

The Week

LONDON

HOUSING

SCANDAL

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

6^D

Volume 8 No 11 September 14 1967

POST BRIGHTON

BATTLES BEGIN

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THE POST BRIGHTON BATTLES BEGIN!

One could almost feel sorry for Harold Wilson, immediately following the massive defeats he suffered at the Brighton T.U.C., he has seen the outbreak of a whole series of industrial struggles. On top of that have come the latest trade figures which, while they are distorted by the Arab boycott of Britain, demonstrate conclusively that no real break through has been made on the exports' front. The final "twist of the knife" (from Wilson's point of view) must be the latest public opinion poll figures which indicate an 8% drop in Labour support since the last General Election.

The most important feature of all this is the upsurge of industrial struggle, ranging from the work-to-rule at Vauxhall factories to the decision by the N.U.R. to place restrictions on one-man guard duties. Alongside this we see the militant action of the teachers and the threatened strikes by dockers which will greet the application of the Devlin report (the Government's quarrel with the port employers may give an entirely new twist to the whole docks' situation, too). As this journal has maintained consistently, at this stage of development a key role is played by the attitude of the leaders of the unions: the fact that the T.U.C. came out against the Government is a powerful stimulus to struggle, both official and unofficial.

Now, from all over the country, there are reports that the left, encouraged by the results of the T.U.C., is organising itself for Scarborough. Already, arrangements have been made for many activities at Scarborough: the VFS meeting Sunday morning, the C.N.D. march and "five unions" meeting in the afternoon of Sunday, and the big teach-in on Labour Party policy (advertised elsewhere in this issue) from 5.00 - 12.00 on Sunday. Also underway are plans for Briefing, the daily bulletin which is published by a broad spectrum of left organisations and journals to assist delegates to oppose right-wing policies. The Week will support and publicise all these activities.

The left has the overall task of defeating the present policies of the Government at Scarborough. But, in addition, it has to fight for two other principles: firstly, that the present leadership of the Labour Government consists of people who have broken with working class principles and who need to be fought and replaced; secondly, that the left must ensure that the victories gained at the T.U.C. mark the beginning of a consistent evolution to the left, to merely fight for the victory of T.U.C. policy is to mark time and, perhaps, unwittingly help Wilson and co. to make a phoney left turn.

We must strike hard and in a determined manner: the present situation is one which is extremely favourable for the development of a mass left wing, based on a programme which is a real alternative to that of the present Government. Confusion and hesitation must be overcome; tactical adroitness must be combined with a principled opposition to the Government. The left has many allies: the motorcar workers, the teachers, railwaymen, etc., and it will only be able to mobilise these allies by decisiveness and boldness. If we don't rise to this particular situation it may be a long time before we have another opportunity. Let us go all out to defeat the Government at Scarborough.

* * * * *

BLACK POWER IN BRITAIN - MANIFESTO OF THE U.C.P.A. by Bernard Reaney

The banning of Stokely Carmichael, the prosecution of Michael X and the publication of a Labour Party paper on race relations all indicated the fear and uncertainty in the ruling circles in Britain of the consequences for Britain, of the incidents in Detroit and other parts of the U.S. These events also confirm that the sort of manoeuvres that have characterised government policy over the last three years go no way to opposing the racist currents in Britain but have aided them; and that racialism can only be opposed by an uncompromising attitude and a determination to match the violence of racialism with violence. Those who have refused to take up this position, and who have compromised 'in the interests of good race relations' are inevitably regarded by Black militants as no better than the open advocates of racialism.

The logic of the governments position has been to prosecute black militants under the 'Race Relations Act', and to ban from Britain Black men who give strength and encouragement to Black people who are fighting against racialism. But there is also the 'progressive' part of their policy, specially designed to confuse the Left. Part of this is seen in the recent working paper on race relations issued by the Labour Party. Its proposals only go as far as the government's in calling for an extension of the race laws, and the 'progressive' signatories of this document do not once criticise the racist laws that the government have strengthened. It contributes nothing to the fight against discrimination and racialism. Its only value is that it exposes the bankruptcy of those who wrote it. Its thesis is simple. Black people in Britain must be patient. They must accept the perspective of freedom and equality as something for tomorrow while inequality and repression remain today, just as the working class as a whole must accept unemployment and wage cuts today for the perspective full employment and a steady rise in living standards tomorrow.

