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THE Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

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THE WEEK

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

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LETTER TO READERS

We have not yet produced the supplement on the workers' control school, many apologies, but we were perhaps a little foolish to promise it this week in the first place. All those involved in the production of the Week had their stint to do in the municipal elections, which on top of the ordinary job of getting the journal out made anything else impossible. Still there is a positive side, more time is now available for people wishing to send material in - but it must arrive by Whit Tuesday.

Readers will note that we have met some of the points made at the Week meeting in Nottingham, by putting the date, etc., on the front page and by returning to an itemised contents' page. We hope in return there will be a good response to our appeal on the back page.

THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION RESULTS

The massive Labour gains would guarantee an impressive victory at the polls at a general election, in fact Labour has equalled its peak performance of 1963 - the best showing in municipal elections ever. However, it would be foolish not to note certain facts. Firstly, the results were characterised a decline in the position of the Liberal Party which clearly indicates that the former Tory supporters who have been voting Liberal are beginning to return to the fold. This is an entirely foreseeable event; dissatisfied Tories are quite likely to vote Liberal as a protest, even to the extent of losing the Tories seats. But when the chips are down and these sections, who very often are rightward inclined, see the real possibility of their voting helping the return of a Labour Government it is a different matter. Labour cannot now rely upon 'Orpingtons' or the winning of Tory seats through Liberal intervention.

Secondly, there were in many working class areas reductions in Labour voting. Of course traditionally there is a tendency for there to be a much lower working class poll in municipal elections than in parliamentary ones. Even overconfidence may help to explain these reductions. But surely we must see in them a warning signal.

The left knows that not only will the return of a Labour Government enable the question of real socialist transformation of Britain to be posed in concrete terms rather than merely programmatic ones, but also the best possibly circumstances for the development of a firm socialist core in the Labour Party are those of a Labour Government with a big majority. Apart from its general loyalty to the workers organisations, the left has doubly sure reasons for being perturbed at any development which casts doubt on the possibility of the election of a Labour Government with a large majority. So it is in all sincerity that we can say to the present Labour leadership "Yes, we are very pleased with the election results, but a little worried and we feel that they suggest that what is needed for the guaranteeing of a firm election victory is a more decisive socialist policy. One which would inspire and mobilise the working class, bring out even the most backward sections, because being clear cut and completely distinguishable from the policies of the Tories and the Liberals ^{and} being one which workers recognise as directed against the employing classes, everyone would know that there was a point in voting." But, of course, we know such an orientation is impossible other than on the basis of the fight for real socialist policies.

WILSON AND SOUTHERN ARABIA

The Financial Times ran an article last week on the reasons for British troops being in Aden. They were there, it explained for two reasons: (1) to protect British oil interests (although the writer was dubious about their necessity for this purpose); and (2) to keep Aden as part of a world network of bases, which in turn were designed to protect British interests. By British interests that paper meant the investments and trade arrangements of British big business. Readers of The Week will not need further development of this point. But what about Harold Wilson? Where does he now stand in relation to the United Nations which has overwhelmingly condemned the bombings in Southern Arabia, that Wilson now defends? What is worse he commits our Party to supporting blatant gunboat style imperialism. With more sadness than anger we must protest and do all in our power to get this policy reversed. We reiterate last week's call for the withdrawal of all British troops from abroad and for the right of self-determination for the Arab people.



LIFE'S BETTER WITH THE CONSERVATIVE

ILKESTON AGAINST THE NATIONAL TREND

by Dick Gregory*

The May local elections have once again shown the determination of the people to be rid of the Tories. Results have shown that Labour could expect a large majority in Parliament if the General Election was held now. Yet in Ilkeston once again the local election results have gone against the Labour Party and the national trend. At the election in May, 1963, the Liberals gained a seat in the South Ward. Again this year they have achieved another success. To many it seems contradictory that a constituency with a parliamentary majority of over 20,000 should lose seats at a time like this. To realise why this happens the make-up of the Ilkeston Local Party must be examined.

For many years there has been a great deal of apathy in the party. The people who hold the executive positions are quite content to plod along in the same old way. Nearly 18 months ago a resolution from the Y.S. branch was passed which called for a membership drive. A membership committee was set up, but it did not meet until October of last year, almost 12 months after the GMC had approved the original resolution. It is now May, the membership sub-committee has not met again. This is just one example of the apathy in the party. The same apathy is even more apparent in the Labour Group. With a majority of nearly two to one, there seems to be more interest in who becomes Chairman of what committee than the proposal of socialist measures to solve the problems of the people.

