

The Week

THE
COMMON
MARKET
DEBATE

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS
Vol. 8. No. 19 May 11th, 1967

6^D

LABOUR = *the*
monolith cracks

71 Onslow Gardens, London N.10.

Subscription £2 per annum and pro rata

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11 Grafton Gardens, London W.1C.

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LABOUR: THE MONOLITH CRACKS

Labour has had its biggest parliamentary revolt in its history: 34 Labour M.P.s voted against the Government and nearly 50 abstained in the Common Market debate. The left has to make a sober analysis of the situation created by this affair and consider very carefully what it means for the fight to build up a consistent and strong left which is capable of challenging Wilson. It is possible to make two important mistakes: one, to miss the significance of this development; and two, to overestimate the political agreement of the Government's opponents.

The significance of the vote against the Government is that it marks the formal end of Wilson's domination over the Labour Party which has completely confused the left for some three years or more. It means, moreover, that a precedent has been set for M.P.s to vote against the Government on other issues. Can anyone^{on} the left defend the mere abstaining on such issues as Vietnam and the incomes policy now? The importance of voting against the Government by Labour MPs is that it creates in the minds of millions of Labour supporters an image of a real opposition to Wilson and the Cabinet. This is a real opportunity for the left if it can seize it. We must now demand, quoting this precedent, that all trade union sponsored MPs vote against the Government on the incomes policy. How can it be possible for TGWU sponsored MPs to support the Government on a policy which is diametrically opposed to their sponsoring union's policy? If there are a continuous series of votes against the Government the idea of an alternative focus to Wilson will gain ground.

On the other hand we must recognise the extremely confused state of the movement on the Common Market. The opposition to the application for membership came from a motley bunch: arguments ranging from defence of the Commonwealth to some approaching a real internationalist point of view were heard in Parliament. The left must learn the lesson of the mistake of forming unprincipled blocs: this method, which might result in a few voting victories, always confuses the rank and file and makes it more difficult to mobilise mass support for a socialist policy. With these qualifications we must welcome the vote in Parliament as a step forward and a confirmation of the necessity of fighting to build a left within the Labour Party. Those who want to opt^{out} now are proposing to leave at exactly the wrong time.

THE WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL

With all its immense resources, the U.S. administration was not able to stop an objective examination of its crimes in Vietnam. There is a huge volume of evidence to show that Johnson and co. really fear the Tribunal. It will meet again soon and provide everyone opposed to the American war of aggression with new material. A great victory has been won.

WORKERS' CONTROL CONFERENCE

STEEL: RON SMITH'S PLAN MUST BE REJECTED by Tony Topham

The national Steel Corporation's proposals for "worker directors" in nationalised steel are a recognition of the pressure and demands advanced by the steel unions and the Voice workers' control campaign. But the content of the proposals is deplorable and must be resisted. They distort or ignore much of what the unions are asking for. The Board's ideas were drawn up by Ron Smith, (ex-U.P.W. General Secretary) who confessed that their inspiration was to be found in the TUC evidence to the Royal Commission on Trade Unions. The plan provides for:

1. four or five Group (regional) Boards for the industry.
2. each Board will have between 14 and 16 members.
3. of these, up to three will be worker "representatives".
4. this of course means that they will be in a permanent minority.

This alone would not prevent them being truly representative of workers, if they were truly accountable to the workers. But the proposals go on:

5. they will "share the corporate responsibility for the Board's decisions".
6. if they are shop stewards, they will be asked to give up that post, during their term of office.
7. they will be selected by the N.S.C., from names submitted by the TUC. They will not be elected, in any way, by the workers.
8. they can clearly therefore not be subject to any form of "recall" by the people they are supposed to represent.
9. they will sit on Group Boards OUTSIDE the Group in which they work.

The only useful proviso is that they will be part-time, which means that they will not be completely severed from the shop-floor. In every other particular, the plan deliberately sets out to separate the representatives from the workers. It's effect will be to take away the most experienced present workers' leaders, (shop stewards) and immerse them in management's responsibilities and ethos. In some ways, the proposal about sitting on outside Boards is the most objectionable. Presumably one chooses directors who have some knowledge to contribute. The Smith plan aims to make damned sure that the workers' representatives are at a disadvantage from the start: that their special knowledge cannot be properly used in their own Group. Smith and the N.S.C. are afraid of that knowledge, and afraid it might be used in the interests of the workers. In simple human terms the proposals are an insult to the idea of workers' representatives. If they are carried through, the result will be disillusion with what is only the shadow of true workers' control, and disillusion with nationalisation will follow.

