elect a delegate to future meetings. A provisional committee was first constituted from amongst those present, with Dan Hussey as chairman. The C.S.E. statement of aims was approved, and it was decided that activities of Hull C.S.E. should be complementary to those of the Hull Labour College and other working class educational organisations in the area, and in no way involve competition with them.

After the discussion that followed, members were agreed that the main aim should be activities involving workers on their own ground, in trade union branches, and, where possible, on the shop floor, rather than demanding that they should have to seek education from the Centre on its own terms. It was therefore decided to draw up a panel of speakers prepared to talk on a wide range of subjects of local and national concern, and to circulate details to trade union branches so that they may be able to call on someone whenever occasion arises. The students also expressed interest in activities involving co-operation with workers, (particularly in the fishing industry), so as to investigate problems and propose solutions. Another major activity of the Centre would be the production of pamphlets in many fields, along the lines of the busmen's pamphlet recently published by Humberside Voice.

## NOTTINGHAM C.S.E. BRAINSTRUST ON INCOMES POLICY

After its successful inaugural members' meeting the Nottingham branch of the Centre for Socialist Education is holding a brainstrust on Incomes Policy this coming Friday the 21st of January. The meeting will be held at the People's Hall and will commence at 7.30 p.m. The speakers will include Lionel Jacobs, chairman of the Nottingham and district trades council; George Cornes, a district official of the Draughtsmen and Allied Technicians' Association; and Tony Topham, the editor of Humberside Voice.

All Nottingham readers are asked to give the meeting maximum publicity and attend themselves.

## United Action of Southall workers continued/

Only 50% of the workers were to be taken back in the first two weeks. 300 of the workers will have to wait a long time before they are re-employed. Moreover, this leaves the way open for victimisation of active trade unionists in the factory.

The Southall workers URGENTLY need your help - the more so now because the strike has on the face of it ended, a fact which may lead people to assume that help is no longer needed.

PLEASE SEND YOUR DONATION to the Transport and General Workers Union Woolf Rubber Dispute Fund, at the T & G W U, 219, the Broadway, Southall, Middlesex.

CARD would like to hear from members and affiliated organisations of action taken by them in support of the workers.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Labour Government seriously intends to institute loans for students rather than grants. It is in full accord with its policy of trying to get the social services on the cheap. Graduates, it is argued, are in a privileged position so far as salaries are concerned. There is, therefore no reason why they should not repay their 'debt' to the state. This is a discriminatory attack upon graduates. If you are going to attack privilege in salary, then make it comprehensive through/radical progressive taxation system.

The worst aspect of loans, though, is that they would have an inherent class bias. A working class parent is far less likely to encourage his son or daughter to incur a debt of a thousand pounds for the sake of a degree than is a middle class parent. (This additional bias would be on top of the factors already promoting class divisions throughout our educational system.) It seems that the government's plan is to transfer the stage of creaming off the middle class from the age of 11 to 18.

The tactic that is being used to introduce the loans system is this: first the notion is quietly announced; then it is put forward as a serious proposal - the response to which is tremendously antagonistic. There is a huge outcry from the student body, so the Government replies that loans are only being considered in the distant future. But, they add, we must accustom ourselves to the idea of Government loans to certain post-graduates and other special students. And, over a period, the institution of loans evolves.

The National Union of Students, if it has any guts, must do everything to oppose the policy of loans. Initially, it should do all it can to prevent students from accepting Government loans. If the students are worthy, N.U.S. might think of raising grants itself. Further, a national student strike should be organised as soon as possible to demonstrate our unanimous rejection of the policy. This would certainly bring the point home to Mr. Prentice.

We at the London School of Economics must at least bring out the issues in public, and inform as many people as possible of the actual implications involved in instituting loans for students.

+ Reprinted from The Agitator, a journal of socialist discussion started last term within the L.S.E. Copies are available, 9d p.p., from Steve Jefferys, 39, Linden Mansions, Hornsey Lane, London N.6.

