

Will They Ban Strikes?

Is this a Way Out for the Dockers

WHILE in full agreement with the Article 'Will They Ban Strikes?' (FREEDOM, 28/5/55), it is as well for us to remember that there are more ways for the capitalist class to deal with strikes than simply by anti-strike legislation.

Parliament, which unfortunately has the support of so many workers, can and does divert working-class struggle from revolutionary paths into futile constitutional argument, and could, as it has, back up anti-strike legislation with the use of scab labour and force.

mains the boss, and retains the cash also. The Hatter's Union of America recently lent an employer an enormous sum from the union kitty so that the boss could continue to exploit the workers.

In spite of the examples of officially led strikes by minority unions, in general it is true to say that the unions themselves at present make anti-strike legislation unnecessary.

London. F.H.

AT this time our fellow-workers in the National Amalgamated Stevedores' & Dockers' Union are engaged in a struggle for recognition in their employment, but this struggle is being fermented by power factions so that one Union or the other can exert influence on its members.

The method best suited to give these results is for the port workers to form their own organization to deal direct with shipowners, contracting a price to either load or unload a ship.

should return to the tools. When appointed they should be subject to immediate recall and replacement in the event of opposing the will of the men and all political alliance should be banned from the organization as a whole although individually each member can make up his own mind.

To share the work available a roster of all dockers could be made and men required for work selected in strict rotation, thus removing any chance of corruption.

I have here put down some ideas as to the method of obtaining peace in Dockland and prosperity for all concerned but of one thing dockers can be certain: No one will give it to them, they will have to make it come themselves.

The Minister of Labour is very worried at present, and he can alter the Docks Act of 1947 to allow them freedom to work in the Docks without Dock Board control but under themselves—in other words, Workers' Control.

The unions will oppose the dockers, to conserve their power, but they don't need them, working for themselves. Start in London or anywhere and other workers throughout the country will soon wake up.

London. S.C.

Interpretation of

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE, by Andrew Rothstein. (Penguin Special, 2s.)

IN introducing this book, Mr. Rothstein asserts that whereas in the past, peaceful relations have been maintained over periods between societies with similar social structures, the problem facing us now is whether it is possible for societies having radically different social structures to do so.

The first part of his work deals with the development of the idea, both among Soviet leaders and capitalist politicians. Nothing is said of Trotsky's activities at the time, although Bukharin is mentioned later as an opponent of Lenin's policy.

The objective difficulties facing a government attempting to carry through a revolution on authoritarian lines are clearly displayed. Either the Bolsheviks joined in the game of power politics with all the other governments, or else their power would disintegrate.

In part two the author sets out to allay popular fears that the U.S.S.R. is not sincere in its desire for peace. The writings of Marx, Lenin and Stalin are quoted to the effect that it is impossible to force revolution on the workers of another country. This is surely quite irrelevant, since the Soviet government's policy is not based on Marxism, and wars are never fought for ideological reasons in any case.

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just at the time the Red Army happened to be there is equally unconvincing. As far as exchanges of accusations of diplomatic trickery are concerned, Rothstein states that "the Soviet Union can give as good as it gets" and proves the point very ably by exposing the basic antagonism of the British rulers towards Russia even during the war, and subsequent events in Western Germany.

Towards the end of the book it is suggested that co-existence might eventually ripen into co-operation, with everyone living happily together for ever. In

this case it would be interesting to know what would happen should a West European Communist Party ever become strong enough to challenge private capitalism. Perhaps the Soviet leaders do not even envisage such a possibility. If so it would not be inconsistent with the theme of the book, for Rothstein has gone a long way towards destroying his own introductory position, and showing that in fact we are not faced with a problem of mutually exclusive social systems, but with systems which, being based on authority and government, are fundamentally the same.

Frequent reference is made to "the peoples' desire for peace". Left to themselves, people everywhere would live together in peaceful co-existence. It is only the activity of governments which provokes and sustains war, and in this respect there is little to choose between the two sides.