The most deadly consequence would be that the worker directors would be held responsible for the whacking cuts in man-power that the industry will experience in the future. The Benson Committee foresaw the need to cut the capacity of the steel plant of the country by 25% by the mid-seventies, which would mean a reduction of 100,000 (a third of the present level) in

the working force. This huge redundancy will fall especially heavily upon isolated backward plants, such as at Ebbw Vale, Consett, Workington, and perhaps Corby and Shotton. The "Daily Mail" correspondent gave the game away last week, when he reported that through the device of the worker directors, the government "hopes to avoid a clash with the unions" over redundancies and closures. This idea may square with The Director's enthusiasm for a form of industrial democracy which makes "the unions ... share the responsibility for some of the expected unpopular decisions". But it is an outrageously cynical way to treat the idea of industrial democracy. The workers' demands, expressed through their unions, are not a matter for this kind of manipulation. The unions and their allies in the socialist movement must return to the attack. The left M.P.s must challenge this plan in the House. Specifically on redundancies the workers representatives on Boards must be free to dissent from decisions, and free to Veto a closure until they are fully satisfied that hundred per cent provision of available alternative work has been made.

Generally, the unions should stick to their original programme: they must not regard Smith's effort as the last word on this subject. Last year the National Joint Craftmen's Co-ordinating Committee for the industry adopted a specific programme of worker controls. This year, the biggest (Yorkshire) District of the production workers' union, BISAKTA, adopted the same proposals. They are briefly:

1. the election of half of the Group Board members by the unions and the plant level workers' councils.
2. the right of veto for workers' representatives at Group level, and for workers' councils at plant level, over all managerial appointments, including the Group Chairmanship.
3. the opening of the books to workers' representatives and Councils, who must be able to report back their findings.

The Smith plan is a development which may be repeated in other industries in the near future. The need for increased vigilance and activity from the workers' control campaign is evident. The response should be to summon the maximum attendance at the Coventry workers' control conference, on June 10th-11th.

ADVERTISER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

THE COMMITTEE FOR SOLIDARITY WITH VICTIMS OF PERUVIAN REPRESSION INVITE YOU TO A:

Free Hugo Blanco Meeting.

Protest at Peruvian Repression.

Friday 26th. Caxton Hall 8 p.m. (St. James Park Tube).

Speakers: Bill Molloy, M.P. Robin Blackburn, Faris Glubb.

Chairman: Roger Protz.

N.A.L.S.O. SUPPORTS D.A.T.A. from a special correspondent

The following letter has been issued by N.A.L.S.O.

The lock-out of members of the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians Association by the shipbuilding employers is now in its ninth week. The employers are trying to force DATA into submission. They are using their power against members of DATA in the shipbuilding industry as a means of compelling DATA to call off the Swan Hunter's shipyard strike. The central fact about this strike is that wages are too low. DATA men at Swan Hunter's were being paid substantially less than draughtsmen on similar work in a number of British shipyards, and about 30/- a week less than the average basic pay for draughtsmen, aged thirty years and over, excluding the London area, at the end of 1966. The offer made by the employers would still have left DATA members at Swan Hunter's well behind the average pay for provincial draughtsmen. The employers have not been prepared to reach a satisfactory settlement to meet the grievances of the draughtsmen, and have resorted, through the shipbuilding employers' federation to a national lock-out of DATA members.

The response of DATA members in defence of their brothers at Swan Hunter has been a fine display of solidarity - not one defection has been reported in the entire industry. At the NALSO conference in Manchester, delegates collected £10 towards the lock-out fund, and this has been sent to DATA by the executive expressing our support for DATA's fight, and for a great victory. It is vital that every section of the Labour Movement is mobilised in support of the draughtsmen - for it is clear that the employers are out to smash the power of DATA in the shipbuilding industry.

NALSO calls on all students and socialist societies and labour clubs to play their part in raising support for DATA. Firstly, by sending resolutions of support to DATA, and secondly by carrying out, at maximum speed, collections among students, throughout colleges and universities. We ask that students make a contribution to the lock-out fund, of at least 1/- each. Donation forms are enclosed.

