before Christmas after they threatened to strike.

Generally speaking, the British workingman seems to have abstained from striking so long as he considered that it was necessary in the national interest, and so long as, at least in theory, everyone was living under an austerity regime. It can, of course, be argued that he refrained from strikes simply because until 1951 strikes were prohibited under the "Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration" order. However, it is a fact that this wartime law was prolonged by the Labor government with the consent of the trade unions. Moreover, even after 1951 there was a general tendency to accept the recommendations of the independent tribunals set up under the Industrial Disputes Order promulgated by the Labor government. Abstinence from strike action was in any case made acceptable by the fact that under the Labor government wage increases were greater than the rise in productivity, since need rather than economic realities determined awards so long as Britain's welfare state was subsidized by America. Most important of all was the fact that basic foods were rationed and sold at very low prices, thanks to subsidies made possible by American aid. Many or most working-class families were better nourished than ever before, both during and after the war, thanks to rationing and price controls.

U. S. Subsidized Welfare State

As the *Economist* has pointed out, it is unfortunate for the Conservative government (endeavoring both to restore a free economy and make England independent of American subsidies) that "Labor should have run through its term of office without being compelled by economic circumstances to stand up to the unions." It is perhaps even more unfortunate that the reduction of American aid to Europe should coincide with the end of Labor rule in Britain. For in effect this means that, whereas a near-Socialist British "welfare state" was liberally supported by American subsidies under the New Deal Administrations in Washington, the British Tories who are trying to restore a free-enterprise economy are receiving comparatively little help from our Republican Administration.

Although most trade union leaders would appear to be intelligent men who realize that wage increases unaccompanied by increased productivity may wreck Britain's barely solvent economy, they cannot afford to ignore the pressure of the rank and file or the challenge of the Communists, who represent the employers as "the enemy" and point to the high profits earned in some industries, while obscuring the fact that taxation draws off the greater part of such profits into the national exchequer. The Communists are today spearheading the strike movement through the Electrical Workers Trade Union which they control and whose President, Frank Foulker, has proclaimed that "We are out to hurt the employers." Since Britain has no Taft-Hartley Law, the Communists have influence in other unions as well as among the intellectuals of the Left, whose views are most clearly voiced by the *New Statesman* and by Aneurin Bevan's *Tribune,* but also find expression in the "capitalist press."

Talking to an English journalist the other day, I was informed of a curious factor which plays a large part in present labor disputes. He said that although the Tory government has abolished or substantially reduced taxation on small incomes, this has not produced any beneficial results or increased popularity for the Conservatives among the workers. Although the reduction in taxation more than outweighs the rise in food prices, working-class wives complain bitterly at the rise in the cost of living for the simple reason that their husbands give them only the same amount of money as before their take-home pay was increased. In other words, the tax relief afforded workers has led mainly to increased consumption of tobacco and liquor and more betting on the horses and the dogs.

To an American this seems fantastic. Among us everyone, including wives, knows roughly what a man earns whether he be a manual worker, clerk, civil servant, or business executive. But in Britain the income of the head of the family is a jealously guarded secret and no one properly brought up would ever dream of inquiring how much friends and relatives earn. Most wives do not know what their husbands earn (and are precluded from finding out by a complicated wage structure), so they have no idea that the Conservative government has increased their income.

Commenting on this peculiarly English phenomenon to an old friend of mine who is a member of the Labor Party and a lifelong Socialist, I was told: "Everyone knows that the Labor Party lost the last election because the women voted against the Labor government, in spite of wage increases, because of rising food prices unaccompanied by larger allowances from their husbands."

There you have it. At every point where you try to understand what's wrong with Britain you come up against some old-fashioned prejudices, practices, and attitudes. Long ago Nansen, the Arctic explorer, when asked where during his travels he had suffered most from the cold, replied: "In an English hotel bedroom." No doubt the British system of heating with open fires was all right so long as people could waste coal. But today few can afford to do so.