The Liberals have seen their opportunity and are cashing in on it. After last year's success they have proceeded to build up their successful candidate into something of a genius in the eyes of the people, with the result that a very mediocre candidate defeated a Labour Councillor at the polls this month. There are, however, some comrades who are prepared to fight to save the party, they are spearheaded by the Y.S. and a local branch of the T.G.W.U. Already there are two resolutions on the table demanding the secretary's resignation. If this can be achieved the Ilkeston Local Labour Party will be well on the way to recovery.

* Dick Gregory is secretary of the Ilkeston Young Socialists

SOCIALIST REGISTER ESSENTIAL READING from James Wilcox

The Socialist Register for 1964, edited by Ralph Miliband and John Saville contains some crucially important articles that every socialist should read. Two complementary contributions analyse the new features of the capitalist system. H. Alavi presents a model of new imperialism and provides detailed information on India as a case study. E. Mandel contributes a lucid explication of the "Economics of Neo-colonialism". A. Halek, an Egyptian Marxist characterises the nature of Nasserism; I. Deutscher writes on the origins of Maoism; and the editors analyse the present position of the left in the Labour Party. Those who followed the recent workers' control school in Nottingham will find M. Basquet's article where he outlines the strategy of the Italian trade unions of great interest. Likewise with Jim Mortimer's article on the "Structure of British Trade Unions."

NOTTINGHAM USDAW TACKLES LORD SAINSBURY by Bob Gregory

Disturbed at the volume of South African produce on display in the Nottingham Sainsbury Supermarket, Central Nottingham USDAW wrote to Lord Sainsbury, the prominent Labour Peer, asking for explanations. The answer read in part as follows: "Personally I am in complete opposition to Apartheid but" (our emphasis) "as a retail organisation we cannot as such participate in the boycotting of South African goods or in the withdrawal of them from sale. Our customers wishing to exercise their own individual conscience in the matter may do so by not purchasing South African produce. In all but very few instances there are alternative or similar products from other countries available."

This reply is at first sight reasonable. Sainsbury declares his opposition to Apartheid. But then so does Sir Alec Douglas-Home. It is the call for action that separates socialists from do-gooders. Why cannot a retail organisation participate in a boycott? If a City Council can black South African goods then how much easier is it for a private company? If the shopper can exercise her own individual conscience then why cannot the retail organisation? For Sainsbury is just as much a shopper, though more so, than the housewife. He has the power to evolve a principled buying policy towards the wholesalers and importers, who distribute South African goods, and to the South African exporters. He has the power to exercise his individual conscience. Why doesn't he?

N.A.L.S.O. PROTESTS AGAINST ALEXANDER CASE SENTENCES from Chris Arthur

The following statement has been issued by NALSO:

"At its meeting on May 9th, the Executive Committee of the National Association of Labour Student Organisations (representing 6,695 students) decided unanimously to protest most vigorously at the sentences meted out to Dr. Alexander and his associates on charges of "sabotage."

The case of Dr. Alexander, who won two doctorates in German philology, at Cape University, and at Tübingen, is a further stage in the repression of our fellow students and scholars in South Africa, whose academic and political liberties are more and more curtailed by the persecution of the Verwoerd Government."

ABERDEEN MUNICIPAL ELECTORS IGNORE ANTI-BOYCOTT PROPAGANDA by Alec Bagley

In Aberdeen, the Progressives (Tories) chose to fight the election on the boycott issue, and fared slightly worse than they did in most other Scottish towns. In spite of a lot of publicity and a special leaflet, there was one Labour gain and a general improvement in the Labour vote. Councillors Bowyer and Lamond, who have been very active boycott supporters, both increased their majority. Bowyer in a very marginal ward.

Congratulations, then, as far as it goes. But I would have preferred to see the Labour Party choose to fight the Progressives on their own terms in this case. Instead, it left the boycott issue to individual candidates - a fact, which revealed, I think, a certain lack of faith in the power of their case among some of the Party elders.

As it is, there is no firm evidence that the boycott issue positively affected voting. The swing to Labour is probably not significantly greater in Aberdeen than elsewhere in Scotland. Perhaps if the Labour Party had presented the pro-boycott case with more confidence they would have done even better. Certainly, the failure of the anti-boycott campaign indicates that would not have done any worse, and the party would have had the satisfaction of knowing that it had done everything in its power to present the case for the boycott to the people of Aberdeen - something which has not yet been done adequately.