DATA MUST BE DEFENDED IN THIS STRUGGLE, AND IN ITS FIGHT AGAINST THE

GOVERNMENT'S VICIOUS INCOMES POLICY AND WAGE FREEZE.

EDITORIAL NOTE

This item was sent before news came through that the Draughtsmen's lockout was over.

We decided to published it, however, because we felt it a very good example of the growing tendency for a linking together of various wings of the movement in common struggle.

We hope that the left wing of the trade union will note this act of solidarity (and many others on a national and local scale) and support the fight that NALSO is putting up to be re-affiliated to the Labour Party.

COAL: COMMON MARKET MEANS REDUNDANCY from Scottish Miner (May, 1967)

Cuts in coal output caused the number of miners in the Six Common Market countries to fall by 10 per cent last year - over 62,000 men. And a rise in redundancies is feared this year. This is revealed in the 15th Annual Report issued last month of the European Coal and Steel Community High Authority.

Coal output will be down to 170 million tons by 1970 it predicts, with a further drastic fall in the number of miners. This year output will be 192 million tons. Last year, output in the Six was 210 million tons which itself was a 6.2 per cent drop from the 1965 output of 224 million tons. Moreover, short-time working in the pits was widespread. It caused a loss of 4.5 million tons of coal - twice as much as in 1965.

Oil imports were stepped up by 10%. Half the energy requirements of the Six is now met by imported oil. But lower overall economic growth and depressed steel output were just as much responsible as oil imports for coal sales falling. Says the Report: "Surplus production (in the Six) in 1966 was considerably higher than in previous years, despite a major reduction in output."

Two months ago, the Six agreed to subsidise the price of coking coal to bring it into line with the cheap coking coal being imported from America by steel plants. Over ten million dollars is now being paid out every year in the shape of tiding-over and re-training allowances compared with 3 to 4 million dollars only four years ago. The High Authority is also now pressing for further concentration of the steel industry and a cut in output.

Investment in the steel industry has been falling - "a disquieting trend" says the High Authority. Yet it is urging Common Market companies to "tailor production to demand and not to attempt, by granting discounts of every sort and kind, to sell extra tonnages on a market that cannot absorb them." It gives an ominous warning that it may use its powers under the E.C.S.C. Treaty to impose what it calls "some degree of discipline among the producers."

The High Authority also states that "discipline in the steel market can be strengthened if the top-level policy decisions are in progressively fewer hands." "How people like Lord Robens can urge Britain to join the Common Market in face of these facts is beyond me," says Scottish Area NUM Vice-President Michael McGahey. "It would really seal the fate of Britain's coal industry if we did," he added.

Since the Common Market was formed in 1958 the number of miners in the Six has dropped by over 400,000 to 650,000.

THE COMMON MARKET DISCUSSION

We have now had four articles on the question of the Common Market and the attitude that socialists should take towards it. We hope to be in a position to publish these articles, together with an introduction and factual material, in the form of a pamphlet. For that reason we would welcome as many points of view on the question as possible.

BRIGHTON'S "SCROOGE" FIRM FACES FIGHT from C.Arthur

C.B.R. Jersey Mills, of Shanklin Road, Brighton, is involved in an official dispute with the National Union of Hosiery Workers. The local Trades Council has issued a circular giving the facts.

"The minimum working week is 72 hours - six 12 hour shifts. Operatives are not supposed to sit down during these shifts. There is no canteen, no sick pay, no pension scheme. Saturday working is 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Men start at 5/6d per hour, graduate to 6/- per hour. Women are engaged at 2/6d per hour. There is a derisory bonus scheme which adds little to these basic earnings. Extra pay is given only for Sundays, and Saturday & Sunday nights. The machines are running 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Week nights are not paid extra.

"The management has refused all requests by the Union concerned to discuss these inhuman conditions. Despite this, a number of employees decided to join the Union. When a meeting was called (out of working hours and in premises a mile away) a technical director of the firm stood outside to take note of those who attended. Within a few days, all employees were called into the office, one by one, and required to sign a "document" to declare that they were not members of any trade union. Those who refused were told to leave instantly. So far, 17 employees have thus been "locked-out". THIS ATTITUDE OF THE MANAGEMENT IS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF DICKENS, but it is really happening TODAY in 1967!* The firm claims "excellent conditions" in advertisements. In the past few years an estimated 360 employees have come and gone, yet the entire labour force is only about 40! Some conditions! The managements says: "this is a small family firm and trade unions have no place here..." Naturally! In the year ending 31st October 1966 they made £97,000 profit, paid 24% dividend. No wonder!