The British not only love their ancient ways; they actually consider them superior. Thus one finds Americans who love England, or at least respect her, tearing their hair at the refusal of the English to learn better methods of production. If the English had been compelled to face up to the realities of the world situation, instead of having received so much American aid that they did not need to do so, their innate courage and hardiness might have saved them. As things are, the majority of the British people remain in ignorance of their country's reduced circumstances. They simply do not know that the standard of life to which they are accustomed cannot even be maintained, far less improved, unless Britain produces more cheaply than in the past.

A Double-Indemnity State Department

By M. K. ARGUS

Mr. James Reston has come up with a suggestion in the *New York Times* that the United States government have two Secretaries of State instead of one. This is a most remarkable idea. Mr. Reston, already a Pulitzer Prize winner, deserves a bigger and better prize now.

This is exactly what our country needs—a double-headed State Department, or, better still, a double-indemnity State Department. Something of the sort has already been tried out and, I understand, rather successfully. In Belgium there are two Ministers of Foreign Affairs; one in charge of the Foreign part, the other in charge of the Affairs part. It works. I don't know whether the Ministers work, but the system certainly does.

For the United States the system would be a blessing in disguise—in two disguises, I mean. For one thing, we could get a truly bipartisan State Department, with a Republican and a Democrat as co-Secretaries of State. President Eisenhower could reappoint Dean Acheson to serve as Secretary of State alongside John Foster Dulles and the harmony would be edifying.

A double-headed Department of State would also eliminate a great deal of confusion, waste, and duplication. For instance, under the present set-up, the Secretary of State makes a statement one day and denies it the following day. This would not happen if we had two Secretaries of State: both statement and denial would be issued simultaneously by the respective Secretaries.

The other day the Defense Department had to cancel a television showing of films depicting Communist atrocities in Korea because the State Department was afraid that this would undermine the possibility of successful negotiations with the Soviet Union and its Communist satellites. If we had two Secretaries, that would never happen. One Secretary would be afraid of the Communists' reaction to our showing of Red atrocity films, and the other Secretary would not be afraid; one would issue an order to cancel the showing of the films, and the other would issue an order to proceed with the showing. The Defense Department would then say, "A plague on both your Secretaries," and show the film at once—not belatedly, as it finally did.

With two Secretaries of State the problem of Senator Joseph McCarthy would be solved in no time. Now, with a single Secretary, one man has to do all the work: he has to deny that there are any subversives left in the State Department, and he also has to discharge all the subversives that, according to him, are no longer left in the State Department. With two Secretaries it would be a cinch: one could always deny and the other could always fire. Senator McCarthy then would have to look into other fields of investigation and leave the State Department alone.

It would also be easier to regulate our relations with our own allies. That is where Mr. Reston's idea is especially valuable. In our dealings with our allies we really need a double-indemnity Department of State; for our friends will never remain satisfied with a single-indemnity American foreign policy. Some of our friends like our enemies better than they like us. They are annoyed with our refusal to make friends with our enemies. Two Secretaries of State would come in very handy in this case. One could treat our enemies as friends to the satisfaction of our allies; the other could treat our friends as enemies to the satisfaction of Moscow and her puppets, and everybody would be very happy.

It would be much easier for us to deal with the Soviet Union and other Iron Curtain countries if we had two Secretaries of State. Now, whenever the Kremlin proposes discussion of certain issues, the Secretary of State says: "We shall not enter into any negotiations with the U.S.S.R. until the Soviet government shows by deed its good intentions." Then, without waiting for the Soviet government to show by deed (or even by word) its good intentions, the State Department agrees to hold discussions. If we had two Secretaries of State, one could wait until Moscow showed by deed its good intentions, and the other could, in the meantime, negotiate with the Russians. There would be no loss of face. One or two countries, perhaps, would be lost to the Communists, but our State Department ought to be used to that by now.

The success of such parleys as the Berlin Conference of the Big Four Council of Foreign Ministers would be assured in advance. One Secretary of State could sit at the table with Mr. Molotov, the other could sit on the fence. One Secretary could agree to the participation of Red China in the discussions, the other Secretary could go back to Washington for consultations.

A brilliant idea, Mr. Reston's! He hit the nail on the head—on both heads, that is.