The Universal Coloured People's Association have understood that if you don't fight for freedom now it won't come tomorrow, and their manifesto is an attempt to bring this message into the Black community. Black power is their philosophy, a revolutionary philosophy, 'which will educate the Black man to be not only reactionary but also actional, a philosophy which must teach the Black man that, as Franz Fanon pointed out, man is not only YES...yes to life, yes to love, yes to generosity, but also that man is equally NO...no to scorn of man, no to degradation of man, no to exploitation of man, no to the butchery of what is most human in man: freedom'. Black people cannot seek economic power within the existing White structure. This would only mean, 'a replacement of exploitation of Black by White with exploitation of Black by Black, a mere replacement of colour discrimination by class discrimination. Since our object is the annihilation of oppression, not the butchery of colour, this would be unsuitable'. The only way forward is to smash the system of exploitation of Black people. If this cannot be done from within, international revolutionary forces must do the same job from without.

The Americans made the mistake of thinking that because Black people were in a minority they would not revolt against the exploitative system that they live under. In Britain the government too has made the same mistake in thinking that the restriction on immigration will make an explosive reaction against racialism less likely here. The Universal Coloured People's Association does not advocate violence. But they say, "we believe that the only way to neutralise violence is to oppose it with violence".

The gist of my argument about U Thant's July 30th speech on Vietnam is that it does not help the anti-imperialist cause but that part of the Left still looks to U Thant for some kind of leadership on Vietnam. Alan Kinchin argues that the Left can and should latch on to that part of U Thant's speech which defines the Vietnamese struggle as "a war of national independence". I still disagree. I feel that such a polemic would add further confusions to the arguments about Vietnam.

For example, if we try to persuade people to oppose the U.S. Government's policies by quoting the odd, progressively worded sentence from U Thant we can get into political trouble. We can only expect to have U Thant's more typical reactionary statements thrown back at us. When we argue that the U.S. should get out of Vietnam now we are in complete conflict with U Thant's policies. And 'U.S. get out of Vietnam now' is the key slogan of the October 22nd demonstration. This is right. It would be very confusing if we were to carry banners with slogans like 'U Thant says Vietnam is war of national independence'. This is not fanciful. U Thant has considerable influence on C.N.D., Left M.Ps, the British C.P. and 'Tribune' and these bodies might well spend much of their time trying to make a lot of U Thant's speeches, unless we can convince them of the need to campaign for a clear-cut anti-imperialist alternative. For instance, Stan Orme M.P. wrote in 'Tribune' (Sept. 8) that the delegation of six Labour M.Ps (Mikardo, Allaun, Atkinson, Mendelson, Russell Kerr and himself) went to the United States last week to urge, among other things, that the U.S. Government accept that "a negotiated peace settlement must be entered into based on the 1954 Geneva Agreement, with the ceasefire to be brought about along the lines courageously advocated on a number of occasions by U Thant". Stan Orme added that: "we shall be speaking on your behalf". But he isn't. We have got to make it clear to this part of the Left that we are campaigning for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. And that is why we must take up the arguments of the N.L.F. and the North Vietnamese and avoid the diplomatic confusions of U Thant.

* * * * *

BLACK POWER IN BRITAIN

(Cont'd. from opposite page)

The UCPA is new and young, and essentially grass roots. They say that the only people who can solve the problems of the Black man are Black men themselves. 'For too many years he has let the White man do his thinking for him the upshot is that he has gained many 'friends' and lost his own personality. The only way to retrieve himself is through the course of Black Power'. UCPA members are drawn from all layer of the Black community, and have a programme of action on the domestic front which includes an advice bureau, establishment of nurseries for coloured children and run by coloured people, legal aid, protection and guidance to coloured people, and to undertake activities that will promote the emancipation of coloured people all over the world.

The UCPA does not pretend to know all the answers, or claim that all their policies are correct. The important thing is that they strike a militant note in the Black community, they reject the reformism of the White liberals, they say that Black people must defend their interests with organisations that they control themselves. They have realised this through the experience of anti-racialist organisations that have been dominated by Whites who have decided what is 'best' for coloured people. The UCPA want to change society - to revolutionise the Black community - that is why their manifesto must be welcomed.

