

The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

vol 8 No 22 November 30th 1967

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**BOLIVIA:
SCHOENMAN
INTERVIEW**

**CUT ARMS
- NOT WAGES**

71 Onslow Gdns., London N.10. Subscription: £2 per annum & pro rata

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CUT ARMS - NOT WAGES!

Labour M.P.s are beginning to realise that they have "been had". When the Government announced its devaluation measures they loyally supported it. The left-wing M.P.s even went to the extent of withdrawing their motion for the Parliamentary Labour Party which condemned the Government for deliberately creating unemployment. One of the sops the Government offered in exchange was an alleged cut in defence expenditure of £100 million. Now it turns out that this was just a fraud. Elsewhere in this issue there is an article analysing just how big a twist the so-called defence cuts are but it needs noting that this question involves more than just the £100 million. This particular piece of dishonesty exposes the whole orientation of the Government and its order of priorities. The British workers have to make sacrifices and accept cuts in their standards so that so-called defence commitments can be kept. This one issue is sufficient to demonstrate how wrong the Government is. There is no excuse for the left wing of the Labour Party not to fight the devaluation measures, they can use the argument "Cut arms - not wages!" to mobilise opposition in the party and unions against the Government.

ONLY THREE AGAINST

Last week's vote by the T.U.C. to support the Government in its "devaluation without wage increases" policy was a disgrace. Only three people - Bill Jones, Robert Briginshaw and Danny McGarvey - voted against. Frank Cousins and others who have come out against the wage freeze voted - "reluctantly" - for a cut in real wages. The same people will denounce, in no uncertain terms, unofficial action by their members. However, if their leaders cease to serve the aim of defending living standards, rank and file members of the unions have to find ways of advancing their interests. It is necessary for them to form committees to organise the struggle. The Week has always opposed those who have sought to go outside the framework of existing workers' organisations. But in the present situation it is vitally necessary that foci be created to link up struggles and co-ordinate the fight against the Government's wage cutting policies. These committees should be based upon the united front principle, rest on local units of the unions where the left is strong, seek to draw in as many of the left union leaders as possible and be based upon a programme of political and industrial struggle.

A prototype of future action is the campaign which is developing in support of the December 12th lobby of Parliament. The next time action of this kind is organised local ad hoc committees must be formed all over the country to mobilise support. This is the best counter to possible demoralisation caused by the failure of the official left trade union leaders to fight Wilson. It is also the best way to reverse the trend and win sections of the left trade union leaders back for struggle.

INDUSTRIAL NOTES

from Claude Anderson

TEACHERS IN ACTION AT DURHAM

At several schools in Easington and Wingate (Durham) about 400 teachers were prevented by the authorities from returning into the schools on Tuesday. The reason for the ban was that the teachers had refused to supervise the school meals. The result of the authorities' action was that 14,500 children were sent home. The borough Education committee in Newport (Monmouth), also decided to suspend teachers without pay if they refuse to resume supervising school meals. The Education committee in Barnsley is also taking similar action against the teachers, and has recommended a town council meeting to give members of the Teachers union an ultimatum of five days to comply with their stipulations in connection with school meals, or face termination of contracts.

400 AT ROBERTS ARUNDEL ANNIVERSARY PICKET

Nearly four hundred pickets stood outside the Roberts Arundel factory at Stockport on Tuesday, to celebrate the first anniversary of the strike. Eighty policemen guarded the factory throughout the demonstration. Most of the pickets were workers and students, but several Roberts Arundel employees were there. Union officials said that they believed that employees of the firm had been given permission to please themselves about when they report for work. One man drove his car right through the demonstration and took with him on the bonnet a picket who was unable to get out of the way in time; other than that incident there were no further provocations. The demonstration ended with a meeting at which Mr John Tocker, Stockport district secretary of the AEU, called for legislation to ensure that foreign employers would fit in with the national industrial agreements for the recognition of trade unions and collective bargaining. The chairman of Roberts Arundel, R.Pomeranz, wrote a letter to The Guardian in which he severely criticised The Guardian's Editorial on the affair. Referring to The Guardian's criticism of his company's refusal to recognise trade unions, Mr Pomeranz said "implication that American methods or American ownership are the guilty ones clearly is falling into a communist propaganda trap".

