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# **SOLIDARITY**

**FOR WORKERS' POWER**

**Volume 2 Number 7**

**6**  
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# C.N.D. DISARMED

The recent policy statement 'Steps towards Peace' issued by the CND 'leadership' marks a new and perhaps decisive step towards the ranks of the Establishment. The new policy, with its tacit acceptance of Russian and American nuclear bombs, with its appeals to the British Government, and with its emphasis on the United Nations, will come as no surprise to those who have closely followed recent developments within CND.

As the Cuban crisis has shown, the bureaucratic societies of East and West still face each other, snarling, and threatening humanity with annihilation. They continue their game of Russian roulette, undeterred by the marches, petitions and postcards of those who perceive the danger but are incapable of organizing mass action against it.

Just as the perpetuation, concentration and bureaucratisation of capitalism have profoundly affected the thoughts, programmes and organizational ideas of those whose original objective was to change the system - so the perpetuation of the trigger-happy society, of its values and of its military conceptions are beginning to affect the thinking of those who started off, determined to challenge all Bombs and the societies that needed them.

CND for all its limitations started off as a profoundly humanist movement in an inhuman society. Its values were those of Man, not those of the privileged minorities ruling in East or West. CND developed outside of the traditional organizations of the 'left'. This above all contributed to its rapidly becoming a mass movement, to its gaining the support of tens of thousands - perhaps hundreds of thousands - of young people. What other grouping could today organize rallies remotely resembling Aldermaston?

During recent months however the rot has set in. The 'leadership', frightened at their own impotence and at the restlessness they sense developing below them, have beaten a headlong retreat towards traditional politics. Their failure to publicize the 1961 CND Conference decisions concerning opposition to ALL bombs (fully documented in Malcolm Pittock's article 'Is CND unilateralist?' in 'Peace News', July 20, 1962) - their sidetracking and shelving of the 1962 Conference decision on Industrial Action (which led to the resignation of Pat Arrowsmith and Michael Scott) are but two examples of the bureaucratic manoeuvres which are turning CND into a facsimile - both organizational and political - of the Labour Party, of which both Canon Collins and Peggy Duff are loyal members.

This slipping back of CND into Establishment-type politics has been speeded up by the unity of interests linking the self-perpetuating ruling group of CND, the Communist Party\* (whose influence has been growing within the movement) and various 'left' elements, infected with Labour Party fetishism.

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\* Converts, since May 1960, to unilateralism. For a detailed exposure of the zig-zags of C.P. policy in relation to CND, see 'International Socialism' No.6.



Another contributory factor has been the almost total silence of the more radical wing of the movement (Committee of 100, 'Peace News', groups of the libertarian left). 'Solidarity' is determined to break this silence.

Whatever the leaders thought, the rank-and-file members of CND stood for values and priorities different from those of established society. This is what brought them to the movement. The new policy statement reduces CND objectives to a series of platitudes, acceptable to even the leaders of the traditional parties. 'Politics' we will be told 'is the art of the possible'. Every deserter from the ranks of radical action has always proclaimed this doctrine. It is however because men and women have rejected it that progress has been imposed on the defenders of the status quo.

Without setting up as prophets, we feel the degeneration of CND, if allowed to proceed, will follow fairly obvious lines. 'Sanity' will develop into the house organ of a small clique. Plans for turning CND into a 'membership organization' with a firm 'line', subscriptions, centralized finances, and increased control from Carthusian Street, will drive thousands out. A membership organization must have power to expel rebels.\* Local groups, at present autonomous, could easily be 'disaffiliated' from a centralized body, if they refuse to toe the line.

The writing is on the wall. We call on all who value the ideals which originally inspired them to join CND to act, before it is too late. To win the support of ordinary people CND must be opposed to ALL bombs. To retain the support of the thousands who have rejected traditional politics, CND must retain its present 'loose' structure. To rally the support needed to make its challenge effective CND must see the Bomb in the context of class society. It must turn to those sections of the community who alone have the power to call a halt to the drift to war.

