

The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS
Volume 9 No. 12 March 20th 1968

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"GOLD,
NOT
BUTTER"
— Jenkins

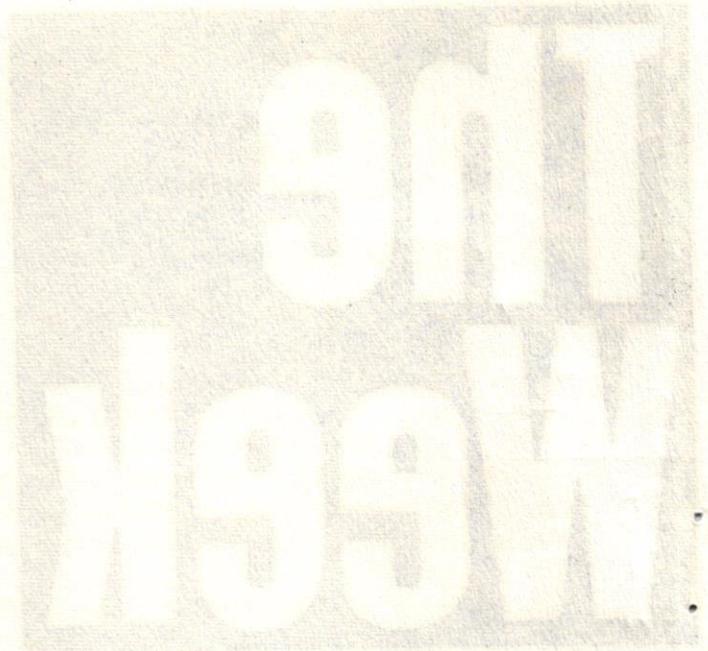
MARCH 17TH

— A DAY

TO REMEMBER

8, TOYNBEE STREET LONDON E.1.

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8p
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GOLD BEFORE BUTTER

Jenkin's budget takes this Labour Government to a new low in its servility to the ruling class. The budget is one of the severest and worst anti-working class measures to be implemented. It is designed specifically - and openly - to reduce our living standards, and increase the profits of the boss. Gold played the decisive part in determining its shape. It is a bankers' budget and has been welcomed as such by them. The stock market understood well its purpose and responded accordingly with two of the most profitable days in trading for months. Some shares hit a new high in value.

The threats of compulsory legislation against the unions to keep wages down while prices rise shows where the Government's hopes lie: if they can keep the working class in line through the trade unions they can count on winning time and a measure of stability for their discredited rule. If the trade unions buy this budget, and its anti-labour ramifications, then it will only be a matter of time before more will be demanded.

This Government is a failure. Its efforts are a disaster and it should be made aware that no one believes it when it pretends to be interested in raising living standards. The £100 million extra taxation on the rich is a sop - sugar-coating on a bitter pill of vicious attacks on the working class. We ask: if the country is in such dire difficulty, can we afford the rich at all?

The budget is a logical consequence of the long downward path travelled by the right wing leadership of the Labour Government since assuming power. It is also a dramatic illustration of the fact that capitalism does not and cannot work. Those who would patch it up can take no path other than that of defending capitalism's overall interests at the expense of the working class and the abandonment of any pretence to fight for reforms. The Labour Government now seeks to do a job which the Tories - the traditional party of big capital - would have found impossible to even attempt.

The next line of defence for the working class is in resisting attempts to curb their demands for wage increases. Prices are going to rise drastically. Workers would be absolute fools if they felt any loyalty to this monstrous cabinet which still calls itself "Labour". We don't think they will. The wage freeze will be rejected by all conscious workers. In the next few months we could see in Britain social struggles which could inflict decisive defeats upon the right wing. Anyone who considers himself a socialist must vote against this budget. No one should be fooled by the increases in taxation on the rich: they have teams of lawyers specifically for the purpose of dodging taxation.

Our message is that all sections of the movement must work out how they can wage a united all-out struggle against this budget and the Cabinet; any other response to this terrible state of affairs is a negation of socialism.

March 17th - A Big Step Forward.

The organisers of the massive March 17th mobilisation in London, the Vietnam Ad-hoc Committee and its component parts, have every reason to be proud of their efforts: they have shown the world that a sizable body of people in this country are hostile to the Labour Government's obsequious support for Johnson's war of genocide in Vietnam, in a way that has created an international sensation. We hope, by their action, they have totally discredited all those who pose as left-wingers but who justify the supporting of unprincipled positions such as "negotiations" by the argument that this is the only way of winning popular support.