NEW BOYCOTT STRUGGLE IN ABERDEEN from Robert Gray and Alec Bagley

Boycott supporters gained a victory when the AGM of Aberdeen University Union passed - by 33--31 - a boycott resolution on May 8th. The low turnout and the narrow majority may not look good in universities further south: here it represents a breakthrough for political awareness among students normally politically immobile. It should encourage the boycott movement in all Scottish universities, and is an unofficial vote of confidence in Aberdeen's Town Council. Moreover, such resolutions, by university unions and all the innumerable elected bodies in our daily life, build up a climate of opinion in which positive government action becomes feasible, the demand for it irresistible.

As this is written, a campaign by right-wing students to call a Special Meeting of the Union on this matter - as is their right - is under way. Aberdeen Town Council has shown us the way; for the University to lag behind in this world issue of human rights would be disgraceful..

Messages of support for those students involved in the struggle to preserve the boycott decision will be appreciated, and should be sent to: President, Students' Union, Aberdeen. Letters to Gandie (the student paper) would also help, and should go to: 9, Shoe Lane, Aberdeen.

A.E.U. BRANCH CALLS FOR STRIKE AGAINST APARTHEID from Michael Hill (Oxford)

Your readers may be interested to know that on 1st May, the Carterton, Oxon., branch of the AEU unanimously passed the following resolution:-

"This branch of the Amalgamated Engineering Union resolves, in accordance with the expressed opposition of the trade union movement (nationally and internationally) to Apartheid and in accordance with the support which the Labour movement generally has given to the boycott of trade with South Africa: to cable an emergency resolution to the National Council of the AEU - now meeting at Worthing - requesting:

"a one day token stoppage by all members working for firms trading with South Africa;

"a warning to the South African Government - backed by the necessary preparations in this country - that if the prisoners suffer the death penalty, (for the sole crime of struggling for democracy in a manner in which early trade unionists were forced to struggle,) this will be met by an indefinite stoppage by all members on all work on imports and exports to and from the Republic.

"It is to be hoped that other branches of the AEU and other unions will follow suit." The branch also cabled fraternal May Day greetings to Nelson Mandela and other Freedom fighters now standing trial.

* The AEU national committee passed on May 8th a resolution condemning Apartheid and supporting an international boycott of South African goods.

60. SOUTH AFRICAN DOCTORS SAY '90-DAY DETENTION' HARMFUL TO MENTAL HEALTH

A "90-day protest committee" has been formed in South Africa to campaign against the re-promulgation of the 90-day detention clause (this has to be done by the end of June to remain in force). The committee has issued a 90-page pamphlet which contains a statement by 40 medical specialists, ten psychiatrists and ten psychologists that 90-day's detention could cause severe brain damage.

ANTI-POLARIS DEMONSTRATION IN JUNE

by Len Nicholas*

C.N.D. Labour Committee chairman, Walter Wolfgang, met Labour Party members and trade union representatives in Glasgow recently when it was agreed to hold an Anti-Polaris demonstration this summer. Scottish Region C.N.D., Y.C.N.D., and the Scottish Committee of 100 have now agreed that the demonstration will be at Faslane, on Garloch, during the week-end of June 27/28. The United States Polaris depot ship has sailed from Holy Loch for Cadiz, in Spain, but British Polaris submarines are nearing completion ---one of them at Faslane.

The Labour C.N.D. Committee will shortly publish a pamphlet by Terence Heelas, especially written for Labour Party members, called the Disintegrating Alliance. Comrade Heelas was a Labour candidate at the last general election and is a member of the Institute of Strategic Studies and a founder member of the C.N.D. Disarmament and Strategy Group. The author thinks that Labour Party and C.N.D. policy has run so close together that NATO remains the only point where major differences exist. In a close logical argument he outlines how the NATO alliance is fast breaking up. The main reason is the ever growing reluctance by America to commit nuclear suicide for her European allies. This snail-like withdrawal by America into her own shell will, he thinks, cause disintegration of the alliance ---probably before the 1969 expiry date.

With the danger of Russian/American war receding a new danger of nuclear weapon proliferation ---- the spread of nuclear know-how to an ever increasing number of nations ---- grows. The Labour Party's proposals to promulgate some sort of shared control of nuclear weapons in NATO countries must be opposed, and loyalty to the United Nations made the keystone of its policy. John Strachey in one of his last speeches said, "mankind has only an even-money chance of avoiding the horrors of nuclear war."