MEMORIAL MEETING IN TRIBUTE TO
ISAAC DEUTSCHER

Speakers: Perry Anderson
Lawrence Daly
David Horowitz
Marcel Liebman
Daniel Singer
Chairman: Ralph Miliband.
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 22ND.
7.30 Mahatma Gandhi Hall
41, Fitzroy Sq., W.1.
(near Warren St. tube)

.....
STOKELY CARMICHAEL'S SPEECH TO THE O.L.A.S. CONFERENCE

The complete text of this important speech is reprinted in
the latest issue of WORLD OUTLOOK. For your copy sent 1/9d
post paid to: Pioneer Book Service,
8, Toynbee Street,
London E.1.

.....
A COMMON ASPIRATION: THE OVERTHROW OF IMPERIALISM, UNITES
CUBA WITH AFRICA AND ASIA.

Speech by CHE GUEVARA given at the Afro-Asian conference of
1965.

Available in pamphlet form from the Bertrand Russell Peace
Foundation 1/3 post paid to 49, Rivington St. London E.C.2.

VIETNAM CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER 22ND DEMONSTRATION

Increasing support for the demonstration is coming from many areas both nationally and locally. At a meeting held in Bristol over the weekend, an ad hoc committee of support was formed with activists from the local Labour Party Young Socialists, and other groups. It was decided to hold a demonstration in Bristol on Saturday October 21st, and to follow it up with a coach-load of supporters for the mobilisation in Trafalgar Square on the following day. It is hoped that in view of the TUC resolution on Vietnam, the local Trades Council will give its support for these activities.

A special Vietnam Student Committee has been set into motion by some of the students at the London School of Economics and a bulletin giving information on the mobilisation and the V.S.C. exhibition is already circulating. Other ad hoc committees that are already working are in Harringay, Walthamstow, and Hackney, also at the Islington committee for Peace in Vietnam's next meeting it is hoped that further support will be gained. The next meeting of this committee is on Monday 18th September at 34 Burgh Street at 8 o'clock.

The Ad hoc Committee meets regularly each week at 49, Rivington Street E.C.2 on Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. It is hoped that any supporters that have strategic places to set up posters, for example in their windows facing the road, will come to pick up material at the above address.

V.S.C. EXHIBITION:

The exhibition is now at Aberdare (Glamorgan) where it is being shown by the local Young Socialists. It is being held at the Trades and Labour Hall, 39, Albert Street, Aberdare, and will be on until Saturday 15th September. The Vietnam Student Committee are making arrangements to have the exhibition shown at several London Colleges at the beginning of term. It will be on at Cambridge University from the 9th to the 11th of October.

VIETNAM PROTEST CONCERT

Folk Song - Poetry - Agit. Prop.

JOHN ARDEN, ADRIAN MITCHELL, CARTOON ARCHETYPICAL SLOGAN THEATRE,

FOLK SINGERS, CRITICS GROUP.

Saturday - October 21 - 7.30 p.m.

St. Georges Hall, Great Russell Street, (3 minutes Tottenham Court Road Tube)

All seats 7/6d. Tickets available now from: Vietnam Concert,
49 RIVINGTON STREET, E.C.2.

INDUSTRIAL NOTES from David Robinson.

Roberts Arundel Campaign.

A further one-day token strike is planned by workers in the North-West in support of those in dispute with Roberts Arundel. Representatives from the Stockport Trades Council and the strike committee have discussed the date of the strike with Horace Newbold, secretary of the Lancashire Federation of Trades Councils. Friday October 13 is the most likely date on which the million workers represented by the federation will be called upon to act. The American Embassy is showing signs of growing concern about the dispute. Last week an American industrial attache at the embassy phoned Mr. Newbold for confirmation of the trade union view of the dispute. Mr. Newbold said, "I explained our trade union methods, our way of life, and gave him a few home truths about trade union custom and practice. In particular, I left him in no doubt that the action of this American company has infuriated trade unionists."

Robert Pomeranz, Roberts Arundel's American boss has already been attacked by trade unionists for his refusal to see Ray Gunther until September 30. Last Monday he issued a statement which is bound to create even more anger and solidarity among workers in the North-West. He said: "The Amalgamated Engineering Union is more concerned with organising riots than in discussing a reasonable settlement." If this is the attitude he adopts when he visits this country later this month then it can be fairly predicted that the one-day strike on October 13 will attract far greater support than the 500,000 predicted at present.

