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Letter to Readers

We went to press the same day as the press reported Harold Wilson's speech at the Transport and General Workers Union Conference at Blackpool. And so, because of time and our not having the full text of the speech, we have not been able to make an extensive editorial comment.

In place of this we have reproduced the editorial in the Financial Times commenting upon the speech. This comment, as is usual for that paper, is quite frank and shows that they do not view the forthcoming Labour government with trepidation but soberly weighup the pros and cons of Wilson's policy. They regard his ability to get the unions to toe the line as a pro - they express a little doubt about him being too vindictive in another respect.

This comment by such an organ of big business is in itself proof of how far Wilson's policies are from socialist ones. We shall comment fully on the speech next week.

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Mr. Wilson's speech to the Transport and General Workers' Union at Scarborough was a major, though rather well worn, statement of Labour's policy on economic affairs. Statements like these to one's closest backers are always important - the Conservatives' to the City, for instance, or Labour's to the trade unions. This occasion, however, was of special importance to Mr. Wilson. This was the first occasion - barring a brief word to the National Union of Railwaymen - that he had addressed a trade union gathering since becoming leader of the Labour party. And even more important he urgently requires trade union support for Labour's concept of a planned

economy, which has as an integral part the matching of wage advance and

The first point, which he got over successfully, was that a Socialist government is not going to be a featherbed for labour. "We cannot afford unofficial strikes," said Mr. Wilson. "We shall have to ask for restraint in the matter of incomes." What makes it possible that he would improve on the present Government's attempts on income restraint is the basis of trust which exists between the unions and Labour. "A great adventure requiring the fullest co-operation of every sector of the community," was how Mr. Wilson put his concept of wages policy. Many trade unionists would wink an eye at this type of language, without necessarily feeling that the whole idea

was doomed.

productivity.

An incomes policy, after all, makes good sense; the thing that is needed is to present it to the people as an opportunity rather than a millstone. Even then it might not work - the unions might not be able to keep their side of the bargain, the economy might not grow at the rate at which a tolerable increase in annual incomes could be sustained, and so on. But it is worth trying and it was Mr. Selwyn Lloyd's mistake that the whole concept was made to look so ham-handed and disagreeable. What Labour would try to do would be to use its relationship with the unions to turn the idea into a reality. Mr. Wilson's cordial reception at the T.G.W.U. yesterday makes this at least into a possibility.

He was able to sugar the pill, of course. Labour would abolish Nicky, which would please the unions without doing the country any harm. More dublously, Mr Wilson promised to clamp down upon "financial manoeuvrings that put quick profits ahead of national interest." In this connection he specifically mentioned capital gains and property speculation, and it is most important that Labour should not be led into vindictiveness here. There is a case - indeed people in the City have urged it - for having a uniform capital gains tax at a lower rate than the present mongrel system. There is an excellent case - suggested by a Conservative Committee - for watching the monopoly aspect of take-over bids through the establishment of a Registrar of Monopolies; and, in property, the co-operation between the developers and local authorities could well be strengthened. But vindicitive action against any of these fields would only harm confidence, slow down development and weaken efficiency.

With Mr. Wilson's speech...the outline of Labour's economic policy is now becoming clear. Neddy is to receive sharp promotion;...Neddy under Labour would move to the centre of policy-making machine...Mr Wilson thinks,..that it could help to provide the engine for Government that has been so notably missing since the collapse of the Common Market talks and the dispersal of Mr. Heath's European team. Through Neddy, the unions would make their voice felt on economic and Labour would articulate its policy of economic growth.

There are still plenty of questions here.... Would the unions be so keen on income restraint once a general election has been held.... A bright point.. is the greater reliance Mr. Wilson is putting on the right-wingers in his party.... (all emphasis ours)

The purpose of the demonstration at Porton was to show an apathetic public that preparations for germ warfare are being made in this country and that these preparations are prejudicial to the interests and safety of the people. Not least among the victories achieved was the fact that several papers began using the explicit term "Germ Warfare Centre" in place of the euphemistic "Microbiological Research Establishment." By Saturday even the BEC was doing so. The local Salisbury papers, however, went on using the cosy local name of "Porton Camp."