#### S.A.C.U. MEETING ON ROLE OF CHINA

On Thursday, January 27th, the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding is holding a meeting on "The Role of China in International Affairs." There is a very impressive panel of speakers including Isaac Deutscher, Lord King Hall, Dame Joan Vickers, M.P., and William Ash. Admittance is 2/6d and the meeting will be at the Caxton Hall, starting at 7.30 p.m.

REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER - REMINDER

If you have not already done so write for your tickets to the "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning" benefit performance for the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation straight away. Tickets 12/6, 21/- & 30/- from 3 & 4, Shavers Place, Haymarket, London S.W. 1. Cash With Order. Book the 29th January (Saturday) now!

## C.A.O. MEETING ON RHODESIA

The Committee of African Organisations and the London branch of the Peoples Progressive Party of Guiana have organised a meeting on Rhodesia. The main speaker will be:

Dr. Cheddi Jagan, former Prime Minister of British Guiana.

The chairman will be:

Ateker Ejalu, chairman of the Committee of African Organisations.

The meeting will be at:

Africa Unity House, 3, Collingham Gardens, London S.W. 5.  
(Number 30 or 74 bus, get off at Bolton Gardens; or Gloucester Rd. tube station).

Time: Sunday January 23rd, commencing at 2.30 p.m.

Come along and support the campaign for: "One Man, One Vote in Rhodesia"; "For the release of all political prisoners in Zimbabwe and Guiana"; and "For Solidarity between the peoples of Zimbabwe and Guiana."

## CONFERENCE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

The Movement for Colonial Freedom and the Anti-Apartheid Movement have announced that they are organising a conference on Southern Africa, to be held on Sunday 13th February, lasting from 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., at NUFTU Hall, Jockey's Fields, off Theobalds Rd., London W.C. 1.

In a statement explaining why they had organised the conference, the organisations said: "The illegal UDI by the extremist Smith regime in Rhodesia has heightened the crisis in Southern Africa and made that area one of the most serious points of conflicts in the world today. However, the Rhodesian problem is only one part of the very grave question of racialism throughout Southern Africa, including Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, South-West Africa and the British protectorates of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland. The racist minority regimes in this area are a dangerous threat to all fundamentals of democracy and human rights, and the British Government's attitude to this situation is of paramount importance. It is vital therefore that opinion in this country should be well informed on all aspects of the question.

"What are the full and true facts of the Rhodesian question? How will it affect the situation in neighbouring countries? What policy should the Labour Government adopt? What sort of solution might be satisfactory? It is essential that these and other questions should be considered, and that is why we extend to you our earnest invitation to attend this conference..."

The speakers will be Neil Carmichael, M.P., chairman of the East and Central Africa Committee of the Movement for Colonial Freedom; and Basil Davidson, the well known journalist and writer on African affairs.

N.B. The M.C.F. have also given the date of their summer school this year. It will be held during the week beginning 27th June, 1966, at the Chichester Diocesan Conference and Retreat House, Elfinward, Haywards Heath, Sussex. This is a preliminary notice and full details will be given shortly.

## YOUNG FABIAN PAMPHLET ON "WOMANPOWER"

A Young Fabian Study Group consisting of four women, Ann Glennerster, Lyn McFarland, Rosalind Steele, and Francis Stewart, all married and three with children, examine the barriers which prevent married women in general, and mothers in particular, from seeking and obtaining employment. Entitled "Womanpower", the pamphlet breaks new ground.

They begin by re-stating the anticipated 1970 manpower shortage as predicted in the National Plan and suggest that married women represent the greatest untapped supply of labour in Britain. They suggest that the contention is false that the majority of the two thirds of our married women who do not work do not, in fact, want to. They cite firstly the regional variations in female employment and, secondly, the enormous variation between the developed countries of the world. They go on to point out, with reference to doctors and teachers in particular, that married women represent not merely the largest reserve of labour: "Perhaps more important, they are the largest reserve of trained labour."

They contend that the main influence keeping many of these women out of work is the failure of employers to meet the special requirements of women with domestic responsibilities, "Employers on the other hand, generally tolerate rather than welcome part-time work" and many do not even tolerate it.