Militant Action at Vauxhall's

Vauxhall Motors' 25,000 manual workers are working to rule and have banned all overtime from this morning. Workers in the A.E.U. and the National Union of Vehicle Builders are united in their opposition to the new productivity and pay scheme recently announced by the management without prior negotiations. They have been offered from 7d an hour more for labourers to 10d for top skilled men plus an extra 2d an hour if the men agreed to their profit-sharing being consolidated into the increase. The company also wanted improved productivity on nine points and a new pay grading structure - which they laid down. Wages at Vauxhalls are well below those at other car manufacturing firms in the Midlands and the men say that the rises proposed should be paid now. Any increased productivity should result in further increases later. They find themselves in the all too familiar position of being urged to run ever faster in order to stay in the same position. There is no intention of taking strike action at present but the company has warned that it might find it necessary to close down the three plants at Luton, Ellesmere Port and Dunstable if the men do not return to normal working.

This threat is unlikely to prevent the Vauxhall workers from fighting for rates equal to those of other workers in the motor industry. Jim Watts, N.U.V.B. district secretary, described the management's warning as "a wild threat". He said, "We are ready to talk as soon as the management are ready. If this is their final offer it is unacceptable and this is the reason why negotiations are not continuing."

SELECTIVITY IN HOUSING?

by Henry Montague

The Labour dominated Hammersmith Council was recently in the news when it was suggested by a Conservative Alderman that it was under extreme Left Wing control. Not only did the ghost of Stalin stalk the corridors but there were said to be six Trotskyists in the Council Chamber. The suggestion that there was Left Wing control brought loud and raucous laughter from those militants in Hammersmith who have fought for many years against the power-hungry clique which controls Hammersmith's affairs. Recently a determined attempt was made to smash the opposition and calls were made for expulsion of many leading militants in the local Labour Parties. The Left Wing fought back with equal determination and following a Transport House enquiry presided over by none other than Miss Sara Barker, four of the local Party officers were severely reprimanded. One of the complaints levelled against the accused was that they had opposed the Council's housing and rents policy.

The Hammersmith Council's problems are again in the news. It has been revealed by the local newspaper that three well equipped maisonettes on a Council estate have been unoccupied for periods ranging from two to five months. Two of the maisonettes have four bedrooms, plus all modern conveniences. The rent, inclusive of rates, amounts to £11.4.2. a week. The other, with three bedrooms, is rented at £9.14.6. Not surprisingly, the Council has had difficulty finding applicants from its housing list and has had to offer the tenancies to those not on the waiting list. The maisonettes are at Mylne Close, a small luxury estate on the Thames in the exclusive Upper Mall area. They were erected by the Old Metropolitan Borough Council who apparently felt that it would be better not to mix working class families with those whose wealth allows them the right to occupy this very pleasant area of the Borough.

Hammersmith has at present 4,956 families on the housing waiting list. They must surely appreciate the irony of the situation!

* * * * *

DOUBLE DISASTER AT FIFE from David Robinson.

The Michael Pit, under the Firth of Forth, one of Britain's 50 priority pits, employed 2,070 men at the time of the fire on Saturday morning in which nine miners were killed. After preliminary talks between the NUM and the Coal Board it was estimated that around 700 men will be redeployed in the nearby pits of Seafield and Frances whose developments are being advanced to absorb them. Another 150 men will be found jobs in five pits further afield, with a small number retained at Michael pit itself. But this would still leave well over 1,000 men without jobs. Twelve thousand miners' jobs have been lost in the past six years and before last week's tragedy the unemployment figures had already risen to 4 per cent in the Fife area. Government encouragement to the building of new industry has resulted in the influx of a number of electronic firms. However, a large proportion of their staff is female and so this has had little effect in reducing unemployment among former mine-workers. The Scottish NUM is calling on the Coal Board to retain the 1,100 to 1,200 men at the Michael Pit until it is reopened, no matter how long this takes. The union's vice-president, Michael McGahey, said after an executive meeting, "We want an assurance that the pit will be fully restored."