Preliminary local leafleting had taken place around Salisbury before June 29th, and a certain amount of advance publicity came when police raided the Goodwin St. offices of the Committee of 100 prior to the demonstration. Despite the threats of the Official Secrets Act, contamination and rain, about 200 people were in Salisbury at the public meeting on Saturday. The speeches came from Amesbury Rural District Councillor, Austin Underwood, from John Papworth, and from Dr. Jeffrey Boss, of the Bristol University Department of Physiology. Underwood pointed out the shocking health precautions at Porton and the long history of official evasion and lies on these precautions. Papworth briefly put Porton in a political context and Dr. Boss attacked the idea of scientific secrecy.

Owing to the vastness of the target area this was by far the most fragmentary demonstration ever. Apart from one mass invasion of the "restricted area" by about 250 of the demonstrators, most of the invasion parties were small and tactics were varied. The position was marked by a helicopter and reconnaisance plane until they were rounded up by the ground. troops, who were numerically far too weak to prevent them moving on, so they picked up some demonstrators and took them out of the area in trucks. They asked the remainder to leave, telling them they would be handed over to civilian police if they were stopped again. Most soldiers were involved with non-cooperating demonstrators and had little chance of carrying out their 'threat.'

While the various invasions were taking place, others picketed sections of the very busy A 30 road along one side of "Porton Camp" with appropriate placards. People were arrested and charged for trespassing on War Department property. At the courts on Saturday night eight cases were dismissed, apparently on the ground that the accused had been prevented by the military from leaving the area after being warned to leave, though 29 of those in the same group were found guilty. In one of the courts the last 5 cases were adjourned until next Saturday so that military evidence on this point could be obtained. The fines were mostly £3 or £5 plus 3 or 5 guineas costs, and a binding over order for 1 year in the sum of £50 was demanded from those convicted in some courts, but not in others.

Several who refused to sign the undertaking were committed to prison for 3 months or until they agreed to sign it. Some of those charged had broken binding-over orders, imposed at Downham Market in May with recognisances up to £50. There was a half-hour adjournment of all the courts at 7.30 p.m., the demonstrators got none. During the break the crowd of relatives, friends and would-be observers who were shouting and shoving outside the courts in their anger at the lack of the statutory provision for the public to attend the proceedings, were given an assurances that this would be remedied after the recess.

Although the class rooms being used were quite large, and 12 or so people could have been comfortably accommodated, only 5 public seats were provided in each. The assurance of more provision quistened the crowd but was not implemented, 5 remained the maximum allowed in each court. Those who were allowed in had to give their names and addresses - a most unusual prerequisite for admission to a public court.

1646 The Evening Standard of July 5th carried the following report:

"Mr. Harold Wilson attended a private lunch in the Tower suite of the Carlton Tower Hotel yesterday. His fellow-guests were 30 top husinessmen. Afterwards Mr. Wilson asked that nothing should be said about the luncheon. The room was booked by Benton and Bowles Inc., an advertising agency who were, ... the hosts. There was much exchanging of ideas.

It is good to see Mr. Wilson using his lunch-times to such good advantage. Only a few weeks ago he was guest of honour at a lunch given by Mr. Bernard Sunley the property millionaire, at which many millionaires, including

Mr. Charles Clore, were present.

DEPOSITS FOR HYTHE SUMMER SCHOOL START TO COME IN

Thirty people have so far sent in their deposits for the school to be held from 7th-13th September. They include comrades from Nottingham, Durham and London. An enquiry received from Germany should result in a good number com ing from that country.

The warden of the Guest House where the event takes place says that because of difficulties with catering margins, it is absolutely essential that he knows well in advance how many people are coming so please send in your deposits, and those of your friends, as soon as possible to 41,

Bramcote Drive, Beeston, Nottingham.