Furthermore, the organisers have taken a giant step forward in helping to revitalise the whole of the left-wing movement in this country, by introducing methods of organisation that allowed the Left to overcome some of its fragmentation and sectarianism. Indeed, Sunday's action can be seen as a victory for the Left generally, because all segments participated, even if sometimes somewhat reluctantly. The organisers, right from the beginning, stuck firmly to the tactic of building a "united front". They emphasised repeatedly, in the build-up to March 17th, that anyone who was opposed to the war and who agreed with the two minimal positions of the Ad-hoc Committee -- "Solidarity with the Vietnamese people against American aggression" and "End British Complicity" could participate in its deliberations with full voice and vote. Convinced that the best way to help the Vietnamese people against imperialist aggression would be the building in Britain of one, massive, united and all inclusive opposition to the war, they argued that anyone who opposed the war, from whatever viewpoint, should participate and carry the slogans of their choice.

Sunday demonstrated that we have come a long way and there is no turning back to the pacifist and rather quiet Vietnam demonstrations of last summer. Indeed the whole apolitical and "neutralist" tradition of the CND seems to have been interrupted - a casualty of the war itself. It would be wrong to think that the whole operation was an unqualified success. The biggest single social force were the students, who, in Britain today, are undoubtedly in the vanguard in their militancy and hostility to the Labour government. The average age level of the demonstrators was low and signifies that a whole new generation of young people are finding their way to socialist politics on the Vietnam issue. But a decisive opposition, one that is capable of turning the Government off its course, cannot confine itself to support from this milieu alone. And although Reg Taylor, the trade unionist and CLP leader from Middlesex expressed the sentiments of thousands of working class militants, we note that there were still only a minority of banners from the mass organisations of the working class in this country, the trade unions and the Labour Parties.

But it would be wrong for the organisers of the Sunday action to ignore these forces and consider them inessential, and perhaps thereby devising tactics which will make it difficult for larger sections of the working class to participate at a future date. In the weeks ahead, all efforts must be made to include all the tendencies on the left, and the working class movement, either officially or unofficially, in planning for the next mass action against the Vietnam war. If they stick to their guns, there is no reason why the organisers, the VSC and all the other left groups cannot be successful. Sunday should be seen as a step in that direction.

It was the yeomanry who chopped down the massive working class demonstration at Peterloo, Manchester in 1819. There was panic among the yeomanry on horseback and their swords flew - killing 11 and wounding about 500. In the present century, the police and army have been used against workers and strikers in Britain, eg during the strikes of 1911 and 1926; and notably as the 'black and tans' in Ireland.

And all the time the police protect the property of anti-trade union companies and their blacklegs - the Myton and Roberts Arundel experiences are just two recent examples of this. It all reflects ruling-class anxiety.

One of the points which last Sunday's excellent Vietnam solidarity demonstration has brought home to those taking part is the political role of the police as part of the capitalist state's apparatus. No-one on the demonstration expected that the police would invite the protesters to occupy the American Embassy for the day. However, the more we learn about the activities of the police last Sunday, the more we can see the way police power, and even violence, reflects an element of panic and anti-socialist bias.

As with Peterloo, the element of panic last Sunday cannot be excused (as some right-wingers try to excuse Peterloo) as the result of bad horsemanship by police hemmed in by a crowd. The extreme right-wing group - the Tory Monday Club were given access to the US Embassy last Sunday afternoon to hand in their puppet petition. At exactly the same time the police were stopping coaches of Vietnam solidarity demonstrators coming into London from the provinces. The police simply invaded and summarily searched the people on the coaches hours before and miles from the demonstration. As even the Daily Telegraph reported: 'Some students never reached the 'battlefield'. Six coaches containing 330 students from Cambridge and Leeds were stopped at noon on the Watford Way, West Hendon. The coaches were escorted to Hendon police station where the students were searched. Police found a quantity of tins of pepper, bags of paint and glass marbles. Four male students were later charged with possessing offensive weapons and appeared at Hendon court. At Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, two coaches were stopped and police took possession of bags of flour, pepper, plastic paint, and marbles. Five of the occupants were charged with possessing offensive weapons, and one with using insulting behaviour.'

You have been warned - if you are going to London with marbles in your pocket you will be arrested. The police were keen to arrest some lads on the coaches who were carrying a packet of razor blades - an 'offensive weapon'. So, if you go to London, you can't shave! This really is panic.

