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AFTER BLACKPOOL - THE FIGHT GOES ON

No left winger - or for that matter, no socialist - could be pleased by the results of the Blackpool Conference. However, it is necessary to say that it was, perhaps, not so bad as it appeared from press and television reports. It is true that the left lost on every important issue. That a number of changes have taken place in the programme and complexion of the Labour Party: it is now a party which officially condones American mass murder in Vietnam, it is now a party which legislates against trade unions and, lastly, it is now a colour bar party (anyone who doubts that should find out from delegates what Bob Mellish said.) That is one side of the balance sheet; the other side is that at that conference because an important section of the left stood firm the basis of a national left wing was laid.

On Tuesday, Mr. Wilson had the conference cheering - with the important exception of the TGWU delegation and a section of the left - but on Wednesday when he replied to the Vietnam debate, Mr. Wilson had to posture for polite applause. That a firm left wing stand corresponded to the feelings and desires of a very large number of delegates was shown by reactions to the Briefing. Delegates from all over the country, including many trade unionists whose vote was cast for the right because of the block vote system, warmly congratulated the distributors of Briefing. The money they donated for it was another important indication. By standing firm left-wingers were not isolated.

The urgent issue of the day is to fight between now and the opening of Parliament for steel nationalisation, with workers control, to be featured in the Queen's speech; against the colour bar immigration bill; against anti-union legislation; for cuts in arms expenditure; for an intensification of the fight against the American war of aggression in Vietnam; and for the admission of the N.L.F. representatives. Mr. Wilson and his team must be made to understand that socialist principles are infinitely more important than the paper victories obtained by manipulation and mesmerism. Every organisation in the Labour movement must be made to realise that not to fight against the Government's policies is <sup>to</sup> court disaster for socialism, for working class standards and for the Labour Party. The aim of this campaign must be to reverse Government policy. Those MPs who have spoken of "last ditches" must be supported and reinforced.

BLACKPOOL BRIEFING: A composite pamphlet consisting of the briefing material issued day-by-day in Blackpool, plus other important material, is to be published jointly by The Week & Voice of the Unions. This will provide an insight to Blackpool conference of an invaluable nature. Price 1/6d per copy.

## WIPE OUT LABOUR'S SHAME

by Ken Coates

(Editorial note: this is the text of the speech made seconding the composite resolution on Vietnam at the Labour Party conference.)

Mr. Wilson and Mr. Stewart have set their faces against this resolution. They are maintaining that it is an extremist one. This is not true. It is a moderate resolution: one which is so moderate, that in the face of the terror and misery of the people of Vietnam, I had great difficulty in bringing myself to support it. But I think it must be supported: because it gives every delegate present who has any regard for libertarian, socialist, humanist values the chance to stand up and be counted.

The essence of the resolution is that it calls upon the Government to dissociate itself from American policy. Not to 'condemn', 'defy' or 'oppose': but simply to dissociate. If every delegate understands the nature of the Vietnam war, this elementary request will be carried unanimously. What is this war? It is a national liberation struggle, part of a worldwide fight against old empires, by the hungry peoples of the third world. It has developed, sometimes under one banner, sometimes under another, sometimes under one of the varieties of world communism, in India, through Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It is the biggest social upheaval of our time.

In Vietnam, this war has been going on for twenty-five years. It began against the Japanese. It continued under the French. Now it is against the Americans. Every village, for all that time, has felt the weight of its terror. In every town-square the guillotine was set up to kill suspect malcontents. Hundreds of thousands have been killed, tortured and maimed. As a direct result, the overwhelming majority of the Vietnamese people have come round to the side of Ho Chi Minh, a fact which has been witnessed in the past by President Eisenhower and numerous front bench spokesmen of our party, including Mr. Crossman - I only wish that he had the courage to say today what he said a few years <sup>ago</sup>, because under the Americans it has become ten times more true than it was then. Mr. Stewart talks about North and South Vietnam. There are not two Vietnams, any more than there were 2 Frances when that country was cut in half by Hitler during the second world war. Half Vietnam has been annexed by the Americans, who installed at the beginning of the year their umpteenth puppet, who then said: "My only hero is Hitler. We need 4 or 5 Hitlers in Vietnam." Under his regime, 8 million peasants, 59% of the population, are herded into concentration camps called 'strategic hamlets'.