BUSMEN IN STRIKE

Three hundred busmen in Bury (Lancashire) now in the fifth week of their overtime ban, decided on Monday to strike in reply to a Bury transport committee decision to stop bonus payments. Mr Harry Joyce regional passenger trade group organiser said: "the committee can only withhold payments if there is unofficial action, and our action is not unofficial."

GUNTER 'WAITS FOR GUIDANCE' TO DEAL WITH WILDCAT STRIKES

Ray Gunter said on Tuesday that he does not intend to deal with unofficial strikes before receiving the report of the Royal commission on Trade Unions -- In a recent speech he said that he was under daily pressure to introduce legislation to deal with "indiscipline of unofficial strikes".

Bank Union to Extend End-Year Strike - by an
Industrial Correspondent.

The National Union of Bank Employees has decided that the third phase of its strike campaign, which is planned to include a large part of London and possibly some City banks during the Christmas period, will be extended to three days. The union said that at least four of the banks affected were involved in strike-breaking activities during the two-day action in Wales on Friday and Saturday which had encouraged the decision.

This will affect parts of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire and the West Country, as well as London, and although the union has not announced the dates it is expected to take place on December 29 and 30 and January 1, with the obvious aim of disrupting end-of-year accounting at the banks. Some 6,000 members at about 600 branches may well be involved. The NUBE has decided to include Manchester in the third rather than the second phase and it expects that anger over the blacklegging will mean more Manchester staff taking action than envisaged two or three weeks ago.

Meanwhile the second phase of the union's campaign to win national recognition and negotiating rights from the clearing banks will take place on December 8 and 9 with strikes at Doncaster, Bolton, Blackpool and Nottingham. It will involve slightly fewer staff than the 2,800 at 300 Welsh branches who, says the union, stopped work on Friday and Saturday. Mr. Alfred Brooks, general secretary, said after yesterday's meeting of the executive that the anger and indignation of bank staffs had been aroused during this "extremely successful action" because some banks had drafted in staff from other parts of the country. He said that the banks particularly guilty of this were Lloyds, Midland, National Provincial and Westminster.

The union is pursuing its complaint with Mr. Ray Gunter, Minister of Labour, and the TUC and envisages that other individual unions, as big customers of the banks, could bring pressure to bear to try to prevent this happening again. Mr. Brooks gave notice that if this action was repeated members would be instructed to refuse to handle transactions started by "blackleg labour." National Provincial and Midland denied that they had tried to break the strike, but Lloyds admitted they had used inspectors to fill the gaps at some branches as they had felt an obligation to their customers. They said they did not regard this as strike-breaking! No comment was available from the Westminster Bank.

A Banking Information Service spokesman admitted on Sunday night that 84 Welsh branches had been closed by the strike on Friday and a similar number were affected on Saturday.

ATTENTION, ATTENTION, ATTENTION.....

Volunteers welcomed warmly on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for typing, collating, stapling, mailing of THE WEEK. Come and join in the lively discussion at 8 Toynbee St. E.1 (near Liverpool St. tube station) any time after 6p.m.

DOUBLE THINK ON DEFENCE CUTS - George Cunvin

One of the "measures" announced by Mr. Callaghan when he outlined the Government's plans to deal with the new situation created by devaluation was a £100 million cut in defence expenditure. This was the part of the devaluation proposals which appealed most to the Parliamentary Left even though it did not go as far as they would have liked.

Last Monday, Defence Secretary Healey shouldered the task of clarifying the Chancellor's statement of last week. It was almost a classic example of how issues can be befogged by a mass of figures. Many M.P.s must have been completely puzzled when Mr. Healey sat down, as to what the Defence Cuts really will amount to. But two things emerged very clearly. Firstly, there are to be no immediate cuts in defence expenditure. The proposals refer to the 1968/69 estimates. Secondly, though Mr. Callaghan gave the impression that the £100 million cut was one of the measures to relieve the pressure on sterling and an economy to help make devaluation more palatable, it now transpires that as a direct result of devaluation, which increases automatically the price of imports, the actual savings will be only £65 million. That is, of course, if we accept Mr. Healey's figures at their face value.

To say the least of it, some of the defence cuts seem a little odd. There will, for instance, be a saving on not repairing the fire damage to the aircraft carrier "Victorious". Also, £10 million will be "saved" through the unexpected delays in the development of military equipment. M.P.s rightly wanted to know how this could be called a saving.