The authors suggest that discrimination against women is by no means a thing of the past and demonstrate the comparative inadequacy of promotion prospects for women. They suggest that the high turnover of women workers, often quoted by employers in defence of their discriminatory attitudes, should be seen as an effect of discrimination rather than as a justification for it. As far as the unions are concerned, the authors suggest that in continuing to place their main emphasis on equal pay, they are often neglecting problems such as part-time work, which are of more immediate relevance to women workers. The authors regret the small use which women seeking employment tend to make of Labour Exchanges and recognise a spiral effect here in that employers fail to inform exchanges of jobs open to women because they believe that there is no demand.

The authors go on to consider the effects on children of mothers who are out at work. They indicate a number of studies which reveal no significant differences between the children of working and non-working mothers, and suggest that there is no reason to doubt that children whose mothers are out at work will be psychologically unimpaired, provided that suitable substitute care is available.

They go on to examine the inadequacy of substitute care provisions and point out the failure of nursery school provision to match the decline of day nursery provision. They describe the growth of private, and some cases illegal, child minding and argue for a higher degree of local authority supervision and financial provision.

The pamphlet is concluded with a summary of recommendations under the heads: employment, substitute care, training, local authorities, employers and trade unions.

The pamphlet can be obtained from: Young Fabian Group, 11, Dartmouth St., London S.W. 1., costing 3s 3d post paid.

Chris Otley's comments on the Radical Alliance/Labour Left dilemma seem to be conditioned by a view of left wing roles and activities which stops short of any of the developments of the last four years. He is almost nostalgic for the hey-day of mass CND activities, and the "old" New Left clubs. He can see nothing but decline since then, and this has led him to neglect a whole range of developments, none of which would have been possible without the original New Left, but which have taken New Left thinking - and above all, organisation and activity in the labour movement - great bounds beyond what the clubs ever did. Does the growth of the Voice movement, in all its shades and activities, the presence of The Week, the campaign for workers' control, Centre for Socialist Education, Socialist Register, Towards Socialism, etc., etc. (and the opposition of the T.G.W.U. and the technicians' unions to the incomes policy) mean nothing to him? The direction of this recent left growth has been against reformism and labourism, where it grows and is nurtured - in the domestic British Labour Party. As Ken Tarbuck says: "the main enemy is at home." I take this to mean that, in the international socialist struggle of which we are a part, our role is to take on that part of international neo-capitalism which we can directly engage. Unless we do that we find, as with the Radical Alliance, that the international issues that we wish to raise remain somehow unfocussed, remote, unconnected with other aspects of the struggle.

I am puzzled as to why Chris Otley should suppose that we (the local Labour Party to which he refers) harbour illusions about our past, present and future impact in the Hull Labour Party. I think we know fairly dispassionately where our strengths and weaknesses lie. We can disagree about these and no great harm is done by such a discussion. But certainly we believe that our presence (which represents a trade union - shopfloor - Labour Party based left) has enabled a constructive dialogue to develop with Radical Alliance, and with the important surviving groups of what Chris Otley calls the "independent left" (CND, New Left). This dialogue has helped to build a bridge from R.A. ideas of election-opposition through to the trade union left opposition within the party and movement. Cecil Ballantine, in his contribution, shows that we have been understood by the R.A. nationally, and this is true also here in Hull. The exchange of views which has gone on between ourselves and the R.A. supporters here has been marked by an absence of mutual recrimination. It is a pity that Chris Otley, at several points in his contribution, fails to respond to this new, maturing mood of seriousness in the discussion of socialist strategy. His major mistake is surely to identify all effective opposition to the Government with the Gott vote. First, this is not true even if he thinks only of the articulate Humber-side Voice -trade union left, for we have made an important impact in the campaign. On January 1st, the Guardian headlined a three column article, which described among other things our Dockers Charter for the nationalisation of docks with workers control, and the Voice pamphlet on busmen's demands for workers management, with the caption: "Much will depend in Hull N. on Labour's unofficial Voices." Apart from this, does Chris Otley discount the fact that 3,000 dockers took a day off work, to hold a mass meeting in support of a militant wage demand, here in Hull this week? The idea, that some political conspiracy to "embarrass" Mr. McNamara was behind this, can be dismissed as the cops and robbers stuff that it is. But the unofficial meeting, with that amount of support, shows an indifference to the Labour Government, and a de facto opposition to the clamours of Brown