With a relaxing of the cold war tensions resulting from the Moscow Test Ban Treaty, the Washington-Moscow "hot line" and some small armaments reductions by the two major powers the odds against war have no doubt lengthened. Terence Heelas' pamphlet dissects the dangers and throws light forward to guide a Labour Government. We hope it will be widely read in the Labour and Trade union movement.

* Len Nicholas is the secretary of the Labour C.N.D. Committee.

NORTH WEST REGION CND'S SUMMER PROGRAMME

The North West Region of the CND has announced its coming activities. The first of these was a Conference of Group Officers on 'The work of a Group Secretary, Chairman, Treasurer, Sanity Organiser, etc.' to which all past, present and future CND and YCND officers were invited. This took place on Saturday, 9th May at 2.30. In the evening of the same day there was a dance at the St. Joseph's Hall, Chapel St. Leigh. The following day there was a Youth Campaign Hike starting from the Clarence Hotel, Greenfield at 10.45. On Saturday 23rd May, 11.00, there will be a new supporters meeting at the Friends' Meeting House. The following Friday, a rally will take place at the Free Trade Hall at 7.30 with Donald Soper, Olive Gibbs, Michael Foot and other speakers. Other events include Regional Council meetings on June 6th and 11th July, and a CND Industrial meeting 7th June. Full details can be obtained from: CND, 14 Tib Lane, Manchester 2.

OLIVE GIBBS REPLIES TO GEORGE CLARK from Dick Nettleton*

The lead-in by a 'special correspondent' (in last week's issue) was loaded. The Canon's statement said that there was something "amiss at CND headquarters", it did not show that there was, as per your report. Of course, there is always something wrong "at headquarters" in any organisation, but by and large Carthusian St. does a good job, is much less bureaucratic than other "headquarters" and, in my experience, has its ear near to the ground.

Olive Gibbs (acting chairman of CND) has replied to the accusations along the following lines:

"I am sorry that so soon after my election as acting chairman I have to write to you about internal dissension within the Campaign. I believe that our immediate objectives should be to unite in a determined effort to put the independent policy of CND in the forefront of the Election, to link it to a widespread campaign against Polaris and to solve our financial problems...the statement issued by George Clark...can do great damage....I will answer them" (the charges) "one by one.

"George Clark has accused the E.C., the Disarmament and Strategy Group, the General Secretary and the Information Officer of attempting to change CND policy.....A statement of policy, based on resolutions passed at the last Conference has been agreed by Council and Executive, was published in the December issue of Sanity and will shortly be issued as a leaflet. This is the policy which we all accept and which is being implemented by Council, Executive, officers and staff of the Campaign. The Disarmament and Strategy Group is also portrayed by George as a sinister group set up to alter CND policy. There is no truth in this. This group was established after the Annual Conference to implement the Resolution on interim objectives.....Its task is to establish communication and a dialogue with strategists and others outside the Campaign, to organise letters and articles in the press, to make contacts with radio and television, to ensure that our case is presented as widely as possible...It does not deal with the production of literature and has no policy-making functions.....I must emphasise that no one on the Executive or Council, in the Disarmament and Strategy Group or on the staff has changed their opinion on NATO.

"...I must remind you that"(the Crewe)"resolution which calls on the USA and USSR unilaterally to disarm was defeated at the last Annual Conference. No one on the E.C. would question the right of a minority to seek to win the majority to its point of view. But the minority has no right to accuse the E.C. of ignoring Conference decisions because they disagree with the majority point of view. Personally I hope and believe that these two conflicting points of view can co-exist in the Campaign.....

"In his statement, George Clark says: "at the beginning of the year I resigned from the position of Field Secretary because I wanted to draw attention to our high administrative costs." This is not what he said in his letter of resignation." The statement then gives George Clark's letter of resignation. "...The E.C. has reported fully to the Council and to the Groups over the past 6 months on our financial difficulties...The Movement cannot complain that it has been kept in the dark, for full information has been supplied to Groups and Regions month after month....

"George Clark's final criticisms are of the method of working and efficiency of our H.Q. staff....Michael Howard...gave an interim report..on April 11th. he stated that the office was seriously understaffed..conditions..were very bad, the staff had no security....they work long hours and get no overtime..they do not get union rates...."