THIS IS AN OFFICIAL DISPUTE. The victimised 17 are standing together, although between them they have 12 wives and 18 dependent children. They are confident that fellow workers, knowing the above facts, will not let them down by seeking to take their jobs. The 17 victimised workers have the support of ALL TRADE UNIONS IN THE AREA. The Trades Council is pledged to mobilise practical help. We ask every worker to study the above facts. TO ALL WHO MAY CONSIDER APPLYING FOR ONE OF THESE "EXCELLENT" JOBS, we appeal - DO NOT STAB THESE WORKERS IN THE BACK! NO SELF-RESPECTING MAN OR WOMAN WOULD DO THAT.

ORGANISE COLLECTIONS! To all other working people - in every factory, office and shop: you can help! The pickets are on duty between 7.30 a.m. and 9 p.m. - Saturdays too. Spare half an hour to pop down and give them a word of encouragement. Secondly, CASH IS URGENTLY NEEDED! The locked-out 17 (and families) are living on next to nothing. IN EVERY WORKPLACE AND FIRM - PLEASE ORGANISE A COLLECTION TO RAISE MONEY. AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE! All cash will be passed to Nat. Union of Hosiery Workers. Donations urgently needed: send to - Denis Hill, Trades Council, 65 Stanford Road, Brighton.

The firm was started as a family concern ten years ago and went public last year. It is not a member of any employer's organisation, so national agreements do not apply. Given the super-exploitative conditions and the common use of substandard yarn the firm is able to undercut other firms (mainly in Leicester). In fact the other firms have themselves indicated to the Union that they wished the Union would do something about this

rogue firm!

Apart from the diabolical hours the job itself is much more exhausting than it ought to be because the sub-standard yarn causes the machines to stop frequently - sometimes as often as every two or three minutes. With several machines to look after, and faults in the knit to look out for, the operatives are subject to continued pressure by management to keep the machines running at all costs or out you go. Most recruits crack up after a week or a month, so that the turnover rate is astronomical - making it difficult to organise for better conditions. The Union complains that what has always been regarded as skilled work is treated by this firm as semi-skilled casual work. Given the pressure on operatives and the use of substandard yarn it cannot but be the case that the product is sub-standard. It would be interesting to know how the firm manages to market it.

The Union first approached this firm in 1964 to ask about addressing the work-force but allowed itself to be continually fobbed off with weak excuses. Eventually one of the employees approached the Union and organised the firm - leading to the lock-out. The management refuses to discuss re-instatement and say it is "war". It has taken huge half-page ads, costing £600-£700, in the press advertising the locked-out men's jobs ('High wages' but not 72 hours mentioned). About 70 people have applied and in spite of the efforts of pickets 12 scabs have been recruited. This is probably more than the management can cope with given the lack of experienced men to train them. Mike Taylor, of the strike committee, says that he expects most of the scabs will pack in the job in a month as the strain tells. Some, but not all, lorry-drivers have turned back when told of the dispute.

Besides Union recognition the locked out 17 want conditions at least as good as those in the Leicester firms. The local Trades Council is actively supporting the strike and it was a big issue on the May Day March. The men want the T.U.C. to take up the issue and it is to be hoped the labour movement will do all it can for them.

P.S. 7.30 a.m. Saturday May 6, 60 Labour V.S. and T.U. members demonstrated outside the Mill in solidarity. Only 3 scabs went on the day-shift.

Meaker's branches continued from page 13/

RUISLIP: 136, High Street; SOUTHAMPTON: 95, Above Bar; SOUTHEND:
164, High Street; ST. ALBANS: 23, St. Peter's St; STRATFORD: 374, High
Street, E.13; STREATHAM: 174, High Road, S.W.16; SUTTON: 118, High
Street; SOUTHGATE: 76, Chase Side, N.14; TOOTING: 53, High Street,
S.W.17; TORQUAY: 134, Union Street; WALTHAMSTOW: 244, Hoe Street, E.17;
WATFORD: 41a, High Street; WEMBLEY: High Road; WEST EALING:
90, The Broadway, W.13; WIMBLEDON: 1, Hill Road, S.W.19; WOOD GREEN:
14, High Road, N.22; WORTHING: 31, Chapel Road.