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\* In St. Marylebone CND, a group recently 'captured' by the Communist Party, dissident members have been forcibly forbidden access to meetings (sometimes with the help of the police). Only some members are notified of meetings. The 'election' of delegates to London Region proceeds in a highly undemocratic manner, despite the attempts of local supporters to nominate representatives of their own choice. London Region of CND was notified of the facts in a letter signed by 23 dissatisfied St. Marylebone supporters, but has done nothing about it. It has in fact endorsed the bona fides of the group now ruling the roost in St. Marylebone, by accepting its 'delegates'. 'Peace News' published some of these unsavoury facts in its issue of September 21, 1962. We will fully document the charges in our next issue. Further information from INDEPENDENT SUPPORTERS OF ST. MARYLEBONE CND, c/o Bert Benson (PRI 9413).



# What's in the Package?

Under certain circumstances, both State and private employers are today quite prepared to grant wage increases. But they want something in exchange. They want to 'rationalize' production at all its levels.

To them 'rationalization' means mechanization, automation, more machines per worker... and bigger profits. For the worker it means speed-up, sackings, more supervision, harder work and more subordination of men to machines.

It is against this background that one should look at some recent 'package deals' offered by employers to 'their' workers. Don't get us wrong. We are not against more money. Quite the contrary. But a few bob more a week won't alter relations or conditions at work. We should look carefully at wage 'concessions' which threaten other fundamental and hard-earned rights. Such are various offers 'with strings' that would make the working day even more tiring, or that would destroy what little control of the job we have already achieved. We want - and need - the money. But don't let's pawn our lives away for it.

## FORDS

On October 12, 1962, the Fords management offered increased rates of 3d. an hour to its 46,000 hourly-paid workers. This 3.5% increase would cost the company about £1,500,000 a year.

The increase was offered 'in the hope of obtaining cooperation in reducing inefficiency and eliminating waste'. This managerial jargon is fairly easy. For 'cooperation' read 'acceptance of managerial decisions'. For 'reducing inefficiency' read 'speed-up'. For 'eliminating waste' read 'sackings'.

A week later, the ground well prepared, Fords seized on a trivial incident and sacked Bill Francis, deputy convenor in the final assembly shop. They knew this would have wide repercussions. They were not mistaken. 6,000 were to down tools for more than a week. As the 'Evening Standard' so clearly and cynically put it: 'The trouble comes only six days after the firm's 'cash for peace' bargain with its workers'.

Long-term managerial objectives were soon revealed. In their letter to Ford workers of October 26, the management made them quite clear. Discussing what would happen after the strike Fords stated 'There would only be employment available for those who are prepared



to accept the rule, regulations and agreements, and to cooperate with the company'. The letter went on: 'The impression has been given that only one or two men will not be re-employed. This is not so. At the moment nobody can say exactly how many men will be permanently surplus'. On October 27, the 'Daily Telegraph' gloated: 'It may well be that the unchallenged rule of the shop stewards is at last coming to an end'. A few days later the Ford management made it clear that many of the militants and stewards would not be taken back.

The men returned to work after promises and exhortations from their district officials that they would 'work night and day to get all the men their jobs back, including Mr. Francis'. A substantial minority of the men nevertheless voted against the resolution to return to work.

When it became clear that the management did not intend to re-employ about 70 men, the unions protested against victimisation. They claimed they had been misled by the management. They even made belligerent noises. They threatened an 'official' strike for November 17, unless all the men were reinstated.

The days dragged on. No proper preparations for a strike were made. In fact, as the 'Guardian' (November 14) pointed out 'The patent unwillingness of the unions to embark on a strike... has encouraged the company to appear intransigent on the dismissal of the 70'. With its tongue in its cheek the paper continued: 'The management might be prepared to reconsider some of the dismissals if it thought the unions would begin to take a real interest in tightening discipline in the plant'. By this time some of the alleged 'trouble makers' had drifted into other jobs. A few had been taken on again. The management then played their ace.