Did James Callaghan, the utterly discredited Home Secretary, instruct the London police chiefs to do this and to have mounted police charge the demonstrators with truncheons flying? This is what happened. On whose instructions did the police try (unsuccessfully) to prevent the solidarity demonstrators from even entering Grosvenor Square? Peter Jackson, MP, has said

that he was particularly upset about the use of mounted police on Sunday and intended to put down a question about 'unnecessary violence' by the police. If the Labour Government refuses to issue instructions of restraint to the police, then we might well be driven to adopt some of the tactics of the Japanese socialist demonstrators. Before their recent brilliant demonstration the Japanese Zengakuren students prepared for police violence by collecting money to buy helmets. The recent statements by Callaghan and the Labour Government on left-wing demonstrations may bring about similar developments here.

MARCH 17 - MOST MILIANT DEMONSTRATION EVER

by Bob Turpin

What a beautiful fantasy world some of our proverbial spillers of ink in the Fleet Street gutters live in. How happily they twist the truth to lend colour and substance to their daily or weekly handout of benevolent malice. How enthusiastically they appear to go about the tasks of lying, muck-raking and witch-hunting. According to the Sunday Telegraph of March 17 the demonstration of that day was planned and conceived in Hanoi! One can almost see General Giap's boys poring over large maps of the Squares Trafalgar and Grosvenor, and every so often retreating into close conclave to exchange strategic and tactical chit-chat. In Grosvenor Square one looked enthusiastically for divisions of North Vietnamese regulars, but sad to say they never materialised.

This incredible fairy tale is only one way the British press is attempting to whip up anti-communist mass hysteria by presenting Sunday's demonstration as part of a world-wide communist conspiracy instigated by Hanoi or Peking. The sad fact is that many of that paper's readers are sufficiently gullible or reactionary to swallow the story. Britain has one of the most efficient propaganda machines in the whole world and I wonder how many people reading the reports on Monday morning were taken in by the monstrous sensationalism of the gutter scribes. Again inevitably the London Police were presented as the heroes of the peace: controlled, cool-headed guardians of law and order, right and justice, and all things bright and beautiful in this tragic clown of a country of ours. And, as we expected, the manifestations of extreme anger of a minority section of the demonstrators - the broken windows, fractured bones, smoke bombs and whatever - were presented in the press as though they were something very carefully prepared beforehand by the Ad Hoc Committee or the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. These were individual acts of protest, often the retaliation of self-defence. Again, sections of the police panicked. I saw one policeman run amok, and three throw a girl upon the ground and set about her with all the ruthless efficiency of the Gestapo. But, these things apart, Sunday's demonstration can be regarded as a success.

It was a success because it was militant. And it was militant because the base upon which it rested was 'Victory to the NLF' - or in other words, solidarity with the Vietnamese people in their heroic resistance to Yankee imperialism. The pacifists, the Communist Party - the 'negotiators' if you like, came along, or at least some of them. And they were welcome, just as they were welcome at the Ad Hoc Committee meetings. But they must have been taken rather aback to see the forests of banners proclaiming 'Victory to the NLF' and the portraits of Chairman Mao, Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh, symbols to the great majority of participants of international revolution.

Earnest Maoists were to be seen scuttling hither and thither, clutching their little red books, whilst people impatiently awaited the beginning of the meeting. Very slowly at first, the contingents arrived - from various corners of the square, and as the square began to fill up, one began to realise the immensity of the demonstration that was about to start. Students had come from universities as far north as Durham and as far south as Exeter. There were hundred of banners from university and college Socialist societies, provincial VSC's and Labour clubs. One was especially heartened to see the banners of Sussex and Essex and Cambridge, symbols of the new student militancy. There too were the Radical Student Alliance, Labour Party Young Socialists, the Stop it Committee and the Australians and New Zealanders against the war in Vietnam. It was probably the greatest cross section of the country's militants ever to assemble in one place since the thirties. It was one of the most inspiring spectacles I have ever seen in London and symbolised the birth of a new era in the history of the British Left. And were my eyes deceiving me, or was it the child of a malicious humour, the banner proclaiming 'Young Conservatives Victory to the NLF'.