WHAT THE TUC PROPOSALS FOR TRADE UNION EDUCATION MEAN

A previous article in the Week noted the struggle which took place at the WEA conference over the TUC's proposals for reorganising trade union education. We have received a statement which "seeks to draw the attention of trade unionists to a pending major change in the structure and control of trade union organisation." Its author(s) say that "its object is to enable an informed debate to take place at this year's union conference and at the TUC, and in particular to ask what can be done to prevent what seems a grossly over-centralised and over-professionalised control over the trade unionists' own education and education fund." We have pleasure in reproducing extracts from the statement:

"...It is common knowledge that since 1957, general agreement has been reached that the former division between the NCLC and the WETUC should end and be superseded by a unified scheme under the auspices of the TUC. The negotiations....have been protracted and the detailed course of these negotiations is not known.....The proposals for the governing body at national level have varied over the years since 1957. At an early stage (1960-1), the TUC proposed that there should be a representative National Committee, composed of the TUC itself, representatives of the WEA and Ruskin College, of the unions, and of co-opted persons, who would represent former NCLC interests. These proposals have since been dropped in favour of complete authority in the hands of the TUC Education Committee."

Details released "confirm that the scheme will be highly centralised and will exclude any kind of local or lay participation in the administration or policy making. The main points are:

- (a) All financial control in the hands of the TUC Education Committee;
- (b) the planning of facilities, the balance of subjects, and courses, to be in the hands of the education department at Congress House;
- (c) a central register of students will be built up;
- (d) recruitment to courses and schools will be via the channels of communication which exist between the TUC and the Head Offices of unions;
- (e) Regional machinery will exist as follows:
 - (1) the TUC Regional Advisory Committees will set up education sub-committees. (note that the TUC Committees in the regions are elected by and from full-time officials only);
 - (2) they will co-opt 2 representatives of the WEA and possibly also representatives of the Trades Council federations in the regions;
 - (3) they will be officered by a full-time TUC education secretary in each region, who will be responsible to the General Council and the General Secretary;
 - (4) they will have advisory powers only, plus the opportunity for suggesting local short term provision;
 - (5) they will liaise with WEA districts and recruit tutors locally.

All local committee structures which formerly existed in the NCLC and WETUC will disappear and will not be replaced. This scheme amounts to a total centralisation of authority.....Regrettably, the TUC has afforded no opportunity for unions to discuss the draft scheme. It is suggested here that conferences ...ought to consider the revision of the scheme to provide for local, lay-committees....to have a proper voice in the control ..of the scheme. This accords with the best traditions of trade union constitutions, as well as of the NCLC and the WETUC. " The paper ends by arguing that if there is firm insistence the proposals must be reconsidered to meet the fundamental point of criticism.

LEFT SWEEP BOARD IN L.C.S. ELECTIONS from a special correspondent

Despite a vicious press campaign (aided by really crude interference by Richard Dimbleby in a Panorama programme) the 1960 Committee candidates won all the elected seats in the recent London Co-operative Society elections. Their candidate, Mr. H.J. Clayden, won the presidency with 3,830 votes against the 3,484 votes cast by the candidate of the London Co-operative Members Organisation, Mrs. M. Millar. Mr. Clayden succeeded John Stonehouse, M.P., who resigned after having only served two of his three years of office. This means that there will be another election for president next year. Other results were:

Management Committee, six elected: Mr. R. Ledger, M.P., 4,039; Counc. R.B. Bastin, 3,650; Mrs. Betty Young, 3,539; Mr. F. Brown, 3,426; Mr. A. Stilwell, 3,393; and Mr. R. Fletcher, 3,311. The highest vote received by the unsuccessful candidates was 2,345 for Mr. H. Shopland.

Education Committee, one elected: Mrs. D Purcell, with 1,388 votes as against the unsuccessful candidate, Mrs. A Scaverien's 979.

Political Committee, one elected: Mr. A. Kearney, with 1,265 votes as against the unsuccessful candidate, Mr. E. Smythe's 911.

These elections took place against a background of a big improvement in the affairs of the LCS since the 1960 Committee members acquired their leading position. In the period under review at the time of the elections, the LCS made a surplus of £2,488,225 before appropriations for dividends, death benefit, donations, etc. The trading surplus was £851,111 after starting the period at a loss - the trends all indicate that improved management has drastically reduced costs and is putting the society above the line.