There is in Vietnam a very rightwing party, called the Democratic Party, which has as its motto 'For the defeat of communism everywhere'. This rightwing party has testified about these camps. They mean: 'a forced labour under the control of 300,000 secret police. The programme is planned for fifteen million people. It is the only conflict on record in which every means is employed to destroy one's own people by a series of barbaric attacks with American arms. These police commit numerous atrocities....' and again, this rightwing party says: 'It is certainly an ironic way to protect the peasant masses from communism...to herd them behind barbed wire walls under police control, to burn their villages. Poor as the Vietnamese are, they are not domestic animals.'

Now, as this genocidal war escalates, as the Americans move in more and more troops, the South Vietnamese conscript soldiers themselves are being confined to these camps, to stop them from deserting en masse.

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Why can't the most powerful military nation on earth defeat these poor peasants? They fight with the most primitive weapons, they fight without pay, they risk their lives and the lives of their families in a desperate struggle against indiscriminate and total terror... Bombs which slice people into fragments, napalm which burns away its powerless living victim with a fire that cannot be quenched until he sees his flesh in ashes, mass eviscerations, torture as a systematic device. People say that the Vietcong also use terror. So they do: they use limited discriminate terror against the occupiers and their quislings, after repeated warnings, as did the resistance in Europe. American bombs kill everything, poison everyone, char all the life within their range, which is at the limit of scientific fiendishness.

How can men find the will to fight such awful things? They find this will from the same springs which inspired our grandfathers to form unions, and our own fight against fascism. If delegates here were Vietnamese and saw the walls of American outposts, decorated with strings of human ears (The American liberal press reports such scenes every day of the week) if they saw the mutilated women, the butchered children, who can doubt that they would be with the Vietcong? They would have no choice, just as, during the war, we had no choice but to fight, with the communists, against fascism.

The Government's support of this evil American war is the worst shame ever to be inflicted on our Labour movement. (At this point the chairman, Gunter, intervened to silence the speaker) They say that the bank rate is 6%. But what is the interest which Vietnamese children are paying on the vast loan with which the Americans saved the £? I appeal to the unions: you too, tomorrow, will be asked to yield your powers to the £. It is not worth these sacrifices. If you vote against this resolution you are supporting these murders and mutilations. By voting for this very mild resolution, at least you take a step to wipe out our shame.

CHURCH SUPPORT FOR MEDICAL AID TO VIETNAM by J.M. Blackman

"Has the Church nothing to say on Vietnam?---J.C.H. (Bristol)."

The reply from Paul Oestreicher of the British Council of Churches in their publication Outlook to this reader runs as follows: "To be silent about the agony of the people of Vietnam is to condone the atrocities of a war which does not come near to being just. If Christians were aware of their role as peace-makers every MP would be submerged with protests at our Government's cowardly support of American policy. Having half-heartedly taken sides with Johnson posing as Goldwater, Harold Wilson still poses as a mediator. This is an insult to the intelligence of the electorate and an insult the electorate deserves. If the Government is defeated at the next election it will be because prices have risen, not because murder has been condoned. That brands us as the real culprits."

He suggests then that the least we can do is to send money to the British Medical Aid for Vietnam Committee, and continues: "Through the Red Cross this will go to North Vietnam as well, where American bombs fall on hospitals and churches and not only on radar stations. 'If your enemy hunger, feed him...'  
Enemy? Could any of the peasants of this crucified people be our enemies?"

This appeared in the Sheffield edition of Outlook, which carries a letter from the Bishop of Sheffield as a sort of parish magazine for the diocese, for this month, September, 1965.

Editorial Note: this is the text of a speech which would have been made had not the platform manoeuvred the West Nottingham resolution on incomes policy off the conference agenda. They obviously feared a real discussion on what a socialist incomes policy should be!