Isaac Deutscher will be speaking on the Sunday morning so it will be worth coming, if only for the week end. Other speakers included Basso, Blackburn, Bourdet, Cliff, Collins, Coates, Eber, Fernando, Hughes, Mandel, Miliband, Nairn, Worsley - and the latest news is that G. Amendola, opposition member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy will most likely be coming.

MINERS STRIKE IN SPAIN

A large number of bituminous slate miners working at Puertiliano in Cuidad de Real province, about 250 kilometres from Madrid, defied the antistrike legislation of Franco's regime a fortnight ago. At Faseco, in Leon province, 1500 workers undertook a go-slow, lasting four days, which caused a 25% drop in production. Both disputes concerned wages, and as a result of them breaking out an inspector of the Spanish Labour Ministry has been sent to investigate.

DANISH DOCKERS TO BOYCOTT SOUTH AFRICAN GOODS

Danish dockers in a resolution of 14th June, have pledged themselves to refuse to handle South African goods, as a protest against apartheid. They have appealed to Norwegian and Swedish dockers to follow their example. 100 Danish M.P.s have issued a 'boycott' appeal.

MR. HENRY BROOKE ON 'EXTREMISTS'

The following extracts from Henry Brooks's speech in the House of Commons, moving the second reading of the Public Order Bill, show the very reactionary views held that great 'defender' of democracy:

"....The public want peace in the streets and the squares. I mean to see that they get it. They are sick and tired of the antics of Fascists, Communists, the self-styled Committee of 100 and all other extremists...And one day a prosecu tion for sedition may very well be brought. I most strongly hold the view that one way to stop disorder is for a court to be able to impose an exemplary sentence and then the deterrent does its work. We must preserve public order, free speech and free assembly against infringement by thugs, fools and fanatics."

1647 The Chinese wing of the Belgian Communist Party, led by Grippa, member of the Central Committee who was recently expelled with two other leading members of this party, held a conference at Brussels recently. In spite of the warning published by the daily paper of the CP that anyone attending this conference would be expelled from the party, there were nearly 125 present, representing an important force of the Brussels federation and also other parts of the country. The conference lasted three days; it proceeded democratically and was not monolithic.

The "Chinese" wing has just published a platform, a book of 250 pages which is a left criticism of the policy followed in the last ten years by the Belgian CP. This crisis is a very heavy blow to the Belgian Communist Party, which was in any case a weak organisation compared to the Socialist

Party of Belgium.

BRITISH-CHINA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION CRITICISE DAILY WORKER REPORT

The July 9th Daily Worker published a letter from Jack Dribbon, the secretary of the British-China Friendship Association, criticising their reporting of the World Congress of Women in Moscow. The letter reads:

"The report in the Daily Worker of June 27 of the speech made at the World Congress of Women by Mrs. Arun Ali did not make clear what her remarks were on the Sino-Indian border dispute. Mrs. Ali stated that her Government was willing to negotiate with the Chinese Government on condition that China accept fully the "proposals" of the Colombo Powers.

"It should be made clear that the Chinese Government has consistontly urged a meeting of both sides to negotiate a settlement of the dispute. Further, she has proposed that there be no "pre-conditions" for such a meet-

ing and that either side could raise any points it wished.

"The response of the Indian Government has been that China must first accept as the frontiers of both countries those which the Indians themselves have determined. On this basis a meeting would not be for the purpose of "negotiations" but for China to sign on the dotted line.

"The Colombo Powers presented their proposals only as a basis on which both sides could begin to talk. Despite certain ambiguities in these proposals which the Chinese often pointed out, they did, and still do accept

them as a basis for discussion."

ITALY-CHINA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION MEETS from an Italian correspondent.

A public meeting of the Italy-China Friendship Association was held in Rome on June 22 at Palazzo Marignoli, where important political meetings are usually held. The meeting was very successful, with a big attendance made up largely by members of the Communist party. Mario Pesce, a left Socialist trade-union leader, presided over the meeting. Franco Molfese, a loft-wing member of the Communist party, spoke on the Chinese attitude on war.

CUBAN 'FENCE-SITTING' INDICATED BY PROTOCOL?