COMMON MARKET: A REPLY TO STAN NEWENS. By R. Cooper

Stan Newens obviously took great exception to my remark about the Labour M.P.'s efforts to rationalize British Capitalism. He then proceeded to outline his views and, to my mind, could not have proved my point more simply.

Although a person holds a view which, in all sincerity he believes does not contradict his stand in other matters, this does not alter the fact that it may still be inconsistent.

First, however, as the article was written under the title "Internationalism and the Common Market", the contents of it were not on the whole a debate for or against going in, but a rebuttal of the argument that support of the Common Market could be partly justified by the Internationalism of Socialist philosophy. As I said in the previous article, even if there are reasons to go into the Common Market, it is a delusion to include that one.

With regard to the point at issue. I have no wish to disagree with the view that standards in Britain have generally risen and, although the contradictions of capitalism might be easier to fight in the past, we do not want to return to those times under any circumstances. Nor would I disagree that capitalism is, in its way, more efficient now than formerly. However, for Marxists, in which category Stan Newens includes himself, it is important to remember, not that socialism can arise only out of the development of the productive forces, but that capitalism in any of its forms means exploitation of the working class, and that the more efficiently they can do this the better they like it. The monopolies, in their fight against the old guard, have, when necessary, passed on some of the benefits to the working classes. The simplest example is the supermarket, with lower prices than the small shopkeepers. Should workers object to this? Of course not! But it is necessary to be alert for the next stage. For when the monopolies are complete, then they squeeze our necks with price fixing, excess profits and redundancies.

How does this affect the Common Market? There are two main prospects: political and economic. The only question which should concern Marxists on the former point is whether the working classes move forward or not. One could cite examples in which we might gain from Italy and France, but others where I think we should lose. Unofficial strikes in Germany are illegal. One official is serving six years for calling an unofficial strike.

From the economic point of view, who is going to pay for the change? The capitalist class? The simplest example is the rise in food prices: 25/- a week at least. Serious even in normal circumstances. The unions would not be slow in applying for wage increases and its effects might be cushioned or just moved over onto the most poverty-stricken. Taking into account, however, the mobility of labour and capital, the workers' bargaining power would be minimal, and the probable effect is a cut in everyone's real wages of £1 a week to begin with.

Mobility of labour, and dropping capital movement restrictions, reduce the benefit to the workers of the labour scarcity which crops up every now and again. Usually the worker can use this period of 'go' to catch up and possibly advance his standard of living, but if a ready market of unemployed or cheaper labour is available then this can either be brought in, or factories moved permanently to their locality. The slightly

OXFORD'S "FACELESS ONES" - A REJOINER by Michael Hinton*

In your issue of May 3rd there is a rave review of Harry Goode's Oxford C.S.E. pamphlet "The Faceless Ones". I agree with a lot in the pamphlet and the review, but I want to add a big pinch of salt.

First about this 'facelessness'. What is it? It is easy, not difficult, to find out who runs the colleges. When the press talks about faceless agitators on building sites, they mean that the general public doesn't know much about these men because they, the press, have more important things to talk about - George Brown and the Royal Family. It's not all that different with dons. The main point in Harry Goode's pamphlet is that the colleges are property owners, and among the least enlightened of property owners at that. I think this is broadly true. They have in some ways been bad for the town, they employ cheap non-union labour, they don't for the most part come out well on the issue of racial discrimination in employment. This is all part and parcel of the fact that Oxford and Cambridge are the furthest from being Ivory Towers of all the British Universities. As the traditional universities of the property-owning class they are the most intimately involved in its hegemony.

But there are traps here. It is easy to get diverted from an attack on the ruling class to an attack on the mandarin 'establishment'. Then the institutional independence which the mandarins enjoy becomes your target, instead of their predictable "failure" to use their independence to be really independent of the class to which most of them belong. And then the stream of Socialist criticism flows into the muddy river of gutter-press propaganda, which expresses the desire of some sections of the ruling class to do away with the mandarins' independence altogether. It is also easy to fall into the Liberal fallacy, that you can change a society by just changing the educational institutions which reflect it.