I am well qualified, coming from Nottingham, to speak on a socialist incomes policy. It was a Nottingham<sup>man</sup> who started the idea. His name was Robin Hood. His policy, which still fevers our imagination, was to rob the rich to pay the poor. It is time that this government of ours followed that inspired example as contained in Clause Four.

We are not suggesting that we can reach Utopia in the first year of a Labour Government. We are well aware of what state the country was in when the Tories were thrown out. Yet we are certain that put to them properly, the working people of this country will make sacrifices if it is necessary. But to ask them to make these sacrifices it must be shown that basic changes in the structure and control of the economy are taking place. There must be a growth in their power and a reduction in the arbitrary powers of the employers. The working people have not been attracted towards any incomes policy whilst they see this Labour Government dragging its feet on steel and land nationalisation. If as much zeal had been devoted to controlling the bankers as to criticising trade unionists this party would have a far greater show of unity in conference today.

What are the preconditions of a socialist incomes policy? I would say that our resolution lays them down quite clearly. It certainly cannot begin with a situation where many workers in this country are receiving less than £10 per week. If Mr. Brown really thinks that this is a living wage, then I would suggest that he attempts what Ernest Bevin did when he was making his case for the dockers: try to live on it.

It is a scandal that an incomes policy should be under discussion without the firm expression for and action by the government on the question of equal pay for women. Above all it should never be entertained before a guaranteed minimum wage is actually established - and when one talks of a minimum wage that means also a living wage. However serious is the state of the economy, there is one reform that costs nothing. The trades unions must have the right to judge from the findings of opening the employers' books what sort of an incomes policy they should have. At the moment they are unaware of the facts as to how much they are being exploited. Mr. Brown recently pointed out that wage increases are out in the open and can be seen by all. Mr. Woodcock told the Institute of Directors last year that they were too scared to disclose their profits. Of course they want to conceal them. We can guess at some of them, but generally we know far too little.

The vital secrets are being kept hidden. What we say is: "open the books." Let us have everything out in the open. Let us know whether these people are cheating the incomes and prices policy or not. The boss and tax office see through Pay As You Earn that they have the last ounce out of the employee. Why, therefore, shouldn't the unions be allowed to assist the Inland Revenue to stop the employer's tax fiddles and expense account rackets? Until the

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The Need for a Socialist Incomes Policy (continued)

unions have this sort of information their members are the only ones bound to suffer. Why shouldn't we scan the books? We can study the accounts of local councils down to the last penny. What is so sacred about profit? The present incomes policy keeps us in the dark and the employers can see we are blindfolded. Mr. Brown has done nothing whatsoever to take any power away from the employers but we are constantly hearing threats against fundamental trade union rights. Trade unionists throughout this land have built this movement in hard won battles and they will not succumb to threats or intimidation wherever it comes from. I will say finally that the first blow against these threats will be at this conference when you vote for this resolution.

FORDS' SHOP STEWARDS WRITE TO MR. WILSON

from J. Bedford

The following letter was sent to the Prime Minister on 25th September:

"At a recent meeting of the Ford Chassis, KD & Hot-Metal Shop Stewards Committee I was instructed to write informing you that the following resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority:

'That this Shop-Stewards Committee condemns most strongly the disparaging and harmful remarks of the Prime Minister, and other members of his Government, especially the Minister of Labour, Mr. Ray Gunter, about Shop Stewards of this country which have been given wide publicity in the national press in recent months.

'We sadly deplore the fact that a Government that we helped to get elected, and of whom we expected so much, should stoop to laying the blame for our economic troubles at the doorstep of the workers and their trade unions, and especially the scapegoat of all, the shop steward.

'We believe that the Government would do better to emphasise to <sup>the</sup> electorate the inefficiencies of managements and the fact that low wages encourage those inefficiencies. That under-production is the fault of these inefficient managers and not the fault of the unions and shop stewards for repeatedly lodging claims for wage increases.'

I am asked to stress that these attacks on the unions and shop stewards can only do harm in the long run to the Labour Government. That to pander to what appears to be popular at the moment - "knocking the trade unions and shop floor representatives" - is a dangerous way to be seeking popularity at the polls.

We are the last to deny that our trade union movement needs to be open at times to justified criticism.