On November 13 they sent to the men concerned a letter stating they were to receive 30 shillings a day as from October 30 and suggesting that they were suspended rather than sacked. This enabled the union leaders, on November 14, promptly to call the strike off 'pending further negotiations'. Mr. Frank Cousins, notorious 'left', even opposed a suggestion from the NUVB that there should be a time limit to these negotiations.

On November 19 a joint meeting of the union leaders and of the Ford management improved the 'offer' slightly. The suspended men would be paid £11.0.0 a week while the unions argued their case.

The assembly line at Fords has meanwhile been speeded up. At least a dozen stewards are still on the stones. And a further steward has been suspended.

Some package deal! What a lot of snakes for 3d.!



# LONDON BUSES

London Transport Executive - a 'public' corporation - has for many months been attempting to 'rationalize' the London bus system. At the expense of the busmen, of course. And like employers everywhere the L.T.E. seeks to bribe its workers into accepting this heavier saddle on their back.

The L.T.E. planned to introduce 72-seater Routemaster buses (to replace the traditional London buses which seat 56), 'standee' buses capable of carrying 35 standing passengers, and O.M.O. (one man operated) buses. One doesn't have to be a busman to see what this would mean in terms of extra work extracted from the crews. The L.T.E. also proposed to cut the buses by 9.5%. Eventual 'savings' were estimated at over £1 million a year.

Meanwhile, the L.T.E. was introducing Bessies (Bus Electronic Scanning Indicators) on a number of routes. This is a subtle form of work control, automatically registering the passage of buses at certain points and immediately conveying the information to headquarters. These devices are designed to replace inspectors, compelling crews to stick very strictly to schedules.\*

What did the L.T.E. offer in exchange? To the Routemaster crews: an increase of 2/- a day. Also a reduction of working hours equal to... 6d. a day (it would perhaps be more accurate to refer to it as a reduction of working minutes). To the crews of 'standee' buses: an increase of 1/6 a day. To the O.M.O. crews: a pay rise of 15% plus a 'productivity' bonus.

Of the wealth produced by increasing the busmen's load, 60% was to go to management, 40% to the busmen. The proposals were presented as a take-it-or-leave-it 'package deal' - more or less endorsed by the TGWU. On October 8, the busmen themselves decided to 'leave' it.

The L.T.E. then made further 'concessions'. On October 16, it made a 'final offer' of 42.5%. On October 19 (just to show that nothing in this world is that final!) it raised the offer to 45%. The busmen were being offered not quite half of the proceeds of their increased sweat. Again the union officials agreed to the proposals. But on October 23 a delegate conference of London busmen again rejected the offer, despite a 'unanimous recommendation from their negotiators for acceptance'.

London Transport had throughout opposed all suggestions that savings achieved should be shared among all busmen. The delegate conference had, on the other hand, repeatedly demanded that all benefits be shared out evenly over all crews, on old and new buses alike. The L.T.E. would have nothing of this sharing of earnings by the workers themselves. It had learnt nothing from the defeat of its earlier 'divide and rule' tactics.

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\* For a full account of the functioning of BESI, see article 'Keeping an eye on seven thousand buses' in Daily Telegraph, October 15, 1962. (A more accurate title would have been 'Keeping an eye on 38,000 busmen'!)



On November 5, the Daily Telegraph gave vent to its spleen. After gleefully pointing out that one-man-operated buses were accepted practice in both the United States and the Soviet Union, it bemoaned the fact that the busmen 'were now recoiling from the idea that those who do more ~~should~~ be paid more'.

The bosses and their press will never understand what working class solidarity is all about. We can't expect them to see how workers at times reject their corrupt values. Let the Telegraph snarl: 'it is time that the (busmen's) leaders stopped following the men and led them instead towards a rudimentary understanding of economics'. We would put it the other way around: despite the concerted efforts of employers and union leaders, the busmen have showed a profound understanding, already today, of what the economics and values of socialism will really be like!

This little package came untied!

## RAILWAYS

Dr. Beeching, the Transport Commission and the Government have jointly and successfully withstood the 'challenge' of the one-day railway strike of October 3. They know they have little to fear from the leaders of the railway unions. Their plans for 'rationalising' the railways by sacking railwaymen and closing down railway workshops will probably go through, with little more than feeble squeaks from the union bureaucrats.