As for the idea that progressive scholars and teachers are not really scholars and teachers (see Harry Goode's last paragraph) or not really progressive (see your review) because they can't help being on the governing body of a college whose bursarial policies they disagree with - don't be daft.

*Tutor in philosophy, Worcester College, Oxford.

Common Market: A Reply to Stan Newens (continued)

tarnished image of the "German Economic Miracle" is attributed by some to their industrious working class. This is not unrelated, however, to the German Industrialists having access to refugees requiring work at any price and one million temporary Italian workers with no permanent status. They are being sent back home now that unemployment is sufficiently high.

The main people to benefit from entry into the Common Market will be the capitalist class who have the resources and facilities to rationalize their enterprises of exploitation. It is an attempt to obtain a uniformly strong chain, and to eliminate those weak points at which the system could be attacked and perhaps destroyed.

It is vitally necessary then, that the real motives behind our entry should be exposed and a United Socialist States of Europe, owning the means of production, posed as its antithesis.

MINERS- GONE TO COVENTRY ! By Ken Coates.

A sad item of news in the April issue of the Ministry of Labour Gazette was picked up recently in The Times and given the deceptive headline, "Miners lead the way in cutting strike losses." The gist of this story runs as follows: coal-mining strikes have fallen from 193 in the first quarter of 1966 to 108 in the first quarter of this year; working days lost from 43,000 to 24,000. Of course, there has been a general decline in stoppages of work throughout industry, from 661 to 576 in the same periods. The number of work-days lost fell, overall, from 485,000 to 451,000. This means that the "improvement" in mining industrial relations accounts for almost all the shrinkage of strike action during those two years. But, of course, it is no "improvement" at all. Even while it was being computed, area after area of the NUM has been going on record to demand significant wage increases for the low-paid workers, and the whole industry is rife with discontent about conditions. The craftsmen feel grossly ill-treated. The day-wage workers exist on pitiful wages, which place many of them below the official poverty-level, and would mean that Frank Cousins's demand for a £15 minimum wage would, if realized, greatly advance their living standards. (How disgraceful that people work underground in excessively hot, damp, dusty conditions, for less than the wage which leading figures in the Trade Union Movement regard as a bare minimum for existence !) In this situation the Ministry of Power has announced the third cut in the coal target for production to 140 odd million tons a year. In fact, this is a higher figure than many experts have calculated will be raised in a very few years' time. Obviously the miners' conditions are not responsible for a great growth of contentment, producing this shrinkage of strike action. The contrary is true. The miners are once again being driven into submission: and the parallel which we should make when examining these figures is that at the same time the Rhondda has become a marginal area for the Labour Party.

What can be done about this ? This is one of the urgent topics for discussion at the Conference on Workers' Control which is being held in Coventry on June 10th and 11th. Mineworkers will be discussing not only the relevance of ideas of workers' control to the defence of the industry and the protection of their trade union strength, but also the relevance of the demand for a democratic integrated fuel policy, based on the creation of a National Fuel Board, under public ownership and democratic control.

READ CHE GUEVARA'S HISTORIC ARTICLE !! READ CHE

The Week has published Che Guevara's historic article on the need for revolutionary solidarity with Vietnam as a pamphlet. It has an introduction by Ken Coates, who was in Cuba at the time the article was published.

It sold well on the London May Day and we have had orders from many quarters before we advertised it even.

It sells at one shilling per copy and ninepence each for bulk orders (over six).

We ask all readers to help to get across Che's great message to the socialist movement in Britain. There is a profound political ignorance in this country on the colonial revolution in general, and the Cuban revolution in particular.

Send your orders to: The Week,
71, Onslow Gardens,
London. N. 10.

THE WEEK'S MAY DAY MESSAGE

The following is the text (slightly shortened) of a leaflet given out by supporters of The Week on May Day marches in London and Glasgow:

THE WEEK sends May Day greetings to all those fighting for socialism, for national liberation and against reaction. On this working class day of celebration we feel a strong sense of solidarity with the Vietnamese Freedom fighters, those opposing the new authoritarian regime in Greece, the anti-Vietnam war demonstrators in the United States, the guerilla fighters of Latin America and Africa, with the leaders of the Cuban revolution, with all those opposing the wage freeze in Britain (especially the heroic draughtsmen), and others too numerous to mention.