① There were four big demonstrations during the conference week at Blackpool. In each case we had the position of workers demonstrating against their "own" party because of the policies of the Government. The first, that by bread roundsmen, has had plenty of publicity so it is only necessary to note it briefly. The most important aspect of this demonstration was the chanting by the demonstrators that they "would vote for the others next time." This again underlines the fact that workers when they become disillusioned by right wing social democracy do not, as certain mechanical marxists predict, automatically become left wing. They will only do so if they see some organisation which offers to them a perspective of successful struggle.

② The next to demonstrate were 40-odd workers from the Darlington locomotive works. They were protesting against the decision, announced the Friday before the conference, to close down their works. In a statement by the Works Council they said: "The Prime Minister has said that railway shops are to be allowed to tender for commercial contracts. We agree - but what good will this be if the Railway Board continues to close the workshops? Our workshop, threatened by Beeching's axe since 1962, is now to close in April, 1966. Eight months ago, our case was put to the Transport Minister and the Railway Board. Suspension of closure and a full enquiry was requested. No answer to our case has been given. If the Minister of Transport will not revoke the decision, then the Prime Minister must intervene. The closure must be halted and a public enquiry held."

This, very clearly, is yet another case of the Government carrying on a Tory policy in relation to the nationalised industries. Far from increasing the area of social ownership, Mr. Wilson and co. are reducing it. And they are doing so on the basis of 'profitability' without any consideration to the social consequences for the workers concerned. Moreover, this particular episode is marked by a high-handed attitude and a refusal to grant the very modest demand that the closure be halted until an enquiry is held. It is to be hoped that readers of the Week will find the ways and means of raising this question and supporting the Darlington locomotive works workers.

③ 100 demonstrators came up from Plessey A.T. & E. factory in Liverpool. Their statement read: "We are here as representatives of 14,000 workers employed at Plesseys, A.T. & E. factory, Liverpool to lobby MPs for the retention of work on the Merseyside of a diversified nature. This is in conjunction with the policies propounded by...George Brown...and to support our case a petition of 14,000 signatures will be presented." The effort had obviously been very well planned by the Joint Staff and Crafts Association. The demonstrators had learnt special words to popular songs and entertained the delegates as they went in by chanting them. A very large number of unions were represented, judging from the banners carried. The transfer of work from their factory to Nottingham is one of the main reasons for some of them.

A four-strong delegation is in China from Britain. The four members of the delegation are sponsors of the newly formed Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU). They have gone as guests of the Foreign Cultural Association and hope to see some of the principal cities as well as study aspects of particular interest to each one of them. Ernie Roberts, of course, will be specially interested to see their engineering. Mary Adams, the only lady, is vice-chairman of the Consumers' Association and is connected with television. Robert Bolt, the playwright, and Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, the historian, are the other two members of the party.

Ernie is prepared to speak to certain organisations about the visit when he returns. The party is due back around the second week in October. Ernie can be contacted about speaking at: 43, Copers Cope Rd., Beckenham, Kent.

#### FOUR "WEEK" SPONSORS STAND FOR NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Four sponsors of the Week stood for the Labour Party's National Executive, Constituency and Central Labour Parties sections. Three of them were new comers to the election: Frank Allaun, Konni Zilliacus and Ken Coates. The other, Eric Heffer, increased his vote by over 50% this year, gaining 98,000 votes as against 62,000 last year. Frank Allaun established himself as a very serious contender for the executive by gaining 239,000 votes. He was second only to Sydney Silverman among the unsuccessful candidates. The lowest vote for successful candidates was 475,000 (that of Tom Driberg and Ian Mikardo.) Konni Zilliacus obtained 130,000 and Ken Coates 69,000.

#### THE "WEEK" AT BLACKPOOL

Supporters of the Week devoted their attention to helping to produce Briefing, a daily bulletin of some 10 to 16 pages. 1,200 copies of each issue were produced and this was a formidable undertaking. Working side by side with supporters of Voice of the Unions, the Labour Peace Fellowship, Labour C.N.D., the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, New Left Review and others, supporters of our journal worked until 3.00 a.m. and had to be up in time to distribute Briefing to delegates as they started to go in at 9.00 a.m.. Briefing was very much appreciated by the delegates, very many of whom came up and congratulated the distributors. They showed their support, too, by donating generously whenever we were allowed to collect money (which wasn't very often because of police regulations). Despite the main concentration being on Briefing nearly 200 copies of the Week were sold and contacts gained for its distribution literally all over the country.