The "Times" Defence Correspondent, last Saturday, also did some arithmetic on the defence savings, based on a series of written answers given by Mr. Healey last week. He arrives at the startlingly different figure of £20 million as the maximum saving in defence expenditure - a mere fleabite.

As a result of devaluation, Britain will have to pay £145 million more in sterling for American aircraft already on order. Devaluation will also put about £20 million on the Polaris programme during the next two years. Running costs of all this purchased equipment will also increase because of the need to buy spares from the United States. Britain also has to pay for the use of Polaris missile facilities off Cape Kennedy. Mr. Healey indignantly repudiated a suggestion from Frank Allaun that the Polaris programme should be scrapped. No part of Britain's defence policy puts her so much in pawn to the Americans as does the Polaris programme. Surely, even Mr. Healey will not dispute that this dependence is the direct cause of the government's slavish support of U.S. imperialism in foreign affairs. The scrapping of Polaris would not only save millions of precious sterling but will also prepare the ground for a socialist break-through in foreign policy.

The "Times" correspondent points out that for a net reduction of £100 million in next year's defence budget, economies to the amount of £160 million should have been made. On top of that, many of the so-called savings are spurious. £6 million, according to Mr. Healey, would be saved next year by cancelling the order for American Chinook helicopters, and more in the following year. But last week Mr. Healey admitted that this saving may not be permanent and that it was not inconceivable that the order would be made good.

Furthermore, as the "Times" points out, a large part of the £100 million package is no saving in the absolute sense, since it is simply achieved by keeping certain items out of next year's budget, in the knowledge that they will come back into later budgets.

This parliamentary double-talk should deceive no one. The Left must press for meaningful cuts in defence expenditure and above all be on their guard lest these spurious defence cuts are used as justification for "balancing" inroads into the social services.

TRADE UNION MOBILISATION CONFERENCE from a special correspondent

There will be a conference next February to co-ordinate action for more militant policies by trade unions. The Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions has announced details of a conference of trade unionists to mobilise support for action to implement the policies adopted by the Brighton Trades Union Conference. It will be in Seymour Hall, London W.1., on February 17th, next year. The conference will be open only to bona fide delegates from shop stewards' committees and trade union organisations.

Applications for credentials should be sent to Trade Union Conference, 1, Teynaton Terrace, London N. 17. A fee of 2/6 per delegates will be payable.

Support from Liverpool, Oxford and London for December 12th lobby

Many more organisations have decided to support the December 12th lobby of Parliament, organised by the Tyneside and Blyth Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. They include several TGWU branches in the Oxford area, centred mainly on the motor car industry. A coach-load of delegates is expected from the Lucas/CAV factory in Liverpool. Among trade union branches in London to express support are the South-West London and the South-East London branches of U.S.D.A.W. Several trade union liaison committees have also organised coaches for delegates, including Merseyside and Tyneside.

V I E T N A M A N D T H E W A G E F R E E Z E M E E T I N G

A special meeting has been organised by the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign to co-incide with the December 12th lobby of Parliament. It will be at

C E N T R A L H A L L W E S T M I N S T E R

There will be a N E W F I L M O N V I E T N A M and

a B O O K S T A L L having a wide choice of pamphlets and books on every aspect connected with the Vietnam war.

The meeting will last from 2 . 3 0 to 5 . 3 0 p.m.

Two members of the National Council of the V.S.C. will be speaking: Pat Jordan and John Palmer and a number of trade unionists. More details in next week's issue of The Week. Please make this meeting widely known to trade unionists.

VIETNAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN from David Robinson.

Already research into British complicity in the Vietnam war is showing that this country's involvement is far greater than is generally realised, even by those of us who are involved in the anti-war movement. Our team at the L.S.E. has uncovered the connections of more than 30 British firms with work on equipment used by Australia, New Zealand and the United States in Vietnam. The Sunday Telegraph published a full-page article on November 26 giving details of work on chemical and biological warfare in both the U.S. and in Britain. Information on new British developments are sent immediately to the U.S. under an exchange agreement. Scientists at British universities are becoming very worried that the trend towards massive defence research projects seen in many American universities may have started in this country. We have contacted a number of those scientists most concerned over this development and hope that they will work together with ourselves, the Stop-It Committee and the team at L.S.E. to prepare a really comprehensive documentation of British involvement in the war of genocide being waged by the Americans and their allies in Vietnam.