The speeches were all much of a muchness and the sentiments expressed in them took no-one by surprise. But I say this in no derogatory way, but merely excuse myself for not reporting them in great detail. The message of support from the VSC President, Bertrand Russell, which opened the meeting, praised the great and ever-growing world wide movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese people. America, by its war in Vietnam, was defeating its declared objectives, he said, and alienating the great mass of the world's peoples. What we were witnessing was the exploitation of the world's working people by a small and wealthy elite. 'The role of our government defies description It is opportunist as never before It is time the US was ejected from Vietnam for ever', declared Lord Russell.

Tariq Ali breathed flames of revolutionary oratory over the over-whelmingly young crowd in the square, whilst John Palmer in a cogent speech linked the Vietnam war to the struggle of the British workers, and reminded us that America's vast expenditure in Vietnam was mainly responsible for its own very serious financial crisis, its curb on imports and restriction of international credit, which in turn was partly responsible for Britain's economic plight. Sad to say, in the huge forest of banners I noticed only a few representing trade unions, the AEU and SOGAT among them. Not enough trade unionists, unfortunately, for his words to have any great impact. He was, in fact, preaching to the enlightened.

Obi Egbuna, President of the Universal Coloured People's Association related the struggle in Vietnam to the fight against racist oppression. We are here today, he remarked, to 'spit in the eye' of imperialism. Not only that but to give it a well deserved 'kick in the groin' as well. Colourful language from a popular figure. Probably for many people the pleasant surprise of the afternoon's speeches came from Vanessa Redgrave. Her speech was one of complete solidarity with the NLF and Vietnamese people and for immediate US withdrawal. She read messages of support from such distinguished figures as Michelangelo Antonioni, the great Italian film director, and Marcello Mastroiani, the film star. Antonioni, 'This is a shameful war. The Americans are not only fighting a war against Vietnam but one against themselves as well I unite myself violently with your demonstration'.

There was uproar when Barbara Wilson, the chairman, then announced that several coaches from provincial universities had been stopped by the police and returned.

Other speakers included Igor Webb of the Stop It Committee, Subid Ali' of the Overseas Students' Co-ordinating Committee, Christina Semler of the West German SDS (in lieu of Rudi Dutschke) and Alain Krevine of the French National Vietnam Committee, Pat Jordan of the Week also. It was particularly encouraging to welcome our comrades from the continent where the solidarity movements are on a very high level indeed, and added an international flavour to the meeting.

These were the highlights of a memorable day. The Vietnam Solidarity Campaign which initiated the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee has survived the gratuitous mud-slinging of certain sections of the British 'Left' and a generally hostile press. There is probably no way at present of gauging the real extent of the impact made by Sunday's demonstration. When all the shouting has finally died down, I believe that many people will be driven to a serious re-appraisal of their attitudes and policies towards the campaign. The time is now ripe for the building of a large grass roots movement.

VICIOUS CAMBRIDGE FINES AFTER HEALEY PROTEST

Last year it was Wilson who received the full force of a militant Cambridge student demonstration. On Friday 8 March it was the turn of Dennis Healey. Between 500 and 600 students turned out to surround Healey's car, block its progress, and totally disrupt the traffic for a considerable time. The police, however, are responding to the wave of anti-student hysteria which is being stirred up in the press and, whereas on the Wilson demonstration it required questions in Parliament to force the Cambridge police to prosecute, on this occasion three left-wingers were quickly arrested. All were charged with 'threatening behaviour'. The fines imposed in court were vicious and vindictive. David Stocking and Bruce Barnard were each fined £30, with five guineas costs. Alistair Barrie was fined £20, also with five guineas costs.

Student finances are never good; under present circumstances they are even worse, and an appeal has been launched for contributions to pay these fines, which are grossly out of proportion to the offences and to the financial position of students. Please could all contributions be sent to:

Geoffrey Crossick, 69 Glendale Avenue, Edgware, Middlesex.

Any surplus will be used on the next occasion when a similar situation occurs

Bertrand Russell Greet's March 17th Rally

The following statement from Bertrand Russell, the honorary chairman of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, was read to the March 17th demonstration in Trafalgar Square:

"The United States of America is floundering towards the complete defeat of all its declared objectives in Vietnam. The Vietnamese people, with a minimum of help from the outside world, have once again thwarted their colonial masters. This striking achievement gives new hope to the world. It opens the way to the collapse of the systematic exploitation of the majority of the world's peoples by a small, wealthy elite in the West. The United States considers itself "world policeman." In fact it is brutal guardian of the spoils gained by vast corporations whose tentacles extend through five continents. This role is being denied to Washington not in the council chambers but on the battlefield. Having flouted its promises at Geneva to respect settlements in both Vietnam and Laos, the United States is learning the hard way that its word is not trusted. Its calls for what it describes as "unconditional negotiations" are recognised as fraudulent and irrelevant. The resistance of the Vietnamese people to American barbarism will undoubtedly go down in history as not only remarkably courageous, but astonishingly effective.