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and Gunter for wage restraint and "responsible" (i.e. docile) attitudes, which, in the long run, is of more significance than Richard Gott's vote. If socialists fail to respond to the voice of that opposition, they will remain in a truly impotent isolation. If they can give expression both to that industrial opposition, and the moral outrage over Vietnam, and advance both together over the hurdle which at present separates them from a positive, coherent, and all-embracing socialist strategy, then we shall indeed be assisting Chris Otley's call for the "crystalisation of a popular socialist movement."

One last word of warning. The mutual understanding for which we are pleading now, during the by-election campaign, must not be destroyed by recrimination within the left, AFTER THE RESULT IS ANNOUNCED. Whatever the effect of Gott's intervention, we must adhere to our present position - that the responsibility for the intervention lies with the Government and its policies, and NOT with the left - neither pro or anti-Gott sections.

#### VAN GELDEREN REPLIES TO BALLANTINE\*

Cecil Ballantine certainly has a point when he takes me up for my reference to Mosley and the British Fascist Party. I did not mean to imply that the Radical Alliance was a neo-fascist manifestation. What I tried to convey was that political frustration with the Labour Party and the subsequent collapse of attempts to find a short-cut to socialism can lead to paths unforeseen by the initiators of such movements.

I feel flattered by his reference to my "Leninist confusion about 'class' and 'party'", and must plead guilty to the conviction that socialism cannot be won in Britain except through the conquest of power by the working class. As long as that working class sees the Labour Party as the medium through which it seeks to achieve power, that is the place for socialists to work. It sometimes seems to be an endless and thankless task but if we cannot win a decisive section of Labour Party workers for socialism what hope have we of ever winning the state? This, like my reference to 'dairisoy', may be trite. It remains, nevertheless, equally true.

I am as fully aware as Cecil Ballantine that ending the Vietnam war is perhaps the most important issue facing the world today and that all means to end it, with justice to the people of Vietnam, should be tried. But how will it help to bring this about by replacing Mr. Wilson's Government with one which is, to say the least, as much committed to support of American imperialist aggression?

\* Letter from Charles van Gelderen to the editor.

#### Editorial note on the Hull by-election discussion

We have devoted a great deal of space to the discussion aroused by the decision of Radical Alliance to stand a candidate in the North Hull by-election. Despite our own position on this (that of giving full support to Humberside Voice which is calling upon people to vote Labour but not muting in any way its sharp criticism of the Labour Government) we have tried to give every view a fair amount of space. We are now, however, going to be more discriminating because of the danger of the mere repeating of arguments. Please when you write on this topic try to make new points.

It has often been said that the ups and downs of Trofim Lysenko's career are a reliable indication of the attitude of the ruling circles in the Soviet Union to the peasantry. Be that as it may, it is a fact that poor Trofim has fallen from favour so many times that he must be reluctant to put forward his views. The latest episode was reported in a recent issue of Soviet News under the title "Academician Lysenko's mistakes." It reads: "A commission of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences has come to the conclusion that Academician Trofim Lysenko disregarded scientific methods in organising research work on his Gorky Leninskiye experimental farm near Moscow. The commission's report has been approved at a joint meeting of the presidium of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, the collegium of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Agriculture and the presidium of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences. Nearly the whole of the latest issue of the Proceedings of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences is devoted to the findings resulting from an enquiry into the work of the farm.