The American anti-war movement has planned an international day of support for draft resisters on Monday, December 4th. In London the Stop-It Committee will be holding a "happening" during the afternoon and a Public Meeting to launch a petition supporting draft resisters at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. at 8 p.m.

A weekly WORK PARTY will be held by V.S.C. every Thursday evening from whatever time you finish work until 10.30pm. Now that we are having to rely entirely on voluntary workers, at the very time when we are expanding our activity, it is absolutely essential that as many supporters as possible turn up on these Thursday working sprees. Leaflets and tickets for our concert (advertised below) will be available and this is a good opportunity for informal discussion about our work. We are STILL at 49, Rivington St., E.C.2., and are still looking for a new office (or an old one for that matter). As soon as we have found independent office accommodation we will announce it in The Week.

V I E T N A M V I C T O R Y C O N C E R T

Celebrate the 7th. anniversary of the National Liberation front
with:

JOHN ARDEN CHRISTOPHER LOGUE ADRIAN MITCHELL

JACOV LIND GINGER JOHNSON & HIS AFRICAN MESSENGERS

CARTOON ARCHETYPICAL SLOGAN THEATRE FOLK SINGERS (ETC.)

at:

THE ROUND HOUSE - CHALK FARM - Friday, December 22 - 7.30p.m. - ???a.m.

Tickets and leaflets NOW from: V.S.C., 49, Rivington St., LONDON, E.C.2.
(tickets 10/- each)

BRISTOL LABOUR PARTY REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR DOCKS NATIONALISATION

- by a Bristol correspondent.

The Bristol Borough Labour Party Annual Policy Conference meeting on 24th. November passed by a large majority, with only five against, a resolution reaffirming support for full nationalisation of the port industry and called for a statement to the effect to be included in the 1968 Municipal Election manifesto.

Leading spokesman of the Labour Group were strongly opposed to Bristol being included in the nationalisation plans arguing instead for continuation of the existing municipal ownership. It was obvious from the voting figures that they received practically no support from delegates. It will be interesting in the light of this whether leading Aldermen in the group will persist in their businessmen's approach to docks nationalisation.

"NO ONE MENTIONS GESTAPO ANY MORE" - from Robin Blackburn

The following article appeared in a recent issue of the "Daily Mirror"

"Sergeant Theophilus Richards is one of an estimated 15,000 men in Britain's growing private army of security guards.

"Their assignments range from patrolling places like Tussaud's to guarding stables, carrying cash, filling wage packets and moving documents, valuables and computer tapes. There are sixty firms in all, but the big three are Securicor, Security Express and Factoryguards. SECURICOR has 6,400 guards, a fleet of 1,361 vehicles and 350 guard dogs carrying out more than twenty protection services. SECURITY EXPRESS has 900 uniformed guards and 350 vehicles. They carry £60,000,000 a day and eight of its biggest customers are clearing banks. FACTORYGUARDS, with 1,250 men have some impressive statistics to show the value of security patrols. In 1966 their men found 933 safes and strongrooms left open. They reported another 29,614 faulty locks, doors, windows and fences. Guards switched off 53,806 lights and 305 fires.

"Applicants for guard jobs are given a careful screening into their past 20 years. The actual acceptance rate is only 5 per cent. With overtime, a guard earns £19 - £24 a week.

"Guards... have to rely on helmets and goggles for protection and a truncheon or a pickshaft for defence. "No reputable security firm wants its men to carry guns," said John Brill, a spokesman for Security Express. "If we have pistols, the crooks will have a machine gun. If we have machine guns, chummy will come at us with a howitzer. We are fighting 2 main types of crime these days. There is the quick bash on the head and your payroll is pinched. Or there is the more subtle, but extremely damaging menace of industrial espionage. We have no more rights than the ordinary citizen to face this. The police give us no special privileges but we work closely with them. In the early days, people used to see our guards and complain that they looked like Gestapo. We don't get any cracks like that any more. You see, everyone has realised that we have to keep one step ahead of the modern criminal." "

An Innocent Among the Speculators by C. van Gelderen

In the course of an interview on I.T.V.'s "This Week" on Thursday, November 23, Prime Minister Harold Wilson made this extraordinary confession;

"Of course every government makes mistakes. We have made a number.... The biggest mistake, I would feel is that I, at any rate we, underrated, if you like, the power of speculators at home and abroad, even when our balance of payments was improving as it was last year, to put the pound in jeopardy and take short-term measures that were injurious to the country.