"It is encouraging to see in Western Europe signs of support for the Vietnamese people. We should not delude ourselves, however, into thinking that our own role has been in any way heroic. The failure to build a movement of support in Britain over the past five years for the gallant people of Vietnam has been monumental, and I am convinced that we shall pay a heavy price for this failure in future years. Unless a significant section of our own community comes to understand the nature of the fraud which the United States has attempted to perpetrate through its propaganda machines in Washington and Saigon, we shall fail to understand the next round in the struggle of the third world to liberate itself from the theft of its raw materials and the indiscriminate destruction of its peoples when they resist.

"In all this sordid story, the role of our own Government defies description. I cannot remember a single government throughout my lifetime which has so debased the British people. Mr. Wilson has been compared to Ramsay Macdonald, but such a comparison flatters our Prime Minister. He has tried to stuff all his election promises down the memory hole, and those who recall the promises of 1964 are told that they are wasting the tax-payers' money! Our Government, opportunistic as never before, staggers from crisis to crisis. On each occasion the Prime Minister uses two criteria to judge events: "What must I do to stay in power?" and "What will the Americans think?" It is not the promised land that Wilson leads us towards, but the American graveyard in Vietnam.

"This weekend I have published in the New Statesman an article appealing for a new look at America's war by the people of Western Europe. As junior members of NATO, we are the hosts and accomplices of war criminals. It is high time that we in Western Europe resolutely ejected the United States from Europe. The North Atlantic Treaty is due for renewal early

(cont. over)

Bertrand Russell's message cont.

next year, and I earnestly hope that throughout Europe there will be a ferment of opposition to this. If Wilson renews NATO membership, Britain will be without an independent foreign policy for a further ten or twenty years; if we reject this ignoble alliance, we have the opportunity at last to repay our debt to the Vietnamese people by weakening the power of the American Empire in Europe. NATO is the heart of Wilson's foreign policy. Let us sever in our nation the chains which bind us to the greed and brutality of the American Empire."

Alain Krivine's Speech to the Vietnam Ad-hoc Committee's meeting

Saturday, March 16th

One of the highlights of the March 17th weekend, was a large meeting organised by the Vietnam Ad-hoc Committee on the Saturday evening before the Sunday rally. Over 500 packed the small hall -- standing room only. This was especially remarkable as the meeting had been only organised at the last minute with no advertising. People learned of it by word of mouth. Most of those who attended were activists who came from outside of London and many of the foreign delegations were present.

Two films were shown -- one, "October 1967", a documentary of the successful October 22 rally, evoked a warm response.

The two speakers at the meeting were Ralph Milliband and Alain Krivine of the National Vietnam Committee (France). Because we think our readers will find it of interest, we reproduce here the speech by Alain Krivine to the meeting. At a later date we hope to publish Ralph Milliband's.

"Comrades and friends!

In the few minutes I have to speak, I wish to convey to you on behalf of the National Vietnam Committee in France, our complete solidarity with tomorrow's demonstration. The presence of foreign delegates here shows today that more and more people have taken a stand on the necessity to transcend national barriers, and to organise at this time an international reply to the aggression of American imperialism. The youth demonstration in Berlin on February 17th and 18th was an important step in this direction, but the continuing escalation ⁱⁿ Vietnam forces us to go further in the struggle.

"We consider that it is possible, and necessary, in Europe to act in accordance with the strategy of Che Guevara when he called for "one, two, or three Vietnams," in order to weaken the imperialist forces. This means, in our case, that we must utilise all possible methods of pressure to weaken imperialism in Europe and above all, to have larger and ever larger mass mobilisations leading to a permanent fight to isolate Johnson and those around him.

"The presence of thousands of people demonstrating in the streets of every European city will contribute to this process of isolation. A definite

(cont. over)

Alain Krivine's speech cont.

objective must be to weaken the American military potential. For this we must try to spread among the people the need to refuse to deliver American war equipment, to expose companies and corporations in Europe which supply the war material used in Vietnam. We must agitate against NATO - the instrument of American imperialism in Europe and a weapon to be turned against the labour movement in Europe as we have seen in Greece.