The protocol system of the Communist world very often indicates more clearly than the actual written statements where parties stand. For instance, Rumania was the only country from Eastern Europe apart from Albania to take part in a Volley-ball competition of socialist countries. The . . following extract from Hsinhua of July 3rd about the arrival of the Albanian delegation in Algiers may also be indicative: "Welcoming the delegation at the airport were Ben Ferhat, Albanian Ambassador to Algeria Musin Kroi, Chinese Ambassador Toeng Tao, Ambassadors of Korea, Vietnam and Cuba."

THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY ON THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE OF WOMEN

We have summarised here the Hsinhua report of the World Congress of Women held recently in Moscow un der the auspices of the Women's International Democratic Federation. We have ignored the incidents in the discussion of the Sino-Indian border dispute because these received widespread press coverage. The comments are those of Hsinhua. Editorial Note.

A sharp struggle took place between two lines at the World Congress of Women held recently in Moscow. The Chinese delegation supported by Asian, African and Latin American delegates fought for a line of unity and militant struggle against imperialism. However, because of manipulations, the Congress adopted a number of documents which will in practice serve imperialist interests. Of all the documents, only the report on the struggle for national independence was adopted unanimously by the Executive Bureau of the WIDF.

The Chinese delegation voted against the new programme because it fails to point out that the source of war is imperialism and that the best way to defend peace is by a concerted struggle against imperialism. The programme should have pointed out that the national liberation movement is a mighty force for peace. In essence, the WIDF programme makes general and complete disarma-

ment and peaceful coexistence the most urgent tasks.

Other delegations supported the Chinese views. The Albanian, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean delegations declared that imperialism headed by the U.S. is the source of aggression and war, and that enduring peace and total disarmment could become a reality only when imporialism was wiped off from the face of the earth. The Vietnamese delegation drew attention to U.S. armed aggression in South Vietnam. The Laos delegate said that her country had to struggle against U.S. imperialism in order to safeguard national independence. The Venezuelan delegate told the Congress that the struggle to free her country had a mass character, and declared: "However much blood we shall have to shed, we shall fight until victory." The Zanzibar delegate said: "To hope that the imperialists will disarm is like expecting a man-eating tiger to go to the dentist to have its fangs removed." Delegates from Laos, South Vietnam, Korea, Venezuela and South West Africa asked again and again that separate resolutions be adopted on the struggle in their countries. Though supported by the Chinese and other delegates they were ignored by those who prosided over the Congress.

On the other hand, some preached to the Congress that "peaceful coexistence" and "general complete disarmament" were everything. The Italian delegation was against each and every statement condemning imperialism, which, it alleged would bring "cold war themes" into the Congress. Glorifying the boss of U.S. imperialism, an Italian delegate said: "Some great figures such as the Pope,....the Soviet Premier and President Kennedy have issued statements of peace and showed a great sense of responsibility." The Yugoslav delegate actually claimed that "positive coexistence" was the "overriding question" now facing the women's movement and the "only alternative to war". The Soviet delegate declared "We are convinced that general complete disarmament is an extremely important pre-condition for peace." The Indian delegate said: "If disarmament comes, the imperialists have everything to lose and the people struggling for liberation have everything to gain."

The Chinese delegation issued a statement in opposition to the adopted programme which concluded "The 'WIDF Programme' and the Congress 'Appeal' will never be accepted by women of all countries who want to carry out the fight against imperialism and colonialism. They have come to realise that without a resolute fight against imperialism and colonialism there can be no peace. No force on earth can halt the revolutionary struggles of women and other people of the Asian, African and Latin American countries. The rising revolutionary

storms on these continents are irresistible."

One year after independence, the Algerian Government has announced for the first time the arrest of pone political opponents, Boudiaf and three others. In a short statement in the National Assembly, Ben Bella spoke of a conspiracy against the state.