"Yes, I think that was our biggest mistake. But we have now decided to get right to the root cause of the problem that the pound can be speculated out of existence."

That anyone who, like Mr. Wilson for some strange reason does, consider himself a socialist, should not be aware of the activities and the power of international finance speculators, is almost incredible. But if Mr. Wilson had any doubts about this he could always look up one or two of his own speeches. He need not even bother to go to the original sources for some of his previous oratorical gems have been assembled for us by Tariq Ali in "The Thoughts of Chairman Harold" (The Gnome Press - 3/6). The following quotation from "Hansard", 3rd August 1961, shows that Mr. Wilson was not always so naively unaware of the activities of the international banking fraternity.

"I hope that the Prime Minister will not think me too hag-ridden by references to 1931 if I conjure up the possibility of a situation in which perhaps, our exports do not increase as much as it is hoped and we go to Europe in a weak condition, needing economic assistance, and in which the central bankers of Europe tell us that we must change our financial, economic and perhaps social policies before they will give the assistance. The bankers of 1961 might become a central bankers ramp. Now I do not think that this is entirely imaginary. It is a possibility just as much under a Conservative government as under a Labour government and I hope that the government are taking it seriously."

On another occasion, Mr. Wilson dealing with Selwyn Lloyd's credit squeeze budget said, (Hansard, October 28 1955)

".....he has to impress the international monetary speculators with confidence that there is not a crisis likely to affect sterling..... With low reserves and the danger of a crisis of confidence, the right hon. gentleman has to go to extraordinary lengths to impress the foreign speculators.

".....The foreign market is now dictating the Chancellor's economic and social policy on the home front; and every time he comes along and carves off another hunk of flesh from the Welfare State and throws it to the wolves to buy time for a few months.....But it does not solve the basic problem."

The Wilson of those days had some idea, not only of the problems but also of the solution. In 'Tribune' (November 13, 1953) he said:-

".....however important finance may be, manipulation of the financial system can never be a substitute for socialist policies in trade and industry, nor the use of taxation and monetary policy a substitute for public ownership of the key sectors of industry."

Right you are Mr. Wilson! As your financial manipulations have failed how about trying the socialist solutions now. There is no other way out of the crisis!

***** INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY & WORKERS' CONTROL CONFERENCE*****

sponsored by the Ruislip Co-operative party

at the CAMBESH PAVILLION, FIELD END ROAD EASTCOTE

SATURDAY -- DECEMBER 9th -- 10.00 am. to 6.00 pm.

Speakers: ERIC HUFFER M.P.
 SYD BIDWELL M.P.
 REG TAYLOR, Secretary, Ruislip CLP.
 PAT JORDAN, The Week

Delegate fee: 2/- (including tea)

Supported by CLPs , TU branches etc.

-- ALL LABOUR MOVEMENT GROUPS WELCOME

WORLD OUTLOOK

World Outlook is an international news service and analysis of particular interest to all those who are active in the working class movement. It has correspondents on all continents and its coverage of events and developments especially in the third world, are unsurpassed by any left-wing journal in Britain. World Outlook began in Paris in 1963 as a mimeographed news service designed primarily for Labour and Socialist publications in many countries. Shortly, subscriptions began to come in from individuals all over the world. Evidently it was meeting a widely felt need.

In 1966 World Outlook was transferred to New York and it soon expanded into the photo-offset process. Circulation climbed steadily, but was limited in Britain to a small audience because of the cost and the fact that it arrived by sea-mail three weeks after the publication date. However it is now being brought to Britain by air delivery and is much less expensive. Subscribers will receive it on the day after publication date.

Material originally provided by World Outlook is used by many publications in various countries. This is due not only to the editorial line which is Marxist, but to its emphasis on accuracy of reporting and to the fact that it publishes material with which it does not necessarily agree, but which it considers to be of interest to socialists.

A subscription to World Outlook can be obtained at the following rates:-
 £1 for 3 months (13 issues) or £2 for 6 months (26 issues).-- U.K. rates only.
 from: PIONEER BOOK SERVICE, 8, TOYBEE ST., N.1.

RALPH SCHOENMAN ON BOLIVIA - Excerpts from an interview.