"At this time we must denounce those leaders of mass working class parties who drag the working class in blood towards American imperialism, and who do not hesitate to call in the police against the protest movement, as in Germany. The movement against the war must assume such a level, that the military and political presence of the aggressors in Vietnam will become repugnant to the people of Europe. In this particular field we think solid political work could be carried out among American troops in Europe, in order to strengthen resistance and to strengthen the ideas of opposition within their own forces. In France we decided to stop all American embassy propaganda meetings.

"It was with this perspective that we created the C.V.N. two years ago. The C.V.N. is a democratic organisation based on supporting committees in the universities, schools, factories and urban centres. Today, the C.V.N. encompasses thousands of militants in more than 60 towns of France. On February 21st the C.V.N. occupied the Latin Quarter of Paris, which it then transformed into "The district of heroic Vietnam" and where the name "Heroes of the Vietnamese revolution" was given to a street. For two hours 8 thousand militants took over the district.

"But this is not enough: now the movement must be co-ordinated on a European scale and therefore the C.V.N. is proposing to organise a huge international demonstration in Paris at the end of November and we expect large delegations from all the Western European countries. An international committee could be created for the occasion with the purpose of co-ordinating ideas for the action formulated by the other committees of the international movement.

"It is possible that De Gaulle's government will decide to ban this demonstration, but for us this occasion would show that with regard to the Vietnamese revolution, "neutrality" does not exist.

"You can only be for the victory of the Vietnamese revolution, or on the side of the aggressor. After the Berlin demonstration, the London demonstration is a step along the road to the counter-escalation of anti-imperialist forces.

"Vive la revolution Vietnamiennne! "

Vietnam Solidarity Campaign Answers Right-wing Tory Charges.

London March 19th, 1968

At a well attended press conference today, three leaders of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, Mike Martin, secretary, Pat Jordan, chairman, and Tariq Ali, a leading member of the Ad-hoc Committee, repudiated allegations printed in the "yellow press" that they had set out to deliberately provoke violence on March 17th.

"At no time," stated Pat Jordan, "did we advocate a confrontation with the police or violence against the police." Tariq Ali stated that the police were as "responsible as anyone for what happened." Mike Martin informed the conference that certain allegations made by several papers were being considered by the Campaign's lawyers to see if they were actionable.

The three spokesmen for V.S.C. issued the following statement:

"We wish to point out that we attempted to deliver letters of protest to the American Embassy - as had been agreed to by the police - but were prevented from doing so, in the first instance, by the crowd in front of the square. When we attempted to get through the police lines to tell the crowd to proceed with the march as planned, we were prevented from going forward by the police.

"But having said that, we think it is absolutely hypocritical for the press and the Government to moan and whine about the 'violence' of the demonstrators. What can be expected when we are constantly exposed - in the press and television - to the daily crimes of the Americans in Vietnam: napalm, torture, bombing etc? As far as we are concerned, the mood and temper of the demonstration on Sunday was determined by the nature of the American aggression. It is impossible to remain calm and peaceful before the barbarism of American aggression in Vietnam. As our president Bertrand Russell has said: to remain quiet, to acquiesce in face of such barbarism is to condone it. Many of those who have been "shocked" by events on Sunday have not made one word of protest about events in Vietnam.

"Frustration has increased because all efforts to turn the Americans from their course seem to have failed, and especially because the Labour Government has reneged on every promise it ever made on Vietnam. Its leader, Harold Wilson, just ignores his own party's annual conference decision on Vietnam.

"We are convinced that all those who are concerned about the war will seek to use whatever means are necessary to influence the Government to change its policy of slavishly following Johnson. We do not think that there is anything alien in this to British tradition. It was not until the suffragettes used the most militant means - which resulted in much violence and the smashing of windows that their voices were listened to and women won the vote. Perhaps the Vietnam movement will have to do the same.

"For our part, we are not going to let ourselves be intimidated by the press or by Tory M.P.s. We plan to counter-escalate and intensify our opposition to the Government's support for the Americans. Last Sunday's demonstration was only a beginning of our campaign against American aggression in Vietnam and in solidarity with the people of Vietnam against that aggression."

George Brown, The Budget and The State by Charles Van Gelderen.