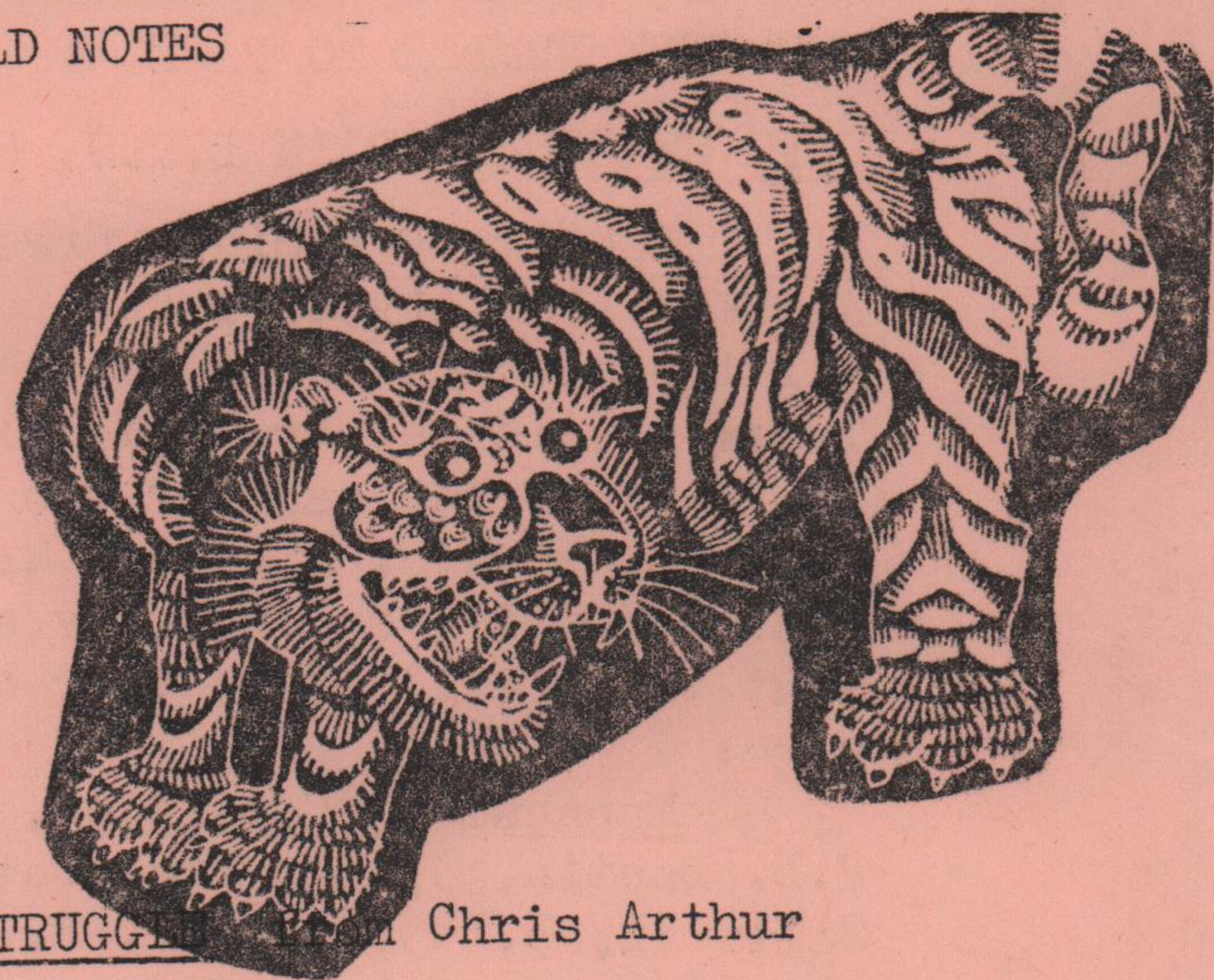
UNION VOICE EDITOR THREATENS LEGAL ACTION OVER PRESS ALLEGATIONS

Arising out of the press campaign against the 1960 Committee candidates in the recent LCS elections, Richard Fletcher, one of the successful candidates and the editor of Union Voice, has instructed his solicitor to institute legal proceedings against the Express, Guardian and Observer over these papers' allegations that he is a member, supporter or associate of the Communist Party.