EFTA SAYS U.K. PRICES ROSE TWICE AS FAST AS WAGES

According to a report of the European Free Trade Association, retail prices in the U.K. rose over twice as much as weekly wages during the second half of last year. But these measures, the report says, did improve Britain's balance of payments position.

Retail prices rose by 1.7 per cent between July 66 and February 67, largely because of tax increases and seasonal factors, while in the same period "weekly wage rates rose by only 0.8 per cent, compared with a rise of 2.5 per cent over the corresponding seven months period a year previously."

The government measures nevertheless had the desired effect. "Mainly as a result of the new measures, the balance of payments position was considerably improved by the fourth quarter of 1966, most of the improvement being due to a large visible trade surplus."

AUSTRALIA'S DEFENSE BUDGET CAUSING TROUBLE

Recent revelations of the maladministration of the increased sums now being spent on military have been made public. In 1962-3, Australia's military expenditure was about £171 m., about £250m. less than the estimate for 1967-8. Over the four intervening years the rate of increase has averaged 22 per cent. The Federal Treasurer said on August 15th: "It is not the present level of defense spending so much as the rate of escalation that concerns us most. Plainly we cannot continue for long to meet anything like the rate of increase of recent years without deep impairment of the economy.....among the countries of the western world only the United States, Britain and France are at present devoting a larger proportion of their resources to defense than we are".

Five years ago, the external costs of defense were well under \$ A100m. a year. This year they could rise above \$ A350m. At this level they would represent 11 per cent or more of Australia's exports. Defense orders for ships, aircraft and other equipment and supplies at June 30th last were costed at more than \$ A600m. The apparent aim of the Treasury is to maintain the ratio for military expenditure of 5 per cent of the gross national product. There is no great confidence that this will be possible. The pressure from the Generals and the Admirals for further substantial increases in Australia's military expenditure is very strong.

One of the particular problems of Australian defense planning has been the difficulty of defining the enemy. Thus the government decided to re-equip the air force with 110 of the Mirage fighters. These aircraft had proved themselves in the Arab-Israeli war. The Australian requirement for these fighter interceptors was undertaken at a time when the great fear was of "an Indonesian attack on Australia". While the Air force front line machinery is thus designed to meet an Indonesian threat that does not exist, the Australian army in Vietnam has to depend on United States Air Force air cover and is starved of helicopters.

Some additional Australian escalation in Vietnam is now popularly regarded as inevitable. Public support for the war is dropping rapidly in Australia as it is in America.

LATEST NEWS OF THE DEBRAY TRIAL

by Russell Stetler (11/9/67)

Supporters of Regis Debray have not diminished their efforts of late, in spite of the long delays effected by the Bolivian authorities. Journalists had filled the oil town of Camiri in August days before the trial of Regis Debray was to begin, only to encounter the Government's delaying tactics. The trial is now set for September 18, and there is every indication that once again the world press will be fully represented. The pressure of world opinion has already forced the Bolivian authorities to concede one point to the defence. Until recently, they had stated categorically that Professor Debray could be defended only by military counsel appointed by his accusers. A report which appeared in the Guardian on September 9 indicates that M. Georges Debray, the father of Regis and a prominent Paris barrister, will be permitted to assist in his defence. His role will be limited to 'advising' the army-appointed lawyer, so that his effectiveness will be circumscribed.

Richard Gott, writing in the Guardian of September 11, suggests the reasons why Bolivia could become 'another Vietnam'. He notes the effectiveness of the guerrillas, who had prepared their operations for more than a year. Since their discovery in March, they have won all the victories against the army, which has lost between 38 and 43 (killed), as compared to between two and five for the guerrillas. The Army's only minor triumph has been to stumble on five dumps of arms and equipment. The Army suffers, among other things, from the physical hardships of the Country's geography. The extremes of high altitude in the Altiplano (from which most of the Indians in the Army are conscripted) and sea-level tropical intensity in the jungles where the guerrillas are hidden explain the shortcomings of the Government forces in the cruel endurance test.

The natural hazards are augmented by the Government's shaky political situation. Mr. Gott writes, 'The Bolivian Army in any case is small -- estimated at about 15,000 -- and much of it is believed to be watching La Paz (where the garrison commander is alleged to be of doubtful loyalty to the regime) and perhaps the majority is busy looking after -- and occasionally shooting -- the rebellious tin-miners on the Altiplano. Not many soldiers are left for dealing with the guerrillas'.