"The commission found that there had been a considerable fall in harvests and milk yields on the farm in the past ten years. 'It is a fact,' says the commission in its report, 'that this farm, which was widely publicised at one time, has been virtually at a standstill as regards development and has even gone backwards in the yields of a number of important crops.' The commission did not obtain any trustworthy data confirming Lysenko's statements about the high degree of effectiveness of organic and mineral mixtures or his claims that one ton of manure-soil compost was equal to, or even more effective than, a ton of manure. Practical experience has shown that figures concerning the growth of output resulting from the introduction of mixtures and composts, given to the press by members of the staff of the experimental farm, have proved to be unreliable.

"In the past ten years, says the commission, the average annual milk yield cow on the farm dropped from 6,785 kilograms to 4,453 kilograms. Although the average fat content of milk for the herd increased to 4.87%, the annual output of milk fat per cow dropped by 13.7 kilograms in connection with the fall in productivity. The commission analysed the data concerning the cross-breeding of cows with Jersey bulls on the Gorky Leninskiye farm. This data, it says, does not confirm Academician Lysenko's conclusion that cross-breeding of this kind leads to the development of a stable fat content in the milk, and that the fat content of the milk of the daughters does not depend on the fat content of the milk of their mothers. The facts also show that the milk yields of the cross-bred cows are considerably reduced. The milk has a low fat and protein content and the body weight is small.

"The commission came to the conclusion that tried and tested methods of animal husbandry and procedures for pedigree stockbreeding were ignored on the experimental farm. The presidium of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences; the Ministry of Agriculture and the presidium of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Agricultural Sciences have decided that it is no longer permissible to use cross-bred cattle from the Gorky Leninskiye farm on Soviet farms which are engaged in pedigree stockbreeding.

"Academician Trofim Lysenko is to submit to the Academy of Sciences a scientific report for 1964 on the work of the experimental farm. He has been advised to eliminate the shortcomings in the work of the farm which have been revealed by the commission"

All of which seems to say that either Academician Lysenko is a rogue or doesn't know what he is doing. I wonder if there are any wry smiles from scientists who were accused of being Western stooges during the genetics controversy of the late 1940s by Trofim Lysenko.

## THE CAMPAIGN FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM+

The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, in association with other interested organisations and journals, is engaged in a campaign to promote solidarity with the people of South Vietnam. This effort, organised in conjunction with the Foundation's campaign against imperialism, started in December with the very successful meeting in London to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the formation of the National Liberation Front of Vietnam. This is to be followed by a series of provincial meetings, culminating in a solidarity conference in London to be held the week end of March 26/27th.

It must be stressed that this campaign is quite distinct from any other campaign on Vietnam. It has the aim of setting<sup>up</sup> the machinery to promote solidarity with the people of Vietnam led by the National Liberation Front. The campaign will seek to organise material and political support for the struggle of the South Vietnamese people against American aggression and the oppressive quisling regimes that American imperialism has foisted on their country. It will, of course, campaign against war in Vietnam, but on the basis of there being only one desirable end to this war: the complete withdrawal of American forces and the ending of U.S. interference in the internal affairs of Vietnam. The campaign takes its stand on the five points put forward by the N.L.F. as a basis for ending the war.

Our starting point, therefore, is that humanists, progressives and socialists should give unconditional support to people engaged in a struggle against imperialist oppression. This means that it is our duty to give the heroic people of South Vietnam - represented by the National Liberation Front - all the political and material assistance we can. Naturally, the most significant assistance we can give is political. Concretely this means creating the machinery to explain the N.L.F.'s position in this country. So far as material assistance is concerned we will give full support to the medical aid to Vietnam campaign. In addition we will present to the conference plans for a wide range of other kinds of aid including the possibility of sending out of volunteers from Britain.

Because we have distinct political tasks in mind, and do not wish to duplicate the efforts of other organisations, those who wish to participate in the proceedings of the conference will be asked to sign a declaration that they support its aims. There will, however, be provision for observers.

The conference will be a business-like affair which will settle:

- (a) the establishment of machinery to co-ordinate all the efforts of all those groups working on the same lines as our campaign;
- (b) the launching of an information bulletin to assist the work of the campaign and to service all those forces opposing U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

We will also take the opportunity to turn part of the week end into a public demonstration against American aggression in Vietnam, and speakers, a film show, an exhibition of photographs, etc., will be laid on for this purpose. A tape-recorded message from an N.L.F. representative will be read.