Boudiaf was one of the leaders of the Algerian Revolution, arrested by the French authorities and detained together with Ben Bella seven years ago. When the crisis broke out last year, Boudiaf opposed Ben Bella, refused to enter the Political Bureau, and rejected a seat in the National Assembly although elected. He was generally considered as the main spirit behind the so-called Party of Socialist Revolution, although he disclaimed responsibility for the activities of that clandestine organisation. After his arrest the French paper Le Monde published a statement he had made a couple of days before in which Boudiaf condemns the measures taken by Ben Bella as "demagogic" and also alludes to the popular discontent in Algeria that could be exploited by the bourgeois right wing. He has, however, denied that he himself was engaged in any serious political activity.

These arrests took place a few days after there had been unrest in the army in the eastern towns of Constantine and Philippville. Detailed information on these events is not available.

All those who support the measures taken by the Algerian government to putAlgeria on the road to socialism must recognise the right of this government to defend itself. It has been admitted by all impartial observers that the Algerian government up to this point has taken no coercive measures against political opponents, and this has been publicly stated by Ben Bella and his colleagues on various occasions. If Boudiaf has confined himself to political opposition only, his arrest would be a political mistake. If he is accused of participation in a conspiracy, he should be tried by a court, with all facilities of a fair legal defence.

ALGERIA BURNAU TO BE SET UP

AN ALGERIA BUREAU is to be set up in London to co-ordinate the campaign for non-Governmental aid to Algeria and provide liason with the Algerians. Until this is done Russell Kerr has agreed to act as a post-box. It is important that copies of all published appeals, and of any successful initiative should be sent to him. From time to time these can be circulated. His address is 320 Regent Street, London Tl.

From the response so far prospects are good for a fruitful campaign. The organisers of the Bureau therefore emphasize the importance of maintaining contact and a full circulation of information.

Work already set in train by the supporters of the campaign include articles for Union Voice, Peace News, Young Guard and Tribune; an Appeal to British Universities for money to help reconstruction of the Library at Algeirs University; appeals to the Unions for technical aid, possibly including a reception at the TUC with Algerian spoke men; an attempt to get HBC or ITV to make a good documentary; an appeal for British co-ops to switch from South African to Algerian produce, concentrating on the LCS; also perhaps direct trade with Algerian Co-ops; an approach to Quaker Trusts to provide scholar hips; an appeal in the teaching professional organs for PT instructors; and production of plamphlets.

The seventeen-man Revolutionary Council which rules Burma under General Ne Win has introduced sweeping economic reforms in the country, hitherto not attempted by any other non-socialist underdeveloped country. In February this year the government announced nationalisation of fourteen foreign (British, Indian, etc.) and eight Burmese banks with compensation payable to the former owners. This was followed by nationalisation of the import and export trade. Burma's rice industry, responsible for seventy per cent of its foreign exchange earnings, has been partly taken over by the State and is to be completely nationalised by the end of the year, along with the country's important timber trade.

A whole process of "socialisation" has been launched by the government and a new distribution system based on the control of the so-called "civil store committees." A network of government owned wholesale and retail shops has also been set up. Of the 32 British businesses operating in the country a year ago, only 16 survive today. Addressing a massive May Day rally - the first ever officially sponsored in Burma - General Ne Win assured the working class a new social order "based on the total nationalisation of all means of production, distribution, transportation and trade." In the agrarian sector, the government has issued a decree nationalising all arable land. A few big farm co-operatives have been started in the Irrawady region on an experiemntal basis and the government's plan is to organise the poor peasants into co-operatives throughout the country. Loans have been granted all poor peasants and agricultural workers to undertake farm operations this season.

Education in schools is strictly regulated by the government. The printing of technical books is now a state monopoly. An official news agency has replaced the foreign press agencies which had the monopoly of news distribution. These sweeping reforms, which are indeed of considerable revolutionary significance have followed a crisis in the government which led to the exit of a "moderate socialist" minister Sung Gyk, who favoured greater collaboration with imperialist countries. The western newspapers have identified the present colleagues of General Ne Win as "Marxists" and "excommunists." Several projects undertaken by the American, British and other capitalist countries have been suspended. Recently the government received a development loan of \$84 million from the Peoples Republic of China and technical assistance for 25 industrial and engineering projects.