These are taken from the text of Ralph Schoenman's interview with The Militant in New York on November 3rd. . . Having explained the circumstances of his first arrest along with Tariq Ali and other members of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation Commission, Schoenman continued :

"We were picked up again the next day and this harassment carried on for some time, a day or two, until finally, owing to the credential of Ovan-do, the army officers accepted our presence, although reluctantly. I have to say that their instincts were correct. . . We then got to Lagunillas which is the operational command of the Fourth Division from which they were launching their antiguerrilla actions in Nancahuazu. We had numerous talks with the army officers involved and were present when some of the equipment captured from deposits was brought in, including documents.

". . . I was in touch with Regis. I was able to see him on a number of occasions alone, which was not easy to contrive. . . We had very long, thorough exchanges and I have a number of letters and documents of Regis' which he wanted to get out of the country. Then we began to bribe some army officers and acquired important information relative to the fate of Regis and the fate of certain material witnesses. What became clear was that the Bolivian army doesn't take prisoners unless those prisoners cooperate . . . those who do not are dispatched. . . I can say definitely that Regis, apart from having been tortured systematically, his nails broken, beaten into a coma -- he needed five blood transfusions -- Regis was also taken into a helicopter and the effort was made to throw him out, but he was able to resist that.

". . . The guerrilla seemed to be comparatively cut off from the traditional left formations. One consequence of this was that in the cities and in the mines there was an absence of struggle which related to what the guerrilla was doing. In the cities very little is known of the Liberation Army. I think that the guerillas made a number of mistakes. Partly they were mistaken in the elements that were permitted to incorporate themselves into the guerilla: lumpen proletariat in some part, people untested and who proved totally incapable of sustaining the trials of a protracted guerilla struggle. Certainly incapable of standing up to the treatment the Bolivian army metes out to anybody in its control. . . . The mines are the places where the most experienced and the most politically advanced elements of the workers and peasants are to be found. And I think that the guerrilla must take this in to account in his strategy of struggle. . I think the role of the guerrilla in Bolivia is to harass the army, to disperse it and to get it off the miners' backs. There isn't any doubt that the setbacks that have been suffered are very severe. And they demand reassessment largely in the realm of tactics. . No reassessment can go outside the necessity for armed struggle. When Che Guevara worked his perspective out, he had an expectation of at least a decade of struggle in Bolivia. The struggle in Bolivia in this phase is no more than eleven or twelve months old. I'm sure it's going to unfold in the next decade in a form not very different to that expected by Che in the large. In tactical terms there may be differences but I think Che's estimate is the correct one!"

GREETINGS TO ALL DELEGATES TO THE THIRTIETH CONGRESS OF THE C.P.G.B.

The Week sends greetings to all delegates to the 30th Congress of the C.P.G.B. It wishes them success in their deliberations and hopes that the discussions at the Congress will assist in the difficult tasks of building a mass socialist party and defeating the anti-working class offensive of the Wilson Cabinet.

The Week, an organ of left wing members of the Labour Party, has been struggling against right-wing policies in the Labour Party and trade unions ever since it was established some four years ago. Several of its supporters have been disciplined by Transport House, and many more have been driven from office because of their views. The Week has always sought to defeat all bans and proscriptions within the Labour Movement and fully supports the Communist Party's struggle for full democratic rights. The Week always seeks to operate on the basis of a united front with all those on the left who want to fight right wing policies. It has played a leading part in supporting many industrial struggles, in assisting the workers' control campaign, in fighting for democracy within the Labour Party, and bringing into existence the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. In all these efforts it has fought shoulder to shoulder with members of the Communist Party.

In greeting delegates to the 30th Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, The Week wishes to state its views on what it considers to be among the most important questions facing marxists inside and outside of the C.P.G.B.: the building of a workers' united front in Britain; and supporting the Cuban revolutionary line in international affairs.

BUILDING A WORKERS' UNITED FRONT IN BRITAIN

Never was it more necessary to fight for unity of the working class in Britain: devaluation of the pound, with its deliberate aim of cutting the standards of the British people, is the latest of a whole series of measures taken by the Wilson Government to solve the problems of British capitalism at the expense of the working class. On the other hand, most trade union leaders, the overwhelming majority of Labour Party officials and most Labour M.P.s have failed to put up any kind of fight against the Government.