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+ statement issued by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation on January 16th.

The Campaign for Solidarity with the People of Vietnam continued/

The conference will be part of the preparation for an international conference on similar lines.

The provincial meetings will be part of a campaign of explanation of the aims of the conference, and at each meeting we will endeavour to set up a local ad hoc committee to prepare for the national conference.

A series of theses will be prepared for the conference. These will be distributed in advance to delegates and will form the basis of political discussion at the conference.

A national Ad Hoc Committee has been formed which will co-ordinate the work and prepare for the conference. It is, however, open to co-options.

A brochure explaining the aims of the campaign will be prepared for wide distribution.

#### What you can do to help+

Contact us immediately if you support the aims of the campaign.

Send us the names and addresses of anyone you think might be interested.

Make a donation towards the very heavy expenses involved in the campaign.

Help to form a committee in your area or university.

Help us to organise a meeting in your locality.

Get your organisation to support the conference.

+ All communications should go to BRPF, 3 & 4, Shavers Place, London SW 1.

#### NOTTINGHAM AND HULL TO HAVE SOLIDARITY WITH VIETNAM MEETINGS

Meetings have been fixed in Nottingham and Hull as part of the Campaign for Solidarity with the People of Vietnam.

The first will be in Nottingham on February 18th (Friday) commencing at 7.30 p.m. and will be held in the People's Hall. The speakers will include Ralph Schoenman, Chris Farley and Ken Coates. A film show will be part of the evening's proceedings and a tape message from Lord Russell will be played. It is expected that the Trades Council will provide the chairman for the meetings.

The Hull Socialist Youth Forum is to sponsor the Hull meeting. This will be held in the A.E.U. Rooms, on Sunday, 20th of February. The panel of speakers will be the same as that at the Nottingham meeting, and the film show and tape recording will also be part of the proceedings. It is expected that the meeting will get strong local support from the Young Socialists, Young Communist League, University Socialists, Labour Party members and trade unionists. Interest is expected to be extensive in view of the fact that the by-election has made Vietnam a real talking point.

The Campaign for Solidarity with the People of Vietnam is making arrangements for meetings in other towns. Please write in to the above address if you want information or if you can help to arrange meetings.

The six week long strike of the workers of Woolf Rubber factory at Southall, the overwhelming majority of whom are coloured immigrants, has received much publicity in the national press (But many of the accounts have been quite misleading). The strike, which began on the 1st December, was ended on 10th January on the basis of a partial settlement. The formula for return to work provides that negotiations on issues in dispute will continue after the return to work. The strike has raised a number of issues of deep concern to CARD members. The Southall workers are also badly in need of more financial help. We are therefore issuing to CARD members this Report on the Southall Strike and an Appeal for Help.

Underlying the immediate issues in the present situation is the active and leading role played by coloured immigrant workers in Southall in organising themselves, in solidarity with fellow British workers, to bring to an end the practice of managements to subject them to intolerable and discriminatory working conditions. Far from accepting lower standards, the coloured immigrant workers have demonstrated <sup>by</sup> their determination to be in the vanguard of working-class action to put an end to such a situation. For 30 years of its existence the management of the Woolf Rubber factory did not allow a trade union to be established in the factory, until coloured immigrant workers made a decisive breakthrough in March, 1964. Of about 800 workers the overwhelming majority are Indian workers; Pakistanis, West Indians, Cypriots and Irish workers are estimated to number less than 10% of the total. British workers in the factory are in supervisory grades. A trade union was established in the factory after more than a year of hard struggle by the workers with the full support of the Indian Workers' Association of Southall, a CARD affiliated organisation. The factory union was then formally brought under the wing of the TGWU. In October and November, 1964, the workers staged a major strike, following which they won many important demands together with a 40% increase in pay. Having gained confidence from their long struggle and their success, the immigrant workers began playing an active role in trade union work in many factories in the surrounding area. This has brought many benefits not only to the immigrants but also to their fellow British workers. They have therefore won the respect and the goodwill of all workers. They have thus laid a basis not only for the solidarity of all workers in defence of their just demands but also the unity of all communities in the area in the fight against racialism.