But our sense of solidarity on this May Day is tempered by a desire to materially help their struggle. We can and must organise solidarity action, but this is not the key: the best way we can help is to fight for socialism in this country and prevent our government from supporting reaction in other countries. In this respect it must be said that the Left has had little success since the election of the Wilson government in 1964. Since then the Wilson government has:

- (1) Pursued the imperialist "East of Suez" policy;
- (2) Legalised the Burnham regime in Guyana, knowing full well it came to power as the result of a C.I.A. plot;
- (3) Been the main bastion of support for the vicious American war of genocide against the people of Vietnam;
- (4) Betrayed all its promises on the cutting of arms, scrapping of Polaris, and ending the British nuclear "deterrent";
- (5) Pursued a vicious anti-trade union policy in Britain - being the first government for a generation or so to propose legal action against strikers;
- (6) Imposed a wage freeze at a time when the prices are rising thus cutting the standard of living of the people;
- (7) Deliberately increased unemployment;
- (8) Gone back on all its promises to improve welfare;
- (9) Taken no basic steps to re-distribute income; and
- (10) Made no moves whatsoever to weaken capitalism and increase the power of workers.

In face of this the response of the Left has been pitiful: part of the traditional Left in Britain has gone over lock, stop and barrel to Wilson, another part cannot make up its mind whether to fight or "advise" Wilson and another section went politically mad and indulged in sectarian adventures.

If we want to make any real progress at all in solidarising ourselves with our comrades the world over we must overcome this weakness and build a strong, viable Left which will represent a real challenge to the Wilson government.

THE WEEK exists for no other purpose than to try to help to build such a Left alternative to present right wing leadership of the Labour movement, a Left which, because it appears in the eyes of millions of Labour supporters as a real alternative to Wilson, can halt the gallop to the right and win the movement for Left policies. THE WEEK believes that several problems need to be overcome if we are to build such a Left.

/Continued over

May Day appeal continued

Firstly, we must work out a correct attitude towards the present Labour Government. Whilst no one in their right mind wants the Tories back we must characterise the present leadership of the Labour Party as basically anti-working class. The aim, therefore, must be to fight and defeat this leadership... Having understood this we must see that the battle to defeat and replace Wilson and Co. will not take place in the Cabinet or the Parliamentary Labour Party but in the factories, building sites, shipyards and workplaces. The Left must seek to mobilise the workers to struggle directly against Wilson and his anti-working class politics.

Secondly, we must recognise that the mass of the people will not be mobilised by mere exhortation. People will swing into action when they see some prospects of success in their struggle... As things are now to the mass of trade unionists and Labour supporters there is no real alternative to Wilson. Moreover, they see nothing of significance outside of the Labour Party and trade unions. Whilst workers respect the sincerity of militants who are in organisations which seek to act in competition with the Labour Party, only a very few of them regard these organisations seriously. It is for this reason that those on the left who wish to really influence the course of events must seek to build up a left inside the Labour Party and trade unions.

Thirdly, all sectional struggles need to be unified into one generalised struggle. All too often are individual sections of the working class left to fight it out on their own. The way the seamen were left isolated last year was criminal. Today, the draughtsmen are fighting a vicious lock out in the shipbuilding industry - a move calculated to destroy trade unionism - and they are receiving at best only small-scale financial help. The trade union and political struggles need to be fused: M.P.s, especially the trade union sponsored ones, must be forced to support industrial struggles or get out; trade unionists must, far from withdrawing their political levy, take their struggle into the Labour Party and consciously plan to take Labour Parties over, throwing out the right wing leadership in the process. Any other policy, no matter how radical it sounds, means de facto giving over of the Labour Party to the right wing.

Fourthly, the left must work out an offensive strategy with an anti-capitalist content. Too often in the past, even in the best of cases, the left only responds defensively to attacks. Moreover, those demands that are made are confined, in the main, to asking for a bigger share of the cake. Unless the left elaborates anti-capitalist demands and unites them into a programme there is no prospect whatsoever of socialist consciousness developing in the minds of millions of workers. Without this socialism can never be achieved. A programme of demands must be worked out which at once appear reasonable in the eyes of the mass of Labour supporters and yet, on the other hand, represents real inroads into capitalist power. Such demands as:

"Opening the employers' books to workers' inspection"; "Nationalisation with workers' control"; "Shop stewards' control over hiring and firing"; "An end to all capitalist alliances"; etc. must be popularised and explained... None of these things will be achieved without an education discussion. The Week sees its main function in helping this process as that of bringing the various strands of the movement together and helping to organise this education - through conferences, etc. - and carrying material which will both link struggles and popularise anti-capitalist demands.