Strikers at the Barbican, on the docks, in the pits and factories have not only had to fight their employers but the Government, too, backed by trade union officials. On every major foreign policy issue (notably Vietnam) the Labour Government has carried out policies indistinguishable from those of the Tories. Only a fool or a knave would say that there is any perspective of taking a single step along the road to socialism under the present Government. On the contrary, the most likely outcome of the present Government's policies is that at the next election the Tories will win an overwhelming majority and will then set about making vicious attacks on the unions, largely using laws which the Labour Government has introduced.

But unity of the working class must be based upon a principled programme of struggle. Lenin said all his life that unity for unity's sake was no good. This applies more than ever in Britain. The old traditional left has almost completely abandoned opposing the right wing in the Labour Party. The fact that most left M.P.s, most supporters of Tribune and left leaders of the unions, like Cousins, have all decided to support the Government in its policy of devaluation (without wage increases to compensate for rising prices) is a disaster. It shows that there is no sharp dividing line between them and fully-fledged supporters of Wilson. A workers' united front in Britain is meaningless unless its main plank is to fight the present Government and to work to replace the present leadership of the Labour Party and trade unions with people committed to socialist policies.

continued over/

Naturally, this is what members of the Communist Party want. But this means unity not with people who have failed to fight the Government ^{but} on a fighting programme. Whilst we should seek to bring into the united front as many of the traditional left as possible, we cannot trim the programme of the united front so as not to frighten off these people. The Week is dedicated to building a united front, with the necessary committees to organise the struggle, around the following programme:-----

- (1) Immediate abolition of the wage freeze and anti-trade union legislation;
- (2) Re-iteration of the principle of full freedom of negotiations by unions;
- (3) A sliding scale of wages to compensate for increases in the cost of living;
- (4) Abolition of poverty through increased welfare payments;
- (5) Huge cuts in military expenditure;
- (6) Nationalisation of the commanding heights of industry under workers' control;
- (7) A workers' plan for the development of the British economy, including the solving of the balance of payments problem by more east/west trade and long term credits and trade agreements with under-developed countries;
- (8) Opening the books of all employers, and workers councils in all places of work to control hiring and firing, welfare allocations, etc.,
- (9) A socialist foreign policy, with Labour on the side of the oppressed instead of being a partner in their suppression; and
- (10) A call for an all-European conference of labour to meet the threat to workers conditions posed by the Common Market and the greater unity of European capitalism.

The Week asks all members of the Communist Party to work with it in struggling around such a programme (naturally we would be pleased to hear of any suggested changes) through committees to organise the fight (e.g., trade union defence committees, strike solidarity committees and national liberation solidarity ones)

SUPPORT THE REVOLUTIONARY LINE OF THE CUBAN COMMUNISTS

The fact that the world communist movement is split in the face of world reaction is the single biggest factor holding back the struggle for national liberation and social advance. The relationship of forces is in favour of the advance of national liberation and socialism. The defeats suffered by progressive forces in the last few years (Indonesia, Ghana, the Congo, Middle East, etc.) have all stemmed from disunity. The Week supports neither the Soviet Union nor China in this situation. It considers that the leaderships of both countries have subordinated the interests of world revolution to those of their own state interests (as they see them). The Soviet Union's emphasis on peaceful co-existence with U.S. imperialism, and China's refusal, for factional reasons, to join a united front in defence of Vietnam are equally reprehensible. However, one country puts a line of internationalism: Cuba.

Cuba is a mere ninety miles from the United States, it has an American base on its soil, it is constantly harried by the C.I.A. and American-financed enigmas, it is threatened with invasion by the American stooge organisation, O.A.S., and it has been blockaded for over six years. Despite all this, it does not flinch in the face of American threats. The line of the Cubans, summed up in Guevara's famous message to the anti-imperialist tri-continental conference, is that to help the world-wide struggle against American imperialism "we should create one, two, three, or more Vietnams." This is not empty talk, as Guevara showed by giving up his own life. If the international communist movement were to adopt the revolutionary line of the Cubans, the counter-revolutionary offensive of American imperialism would be defeated. The Cuban experience is living proof that the best way to fight for peace and to advance revolution is to adopt a firm line towards imperialism. All over the world, the youth support the line of the Cubans, on the great October 22nd demonstration in London, thousands of young people chanted pro-Cuban slogans, and badges and portraits of Guevara were everywhere. The Week asks British communists to consider the Cuban case and get their party to support it.

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