The general trend in Burma is obvious although it is too early to venture an opinion on the character of the Ne Win regime. Ne Win who seized power from middle-class politicians (U. Nu) some 18 months ago sponsored a new political party (Burma Socialist Program Party) pledged to the goal of "Burmese socialism." He has invited all those who support the objective of a "Socialist Burma" to join forces with him. The program of the BSPP promises a "one-party, one trade-union regime." In an indirect allusion to the bureaucratisation of the workers' states, the program also condemns "leftist imperialism" for what is termed its "despotic attitude towards the million"

In April the regime decreed a general amnesty and released a large number of political prisoners, including insurgent leaders of the Communist party, and the minority groups of Karens, etc., engaged in a 15-year-old fight against the government. It has also assured freedom from arrest to all insurgents who would surrender to the authorities within a specified date. In response a section of the Burmese C.P. has already given up its fight against the government and is contemplating the possibilities of entering the B.S.P.P.

1651 The lead article in the Economist of 6/7/63, entitled "Tipt -ing Whither?", expresses considerable apprehension about economic prospects for the capitalist in the second-half of 1963, We reproduce extracts:

"...All the major free countries now look as if they may be set upon a course of restraining their economic growth by just slightly sterner policies than one would have thought logical for them, and sometimes they seem to be doing this for pretty odd reasons. In the United States the difficulty of persuading Congress to legislate on civil rights makes it unlikely that the President will have time or manoeuvring room to persuade it to pass his tax reductions bill as well. This is happening at a time when most current indices in the United States are still moving upwards. But it is also happening when the latest surveys of expected future consumer spending in the U.S. are not exactly bouyant; when the recent reasonably healthy rate of growth there has depended disproportionately heavily on advances in two very seasonal industries (automobiles and construction); and when it looks as if America, while doing without reflationary tax reliefs, is moving over to a higher (and therefore slightly deflationary) level of internal interest rates in order to meet its balance of payments problem.

"The nature of the United States' balance of payments problem America's earnings from exports still far exceed its spending on imports, but
not by enough to finance its level of lending and foreign aid - makes higher
interest rates an entirely logical internal method of correction. Another
method, of which more might also soon be heard, would be to cut aid by saying
that "other countries should now bear a fairer share of it." But either step
would mean that America was imparting a slight new deflationary push to the

world economy.

"At the same time, the nations of continental Europe, which have provided the main impetus to western expansion in the recent pass, look as if they may have run into much the same economic predicament as Britain had reached by 1956. The pace of their growth has slowed down, partly because the immediate surge of their great investment boom of the 1950s may be over, partly because the advantages they previously held through the former under-valuation of their currencies have begun to run out. But while their rise in output has slowed because of this check to the rise in their investment and exports, European workers have got used to lush annual rises in their wages during the boom years. They are continuing with this wage push. The slowdown in pressure on demand for these countries' real resources has therefore coincided both with an increase in their cost inflation per unit of output and with some impairment of their previous very healthy balances of payments. When this happens, it is the most natural reaction in the world to respond to the cost inflation and to the deterioration in the balance of payments by outting back internal demand still further In continental Europe, where Keynesian economic thinking is not so firmly entrenched, the tendency might even go further and last longer than it did here. So, here again, the signs are that continental Jurope might give a slightly more restrictive push to total domand within the world economy than economic logic would suggest is desirable.

"In Britain the official Treasury view for the 2nd half of 1963 is that expansion is now about to get going again. Exports have been helped by the cost inflation among our European competitors. The latest retail sales figures (for May) look more cheerful than the very disappointing figures for April..

.... But there are two new damping factors. First, the Profumo affair - and the consequent demoralisation of the Conservatives - has dispirited businessmen, who now await the assumed certainty of a Wilson government... American overseas investment"...is... "more likely to go to the continent than to potentially Socialist Britain. Secondly, .Mr. Maudling has not reacted to this by speeding reflation up... Indeed..he ..prefers 'steady expansion to spectacular expansion'"