Post-Election Conversation Piece

(with apologies to Malatesta) CHARACTERS: Ardent Voter. Anarchist.

A. And now the election is over do you feel much better? A.V. Of course—I've done my duty. A. I see. You conceive it to be your duty to vote for a political party which will extract the maximum out of you, and give you back as little as possible? A.V. I wouldn't quite put it like that. After all we have to have a government to run the country and tell us what to do. A. Did you say run or ruin? Don't you know what to do without being told? A.V. Well I know what to do naturally, but all the other people don't. If they weren't governed they would get into a terrible mess. A. Do you realise that these people you are talking about think just the same about you? They think that if you were free to do as you wished you would murder and steal and never do any work. A.V. But that's silly, I'm just an ordinary sort of chap. Why should I want to murder and steal? I quite like my work as long as I don't have to work too many hours. A. Quite so. The other people you are worried about are ordinary chaps too, they feel just the same as you. Maybe if you weren't quite so keen to be ruled you wouldn't have to work such long hours to support all those M.P.'s and other useless "organisers" who make you pay for their H-bombs and battleships and armies. A.V. I don't see what you mean. We have to have those things to protect ourselves. A. Protect yourselves from other governments you mean? A.V. Yes, I suppose so. But we can't stop them from re-arming. A. That's what they say about us. A.V. You may be right, but it's impossible to do away with all the governments, they wouldn't allow it. A. You do agree then that it would be a good idea to abolish all governments if we could? A.V. Well ... yes. A. Why have you just voted for one then? A.V. That's not quite fair—after all, nobody actually wants war, it's just that the political situation in the world is always so awkward that we have to be

ready—anyway there are other things to be considered. A. I agree that the political situation is always awkward—surely this is because there are so many politicians. What other things are we to consider? A.V. Well obviously everything has to be controlled and organised or there would be absolute chaos. A. Don't you think that the organisation to which you refer can best be handled by those who know the most about it? A.V. Naturally—everyone knows that. A. In that case can you tell me why all the Ministers of this, that and the other have got their jobs? They usually know nothing about them and are just political figure-heads. A.V. Even if that is so we still have to have the Civil Service—that's what costs the money. A. The Civil Service is just a dictatorial administrative organisation. We still haven't got down to the people who actually do the work. They are quite capable of administering their own affairs, and would doubtless do it far more efficiently since they are on the spot and know just what is necessary. A.V. Ah! So you do admit that some form of organisation is necessary. A. Of course—that's why there would be no chaos. But let those who know best do the job. None of these remote policy decisions from on high. A.V. So you are suggesting that if we did away with all forms of authority and power everything would be alright and we should live happily ever after? It sounds very simple, and you seem to have a reasonable case for the main principles, but obviously it would not work in matters of detail. After all you can't change human nature! A. Now you are falling back on sweeping statements, and vague generalisations. You must know that all theories are equal to the sum total of their parts, so that having established certain premises we must then analyse specific issues arising from them. A.V. Now you are just trying to blind me with science, but it won't work because there are lots of things that I can mention which you can't possibly answer satisfactorily. For instance what would happen if people refused to work, and how could we possibly manage without a police force? A. Well your first point brings out

Don't forget the DEFICIT! (see page 2)

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS Every Sunday at 7.30 at THE MALATESTA CLUB 155 High Holborn, W.C.1. (Nearly opposite Holborn Town Hall)

June 12—Tony Turner on WHAT MAKES MAN—HEREDITY OR ENVIRONMENT?

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS Every Thursday at 8.15.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS Weather Permitting HYDE PARK Sundays at 3.30 p.m. MANETTE STREET (Charing X Road) Saturdays at 5.30 p.m.

GLASGOW INDOORS at 200 Buchanan Street Every Friday at 7 p.m.

OUTDOORS At Maxwell Street Every Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

The Malatesta Club 155 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.1.

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP Informal Discussions Every Thursday, at 8.15 p.m. Lecture-Discussions Every Sunday at 7.45 p.m. (See Announcements Column) ALL WELCOME

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