A matter of great concern to CARD members was an (unsuccessful) attempt to create dissension between Indians and Pakistanis in order to disrupt the unity of the workers. In view of the fact that the majority of the workers were Indian, attempts were made to recruit Pakistanis in their place. At an early stage in the strike Pakistani CARD workers were active in Southall explaining the importance of solidarity, to their compatriots a few of whom had been enticed into the factory. A most encouraging aspect of the strike was the fact that the Pakistani community in Southall, led by the Pakistani Welfare Association, stood solidly with the Indian community despite provocations. An isolated incident of violence at the factory gates on the 3rd of January, given quite misleading publicity in the national press, brought a joint appeal for solidarity from the Pakistan Welfare Association and the Indian Workers Association whose leaders have worked effectively in their respective communities to see that good sense prevailed. The failure of interested parties to pit one community against another bodes well for the future.

+ A statement issued by David Pitt, chairman of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination, in the form of an appeal to CARD members.

An aspect of the strike which gives cause for misgivings is what some workers describe as the step-motherly attitude in some sections of the Union. The district officials of the union have learnt to respect the work of the immigrant workers and serve them loyally. But some regional officers are said to have been not quite so forthcoming. It is understood that the workers had to secure the help of national officers of the union before the regional office could be persuaded to declare the strike official. Moreover, little effort appears to have been devoted to mobilise solidarity and support for the strikers. The Woolf Rubber Factory workers appear to have been left largely to deal with the management with their own limited resources.

The workers were not given strike pay. The explanation given by the union is that many of the workers did not qualify for benefit; to do so they must be fully paid up members of the union for at least 39 weeks without break. Those who were once in benefit but who had fallen in arrears would not qualify until 4 weeks after they had paid up their arrears. This does not, however, explain the non-payment of strike pay to those who were in benefit and were not in arrears. Furthermore, it is understood that all the workers had cleared their arrears before the strike was declared official; this was the union's condition for declaring it official. Thus many of those who were not in benefit when the strike was declared official would be in benefit for the last two weeks of it. It is understood that the union is now considering making a token payment to the strikers. As strike pay as such is very small, this payment is not likely to give much relief to the strikers.

The union action in interpreting its rules on strike pay so rigidly (if its action can at all be justified by the Rule Book) has not been calculated to bring about an early and successful conclusion of the strike. The workers' bargaining position would obviously have been far stronger if the union had been prepared to bend the letter of the law in order to make the maximum payment possible. As it is, their action encouraged the management to take an uncompromising attitude. This might have broken the backs of the workers and in consequence the union in the factory but for the magnificent way in which the entire immigrant community in Southall rallied to the support of the strikers. Landlords postponed or waived their rents and grocers extended generous credit. A strike fund of over £800 was collected and distributed amongst 200 most needy workers by the Shop Stewards Committee. The fact remains that the workers have been forced to accept some unfavourable terms in the final settlement; the management evidently felt encouraged by the weak support for the strikers from the union.

The real issue in the strike was an attempt by the management to by-pass and undermine the union. A worker who was ten minutes late from lunch break was suspended without consultation with the shop stewards and in violation of the National and Local Agreement with the union. The refusal of the company to reinstate the man and to undertake to observe the recognised and agreed union procedure led to the strike. Apart from the reinstatement of the worker concerned, the strikers demanded a 100% union shop, an assurance from the company that they shall honour the National and Local Agreements and also to settle long pending wage claims. The company, which refused to discuss the issues until the workers returned to work, dismissed the workers on strike. The settlement which has now been reached is that the company will re-instate the workers and will start immediate negotiations on the other issues in dispute. But under the plea that the company has lost business due to the strike, it refuses to take back all the workers at the same time