Mr. Fletcher sent, without prejudice to any further action, to the papers concerned a memorandum on the question. This statement referred to the numerous reports in the press alleging that the 1960 Campaign Committee candidates were either Communists, associated with the Communist Party or under its control. It was widely said after the elections that the LCS was now under Communist control. As one of the 1960 Cttee. candidates Mr. Fletcher answers these allegations and sets out his own political position. Mr. Fletcher points out that he has never been a member of, or associated with, any political organisation other than the Labour and Co-operative Parties. In 1959 he was elected secretary of the Cambridgeshire L.P. and held that position for two years. On moving to London he was elected to the L.P. London Executive from his union, ASSET. After the Scarborough Conference in 1960, Mr. Fletcher had helped to organise the Appeal for Unity, and in February, 1963, he became the editor of Union Voice.

Of the six 1960 Cttee. candidates, only one is a Communist. The others include a Labour M.P., a Labour borough councillor, and persons who have been members of the L.P. and Co-operative Parties for years. Of the 16 board members four are Communists, of these one has been on the board for 27 years. He says that he is taking his action because a tiny minority should be allowed to pervert and distort the truth about political questions, because these allegations are immensely damaging to the interests of the L.C.S., and because the public and political careers are jeopardised by them.

Colonialism's Week



AN APPEAL FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE VENEZUELAN STRUGGLE by Chris Arthur

Revolutionary Venezuela, number 3, (issued by the London Committee of the Venezuelan FLN) contains the following appeal for a solidarity movement in the imperialist countries:

"Venezuela is not only a country fighting to shake off the yoke of neo-colonialism, because of its crucial economic position vis-a-vis the U.S. it can be a trouble spot for peace in the near future. All peace seeking forces the world over should be aware of the fact that to a great extent the future of world peace depends upon the development of the struggle for national liberation in the colonial and dependent countries. Colonialists of all sorts, predators on the natural resources of the underdeveloped countries will not accept peacefully the loss of privileges and profits. But a powerful movement within the colonial powers will be able to deter the foolish warriors who cry for armed intervention every time a liberation movement achieves a new victory.

"The following front page spread, which appeared in the Denver Post of Oct. 30th, 1963, and whose accuracy has never been denied or challenged, is a dramatic illustration of the facts mentioned above:

'U.S. SET TO SUBDUE REDS IN VENEZUELA. by Thayer Waldo - Washington. U.S. Marines may be sent into Venezuela within the next 60 days to prevent a Castroite Communist takeover there. The fateful decision to use force of arms if necessary, to halt the spread of Red domination of Latin America was taken by President Kennedy early last month, it has been learnt from a highly placed Pentagon source.

"Though the new official policy applies to any south of the border republic threatened with seizure by subversive elements, Venezuela so far is the only country for which active planning has been undertaken. That planning involves a precise timetable already operational. Its progressive steps are:

- placing two regiments of battle-tested marines on partial alert (effective since October 1st)
- Placing these regiments on full alert (from Nov. 1st)
- Moving these regiments..to Pesacola, Fla., Naval Air Station with full mobile field equipment (Nov. 1 to 15)
- Airlifting marines and gear to Vieques Island (only if Venezuelan presidential election scheduled for Dec. 1st is blocked....)
- Full scale airborne invasion supported by massive air cover....(only if pro-Communist elements succeed in gaining control of key offices....)
- Conditions requiring the last two steps are now regarded in top Washington circles as 60-40 and 50-50 probabilities....."

COMMENT: The left must do all in its power to make sure that the Labour Government opposes any aggressive moves by the U.S. towards Latin America.

PRIEST-CONTROLLED GOVERNMENT USES 'SAVE RELIGION'
BAIT IN MALTA REFERENDUM

By Richard Matrenza*

Malta's politico-religious Referendum (May 2,3,4) supposedly to test the people's wish as to what form the Independence Constitution is to take, is now history. However it is very important that posterity should be made aware of a number of points.

All along during the Referendum campaign it was evident that this was going to be a replica of the 1962 elections with religion first and independence second. This time, however, the Roman Catholic Archbishop, Sir Michael Gonzi, decreed that the Church will not intervene in a political Referendum. In spite of this the Island's priests aided and abetted by lay religious organisations paid no respect to this warning and carried on a frantic campaign in favour of the government urging people to vote 'YES.'

Only the Labour Party stuck to its principles and directed the people to vote 'NO' against the government's draft independence constitution which subordinates human rights to two clauses giving unprecedented power and privileges to the Roman Catholic church in Malta.

Out of 156,887 votes served 129,650 were cast. The result was 49,667 YES; 41,614 NO; 6,939 INVALID.