#### MALCOLM CALDWELL JOINS THE "WEEK"

Observant readers will have noticed a new name in the list of sponsors in the last two issues: Malcolm Caldwell. Malcolm, aged 34, graduated in economics at Edinburgh and in politics at Nottingham. He joined the staff of the London School of Oriental and African Studies in 1959. Has since then visited several countries in South and South East Asia. Currently completing a book on problems of independence in Asia. Was associated with the Labour Party since school days. He writes regularly for Peace News and many journals. He says: "I have been reading the Week since its establishment, and greatly value its service in providing up-to-the-minute interpretations of events for socialists. The Week has very quickly made its mark on the British scene, as the frequency with which it is quoted in the press demonstrates."

## "TEACH-IN" ON SECONDARY EDUCATION

from an education correspondent

The Leeds Association for the Advancement of State Education has organised a 'teach-in' on "The future of secondary education", which is to take place on Saturday, October 30th, at 2.30 p.m. The venue will be the Brain Wood County Secondary School, Elmete Lane, Leeds 8. Anyone may attend for whole or part of the "teach-in" as they like. The tea break will be at 5.00 p.m. approximately and the meeting should finish at 9.00 p.m.. Programmes, costing 3/6, can be obtained at the door. Arrangements have been made for teas, prices 5/-. These have to be ordered by telephone from the secretary. An attractive leaflet giving full details of the "teach-in" is available from: Mrs. Jennings, Secretary ASE (Leeds branch), 34, Dennistead Crescent, Leeds 6. Telephone Leeds 57527.

## JOAN BAEZ CONCERT IN SHEFFIELD

Centre Concerts is to present a concert for CND in Sheffield on Tuesday 12th October. It is at the Sheffield City Hall and commences at 8.00 p.m. Joan Baez will be singing folk and protest songs. Tickets are available at 5/-, 7/6, 8/6, 10/6, 12/6, 15/-. 16/- and 21/- from Box Office, Wilson Peck Ltd., 64-70, Leopold St., Sheffield 1. You should enclose an SAE.

## LABOUR POLICY IN SOUTH ARABIA

from Gertrude Elias

Editorial note: the following was published in a leaflet by the South Arabia Committee, 3, Shavers Place, London.S.W.

In answer to the British Government's abrogation of the constitution of Aden, the Aden Liberation Movement has called on all citizens to refuse to work under the British High Commissioner. Colonial Secretary Anthony Greenwood, two years ago still a brave sponsor of the Movement for Colonial Freedom, has to learn that the easy days of the Anglo-Arabian Empire are on the wane. Britain has been in power here for over a hundred years; now everybody from Chief Minister Mackawee down to the last street sweeper feels/has been long enough.

Mr. Greenwood tried in vain last August to find stooges willing to sell out, but Abdullah al Asnag- the leader of the Aden TUC and the People's Socialist Party- insisted that nothing less than the implementation of the U.N. resolution for self-determination and free elections under U.N. supervision was good enough. The resolution stipulated in particular that the British military base in Aden be evacuated. The Colonial office, true to tradition, asserts that the National Liberation Movement is stirred up by the U.A.R., and they want to make the world believe that "were it not for Pres.Nasser and Cairo, the Arabs in Aden would gladly reconcile themselves to all the squalor, to their drainless slums in the 'Crater'(Aden's "Native" quarter)without resentment...that they would watch the tanker fleets of the big oil companies which pass through Aden docks year in year out, carrying liquid gold to the West..."

No, Mr. Greenwood, the resentment of the Arabs is not due to the "Voice of Cairo" nor to the hidden hand of Moscow or Peking. Blindness due to malnutrition and poverty is certainly one of the scourges of British rule, but the evidence of the omni-present Anglo-American oil trusts cannot be overlooked, even by those of poor vision.