SUPPORT THE MEAKER'S ELECTRICIANS. From an Industrial Correspondent.

All maintenance electricians employed by MEAKER'S LTD., the Gents Out-fitters, have come out on strike. They are protesting against the victimisation of one of their members, Gery Lawless. Mr. Lawless was dismissed when he refused to co-operate with the management in the sacking of another worker.

Briefly, the background to the dispute is as follows: Meaker's electricians recently won a wage increase of 1/- an hour. Following this the management instructed Mr. Lawless, the chief electrician, to reduce the labour force. Mr. Lawless refused and, as a result, was himself sacked. The reason given by the management was that he "failed to agree with members of the staff."

For some time Mr. Lawless had been in dispute with the Management over safety regulations: he has been insisting that the rules and regulations of the Institute of Electrical Engineers be strictly applied. This created a situation in which the management were willing to seize the first excuse to sack him. They have done so now as a result of his standing by basic trade-union principles.

The men involved in the dispute have organised pickets of certain Meaker's stores and have appealed to all sections of the labour movement to join them in picketing stores throughout the country. For details ring 01-TER-1714. E. Boyhan, 22 Duncan Terrace, London, N.1.

The following is a list of Meaker's branches. Get your Trades Council to organise a picket:

BALHAM: 107, High Road, S.W.12; BARNET: 76, High St; BEDFORD: 6/8 Silver Street; BEXLEYHEATH: 133/135, Broadway; BOSCOMBE: 562, Christchurch Rd; BOURNEMOUTH: 72, Old Christchurch Rd; BRIGHTON: 203/205, Western Rd; BRIXTON: 404, Brixton Road, S.W.9; BROMLEY: 81, High Street; CAMDEN TOWN: 137, High St., N.W.1; CANTERBURY: 20, High Street; CATFORD: 191, Rushey Green, S.E.6; CHARING CROSS RD: 137, Charing Cross Rd, W.C.2; CHEAPSIDE: 74/75, Cheapside, E.C.2; CHELMSFORD: 86, High St; CHICHESTER: 18, North Street; CHINGFORD: 26, Old Church Road, E.4; CHISWICK: 308, High Road, W.4; CLAPHAM JUNCTION: 59, St. John's Road, S.W.11; COLCHESTER: 19/20, High St; CROUCH END: 3, Broadway Parade, N.8; CROYDON: 147, North End; DALSTON: 10, High Street, E.8; EALING: 49, The Broadway, W.5, EASTBOURNE: 125, Terminus Road; EDGWARE: 138, Station Road; ELTHAM: 93/95, High St. S.E.9; ENFIELD: 7, Church Street; EPSOM: 34, High St; EDGWARE ROAD: 108/110, Edgware Road, W.2; FINSBURY PARK: 3/5, Alexander Bldgs, N.4; FINCHLEY ROAD, 221a, Finchley Road, N.W.3; FOREST GATE: 41a, Woodgrange Road, E.7; GOLDERS GREEN: 24, Golders Green Road; HAMMERSMITH: 13, The Broadway; HAMMERSMITH: 21, The Broadway; HARROW: 291, Station Road; HORNCHURCH: 139/140, High St; HOUNSLOW: 257, High Street; HOLBORN: 274/275, High Holborn, W.C.1.; ILFORD: 169, High Road; KENSINGTON: 197, High Street, W.8; KENTISH TOWN: 337, Kentish Town Rd; KILBURN: 88, High Road, N.W.6; KINGSTON: 20, Clarence St; LEWISHAM: 94, High Street, S.W.13; LUTON: 36, George Street; LINCOLN: 292/293, High Street; MAIDSTONE: 10, Week Street; NEW MALDEN: 4, Broadway Prde; NORTHAMPTON: 7, Mercers Row; NOTTINGHAM: 7, Long Row; ORPINGTON: 258, High Street; PALMERS GREEN: 337, Green Lanes, N.13; PECKHAM: 164, Rye Lane, S.E.15; PICCADILLY: 47/48, Piccadilly, W.1; PORTSMOUTH: 175, Commercial Road; RICHMOND: 5, George Street; ROMFORD: 47, South St;

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