Numerous complaints and allegations are rife on the island how aged people, sick patients and nuns have been 'pressurised' to vote. Cloistered nuns who are completely out of contact with the outside world beyond their convents' walls have been also taken to the polling booths in cars driven by government canvassers and priests.

* Richard Matrenza is Permanent Secretary of the Civil Government Section of the General Workers' Union, Malta.

THE LISBON MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION

by Alvaro de Miranda

In Portugal, on May 1st, there was a demonstration by about 3,000 people, mostly students. Although the police deny having opened fire, hospital authorities confirmed that one person, a 44-year old shoe shiner was shot dead and one other person wounded. Previously, on the 28th April, a law student was shot twice, once in the abdomen and once in the shoulder, whilst he was distributing leaflets calling for the demonstration. Six other students have been arrested for the same reason.

In the Beja trial, Manuel Seroa, a catholic workers' leader, complained in court about the treatment he had received at the hands of the PIDE (political police). He was kept awake for 11 days and 11 nights and severely beaten up. For the first 3 months of imprisonment he was kept in an underground cell, in almost complete darkness. He had to remove daily with a bucket the water that had dripped from the walls. Edmundo Serra, also one of the main accused, stated that one of the reasons that had led him to take part in the revolt was the social injustice he found in Portugal. He had been sentenced to 10 years in the concentration camp of Tarrafal in the Cape Verde Islands, the most dreaded prison of all, when he was only 17.

'SHORTAGE' OF LABOUR IN THE COMMON MARKET by Pat Jordan

There are a number of factors which are threatening the continuing economic growth of the Common Market countries. Among these is the growing shortage of labour which arises because of the essentially unplanned nature of the E.E.C. The rate of growth in total employment slowed down in these countries during 1963: being 1.2% in France, 0.8% in Belgium, 0.5% in Holland and 0.4% in both Western Germany and Italy. Except in the case of France these figures are considerably less than the natural growth in population, and they compare with economic growth rates many times as high.

Almost all the increase in the labour force is accounted for by an influx of workers from agriculture or abroad. The number of workers in agriculture decline during 1963 in Italy by 272,000, in W. Germany, by 133,000, in France by 120,000, in Holland by 12,000, and in Belgium by 8,000. In W. Germany foreign workers account for nearly 4% of the work force and firms are trying to recruit even more. However, this is not so easy as in the past, and some firms are recruiting in North Africa. Even Italian firms are recruiting from abroad now. However, Government figures indicate that a growing number of foreign workers have begun to return home as conditions improve in their native countries.

Only in Italy has the decline in unemployment (mostly in the south) played much role in increasing the labour force, accounting for almost one-third of the rise in total employment in the last two years. But this source is tending to dry up as most of the remainingⁱⁿ jobless are virtually unemployable because of where they live, age or lack of training. In France too, the process of drawing on the agricultural reserve is coming to an end and most of the repatriates from Algeria have been absorbed. In other countries there is virtual full employment.

France and Holland are now feeling the effects of the postwar baby boom; but other countries of the E.E.C. do not expect an increase in the working population to help much. The Common Market countries expect a rate of growth in their labour force to be less than half of that projected for the United States during the rest of the present decade.

There are many consequences of this shortage of labour: in some countries especially W. Germany, there is a tendency for stratification in the working class between foreign workers and native born workers. A recent UN survey pointed out that during 1963, Germans took 90% of the new jobs in the service section of the W. German economy but less than 30% of the new jobs in the commodity producing sector. In the Common Market countries is it to a great extent foreign workers who do the unskilled and unpleasant jobs. Another effect is to make it easier for unions to win wage increases and better conditions. The same survey gives the following increase in wage rates between 1958 and 1964 (1st quarter): 49% in France, 47% in Italy, and 40% W. Germany (to beginning of 1964). This figures compare with 25% for Britain. Unit labour costs went up between 1959 and 1963: 28% in Italy, 21% in France, 20% in W. Germany, and 17% in the Netherlands. Again this compares with only 10% in Britain.

The severe shortage of labour will lead to counter measures to stop the workers from taking full advantage of their position. The authoritarian features of the E.E.C. will find expression in attempts to emasculate the labour movement. One of the 'ideological' weapons the employers will use will be the threat of foreign competition, perhaps in particular British competition. Hence we have an additional argument for trying to forge links with the European workers' movement at a very favourable juncture.

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