Mr. Gott perceptively goes on to analyse two critical factors likely to emerge soon as the most significant aspects of the overall situation. One is the role of the United States. It is clear, on the one hand, that the U.S. hopes to be able to rely on the local forces and to avoid direct intervention. Its role is at present limited to anti-guerrilla training. On the other hand, the political situation is likely to degenerate so rapidly as to force a real decision by the U.S. State Department in the near future. The second point which Mr. Gott insightfully recognises is the distinction between the guerrillas' ability to influence Bolivian politics and their prospects of catalysing the continental revolution. That they are able to succeed in the first task is beyond doubt. But they accept the second, more difficult task as the more fundamental. It should not be forgotten that this struggle is not merely one option among many possibilities. To affect Bolivian politics in an enduring way, a revolutionary must have a wider view.

Due to confusion over holiday arrangements this article was received too late for last week's issue. However, we feel that the points it makes are so important that they should be published as widely as possible - Editor.

By the time this issue of "THE WEEK" reaches its readers, the delegates to the T.U.C. at Brighton will have recorded their votes on the vital resolution from USDAW criticising the Government for "the creation of a pool of unemployed workers". It is possible that this resolution will have been defeated. It is also possible that it would have been carried but for the high-handed action of Lord Carron (he used to be plain Bill Carron in the days before the Pope and the Establishment decided to reward him for his services to capitalism).

In the latter event, Harold Wilson will have little real cause for satisfaction. On paper his government will have received a vote of confidence but Lord Carron revealed his own doubt about the workers' faith in the present leadership of the Labour Party when he refused to allow the A.E.U. delegation to freely decide how to vote on this resolution.

His Lordship and his fellow right-wing leaders in the Labour Movement like to strut the stage and pose as the champions of democracy. How often in the past have they condemned the communists who take their orders from the Central Committee (who, in turn, take their orders from Moscow - or Peking)! Some Unions even bar from office good trade unionists who carry a Communist Party card on the grounds that they are not free agents.

Now Carron shows us what a shallow thing his devotion to democracy is. As his swan song, before he gives up the presidency of the A.E.U. he cynically proclaims "Carron's law". "I support the Government and so will my union", he arrogantly asserts. In the Fascist era, all over Italy one could see the words "The Duce is always right". Carron dons Mussolini's discredited mantle and tries to impose his one-man dictatorship on the A.E.U.

By manipulating the Union's constitution he may get away with it, but the bloc vote which he cast on Wednesday will not represent the views of 1,200,000 members of the A.E.U. One can be sure that a majority of them do not support a policy which has created half-a-million unemployed and depressed the living standards of millions more. The "Sunday Times" talks of "Lord Carron's (unshakeable) loyalty." Loyalty to what? To the individuals elevated to take power through the Parliamentary Labour Party? Or to the principles on which the Labour Movement was founded?

These are the questions which not only the delegates from the A.E.U. but all the delegates assembled at Brighton must ask themselves. "The dilemma of this congress is that we all know the Labour Government should be attacked. But how far can the trade unions go without helping to put the Tories back in power?", Lewis Wright of the Weavers is quoted as saying. If trade unionists remember how and why their organisations came into being and why the trade unions founded and built the Labour Party there would be no difficulty in resolving this dilemma.

The Labour Party was created because the organised workers wanted a political party which would pursue policies diametrically opposed to those pursued by the traditional ruling parties. They wanted a party which would put an end

to capitalism and all it stood for; a party which would once and for all put finish to the recurrent economic crisis with its accompanying unemployment and depressed living standards. They wanted a party which would build a new society based on social justice and not the exploitation of man by man. That is why Clause IV was written into the Constitution of the Labour Party and why organised Labour refused to allow Hugh Gaitskell to tamper with this clause.

By fighting for a policy which will safeguard the interests of the working class and compelling the Labour Government to turn to socialist solutions to the problems of Britain the delegates at Brighton will bring no solace to the Tories. Indeed, they will ensure that never again will this country have to endure Tory rule. It is Harold Wilson, Lord Carron and those like them who are working so hard to preserve capitalism who are endangering the Labour Government. After all, if we must have capitalism why not have an avowedly capitalist party to run it?