There are few socialists, inside or outside the Labour Party, who will express any regrets at the departure of George Brown from the government. For too many years he was the very symbol of right-wing entrenchment within the Transport House establishment. It was he who, in the nineteen-thirties, moved the expulsion of Nye Bevan and Stafford Cripps from the Party. He was one of the instigators of the movement which pushed Gaitskell into the leadership. Not so many years ago he tried to expell Bertrand Russell. His present pose as the champion of the fundamental aims of the Labour Party will deceive no-one. It is but one more gamit in the game of man-oeuvring for supremacy within the Party.

There are, however, some curious facts which came to light in the course of his resignation speech. Like many other Labour politicians - including the late Nye Bevan - George Brown entered Parliament under the illusion that it was the citadel of power in Britain. His experience as a Cabinet Minister, second-in-rank only to the Prime Minister, has brought home to him what Marxists have always known - that real power is in the hands not of Cabinet or Parliament but of those who control the country's economy. In the case of Britain decisions are taken in the City of London, in Wall Street and in Zurich. Roy Jenkins' Budget, delivered on the very morrow of Brown's remarkable resignation speech is the expression of the wishes of international finance capital. Far from reflecting the views and interests of the Labour movement, it is a vicious anti-working class budget, designed to defend the capitalist system come what may.

If George Brown was sincere in his desire to restore the morale of Labour he will now tell all. He could do a real service to the movement and the cause of socialism by exposing the tight grip which the Bankers exercise over the British economy, using the Treasury as their instrument within the Government. Marxism describes the State as a class institution, the Governemont as the executive committee of the ruling class. The trappings of parliamentary democracy are designed to conceal this iron fact from the people. When the Tories are in power, this camouflage is more successful because there is a complete identity between the Tory hierarchy and those who own and control the nation's economic life. Under Labour there has to be more direct interference with the machinery of government.

The masters crack their whips and the Cabinet has to come to heel. That is why the Labour Government ignores resolutions passed at Annual Conference and attempts to stifle criticisms within the Parliamentary Labour Party. They know they cannot serve the capitalist state and the cause of socialism, and from choice or from ignorance they prefer the former solution.

From this flows all the errors and betrayals of the past three years - the anti-trade union legislation, the racialist immigration laws, the support of American imperialism in Vietnam and the Carribean. The only alternative to this is a resolute fight for a pricipled socialist policy and this will not be realised by M.P.s who abstain on vital issues. Only by fighting all the way against the reactionary policies of the Wilson government can the morale of the movement be restored. The time has come to stand up and be counted.

Party members in London have the chance to build a new Labour Party whose influence can, in time return the movement to its socialist principles. This is why Transport House is determined, at all costs, to gain control of the new party organisation in Greater London which it hopes will be established next Sunday (31 March).

Having resisted rank and file pressure to set up a new Greater London Labour Party ever since 1962 - when the London Government Act was first published - the NEC have presented the London membership with a model constitution for a highly centralised organisation whose officers are to be appointed by Transport House. This has been done at less than a month's notice; many organisations have not had time to meet to appoint or mandate delegates and no amendments to the proposals are to be allowed.

Why is it that having resisted pressure for reform for 3 years Transport House should ride roughshod over its London membership in the period immediately before the most crucial borough elections in the Party's history? The press suggests that Transport House fears a rival centre of power, but this is hardly credible as the new body, whatever its form, will be constitutionally restricted to local and regional affairs.

Short of capitulation on the principle of regional democracy - that is, the right of the Party in London to appoint its own officers - the London membership has no alternative but to maintain the London Labour Party in existence at its Conference on March 30, until its successor has been agreed at a properly constituted delegate conference.

The 'establishment conference' of the 31st, would then vote for an adjournment until after the borough elections, by which time the NEC's final proposals could have been circulated and amendments sought from affiliated organisations.

Whatever the outcome, one thing is certain. For Transport House to force through its proposals at this time, against the wishes of the Party's active members in London, is to court electoral disaster.

All who can should attend as delegates on March 31st and vote for the "democratic" ticket.

AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON IMPERIALISM.

PIERRE FRANK	LIVIO MATEAN	ERNEST MANDEL
France	Italy	Belgium

TOPIC

"For a world-wide counter-strategy against American Imperialism in Vietnam"

Chairman: PAT JORDAN

SATURDAY, APRIL 6th, 7pm, YORK ROOM, CAXTON HALL, LONDON S.W.1 (nearest tube: St James' Park)