Lord Carron's own union can set a lead. They can make sure that His Lordship is replaced in the leadership of the A.E.U. by a president who will respect the will of his members. A vote for Scanlon now becomes a vote against "Carron's Law".

NALSO CHAIRMAN CALLS ON GERMAN STUDENTS TO MOBILISE FOR OCT 21st/22nd

The following is an address delivered to the conference of the Socialist Students of Germany (SDS) by Bernard Reaney, Chairman of National Association of Labour Students, in Frankfurt last week:

Comrades, I bring to your conference the solidarity of the National Association of Labour Student Organisations, in the struggle you are advancing in support of the heroic fight of the Vietnamese people against imperialist aggression.

It is very apt that the banner you should raise over your conference is that of the NLF. The example shown by these fighters is an inspiration to students all over the world to take up the struggle in defense of the Vietnamese revolution, and also against the ruling class in their own countries, who support this aggression either by the active commitment of troops or through the war alliances of imperialism. On the International scale this conflict provides a link between progressive forces in the student movement throughout Europe and also in the US.

A great manifestation of international solidarity against the war, has been initiated by the 'Student Mobilisation Committee', and the 'National Mobilisation Committee' in the US under the slogan, 'Bring the Boys Back Home NOW!'

This manifestation is taking place on the weekend of the 21st/22nd of October, when the US mobilisation will bring together in Washington more than one million people to demonstrate against the war.

They are calling for demonstrations to be organised throughout Europe in solidarity with their activities at that time. In Britain we in NALSO are working in the 'Vietnam ad hoc Committee for Oct. 21st/22nd' to help mobilise British students against the American war and the complicity of the British government. Our slogan is 'US get out of Vietnam NOW!'

Comrades; may I make the very strongest appeal, not only from my own organisation, but in the name of the fighters in Vietnam and the fighters of oppression throughout the world, to take action on October 21/22nd, to provide a positive link between militant students everywhere, particularly those in the US who work in difficult and dangerous conditions, and to demonstrate our determination to defend the Vietnamese revolution. Thank you.

PROTEST OVER COUNCIL RENT INCREASES

The following is the abridged text of an open letter sent out by the Brent Federation of Council Tenants Association to the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the London Borough of Brent. Further copies and information can be obtained from 44 Wells Court, Cambridge Avenue, N.W.6.

"News is coming in all the time of proposed increases in council house rents. This association trusts that no such proposal will emanate from the Brent Council in the immediate future. We are asked to state that any such demand would be strongly opposed by this organisation.

Interest charges now annually amount to over £2m., over 80% of the income from rents, and have doubled since 1959. Interest rates have steadily risen, 2½% in 1946, 3¾% in 1954, 5% in 1955, and 7¼% in 1966. If the trend continues, the councils will eventually have to cease all council house building to prevent the debt and interest charges rising to such a height that the scale of rents will be such that no one will be able to afford them. The solution is for the Government to face the problem seriously and firmly oppose those financial interests that profit from the present system. At present interest rates a tenant paying £4.4.6d. a week rent is paying £3. 2. 6d. to the money-lender.

In the past, Rent rises have usually been offset by a rise in wages. In the future this is less likely to happen; rate of rent increases is being pushed up while wages are being frozen.

We further view the abnoxious rent rebate scheme with much misgiving. No-one is opposing benefits to the less fortunate members of the community, but they are opposed to a council simply declaring that those tenants earning above an arbitrarily arrived at income should support those below it. "This way the vast majority of council house tenants are paying twice for social security: once when the employer takes their social security payments out of their pay each week, and secondly when the wife pays the rent."

Who says a fair rent is one sixth of your income? Does this also apply to our business-men councillors for their rates? How do we know that the amount they say they will pay out in rebates is an accurate assessment and not just a bluff to sell a means test as social justice.

Ought not 'Old Peoples Housing' and Hostels be the responsibility of the Government and not be a charge on the housing accounts. Perhaps tenants would benefit from a closer investigation into the nature of a 'deficit' that is used as an excuse for rent increases.

These are matters exercising the minds of our members and which we would like to have the councils views.

Yours faithfully,

W. Deacon
Chairman.

P. Braxton
Secretary."