Early in November the Transport Commission proposed to the NUR, ASLEF, and the TSSA, wage increases of 5% for its 450,000 employees. These would amount to £17 million a year. This was later increased to 6%. The unions accepted.

Dr. Beeching is not known for his generosity. As a famous Trojan once said: 'I fear the Greeks even if they be bringing gifts'. What lies behind the Beeching millions? Is it 'conscience money'? Or is it the prelude to a further stepping up of the whole process of rationalisation on the railways?

Again, the Daily Telegraph (November 6, 1962) lets the cat out of the bag. After dismissing the Beeching offer as 'something of a gesture', it puts its cards on the table. 'This should have been the occasion', the paper claims editorially, 'to seek a package deal by which the railwaymen would agree, in return for higher pay, to cooperate with the management in matters of closures, redundancy policy and reorganization generally'.



Railwaymen should keep their eyes skinned. They should remember two basic facts of economic life. 'Disinterested gestures' and the making of profits don't go together. And what holds a package together is usually 'strings'.

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P.S. In these three episodes (and in countless hundreds of others) the role of the union leaders has been very similar. The union leaders have been acting like this for years. That is why we think it inadequate to refer to these acts as 'sell-outs' (Socialist Current, November 1962; Freedom, December 1, 1962). It goes much deeper. A 'sell-out' implies the possibility of acting otherwise. We doubt this exists. We will return to this theme in a later issue.

# WORK SHARING

There have recently been a number of disputes over 'rationalization schemes'. One of them took place at the Fraser & Chalmers works of the General Electric Company in Erith, Kent.

G.E.C. as a whole employs 63,000 workers. Profits for 1961 were £9,886,000. The Erith works makes turbines, winding gear and other mining equipment. The factory employs 4,000 workers with the almost unbelievable ratio of 2,100 white-collar workers to 1,600 manual workers. 240 apprentices are also employed.

On August 16, 1962, the management issued a statement: 'It is necessary to embark on a policy of cost reduction. This will involve some reorganization. The reorganization will affect chiefly the non-

productive sections and departments of the organization. As a result, the Company regrets it will be necessary for some of their employees to find employment elsewhere.'

The company then stated that they intended to review piecework prices, waiting time, payment for defective work, teabreaks, overtime and mobility of labour. 'Increasing the mobility of labour' meant that those remaining would do the work of those sacked.

The firm said that it intended to sack 145 men, some of them aged between 60 and 64, men with 20, 30, 40 and more years' seniority. The jobs affected were on the whole those done by men too old or disabled to do heavy work (storekeepers, etc.). Some of those sacked were registered disabled.



On August 29, the men held a meeting at the Odeon, Erith. They decided that if the redundancies weren't withdrawn and the work shared, they would share it themselves, by working a four-day week.

The management refused to withdraw the redundancy notices. So the men themselves shared the work. For three weeks they took Friday off each week. Union officials applied the usual pressures, particularly when they had no members redundant (the Boilermakers, for instance).

At a further mass meeting a return to normal working 'to allow the procedure to operate' was proposed. The men agreed on the basis that no one would do any of the work normally done by those declared redundant.

The unions registered 35 'failures to agree'. Three works conferences were held. The AEU Divisional Organizer, G.W.Luck, then reported that the firm had agreed a) to review the discharge of certain millwrights; b) that proposals in

connection with labour utilization would be dealt with strictly in accordance with procedure.

This type of issue is going to be met with increasing frequency, whether or not Britain enters the Common Market. It must be seen for what it is, not the beginning of a slump, but part of the constant 'rationalization' at the expense of the worker which is a feature of modern capitalism.

One of those sacked at Erith was Alderman J.S.R.Wise, a shop manager. Last year he had been Labour Mayor of Dartford. He had played a leading role against the council tenants who were fighting a rent increase imposed by the Labour council. (See Solidarity, vol.I, no.7). For his actions against the tenants he had been dismissed by the men as Convenor of the Shop Stewards Committee. But not to worry. He rapidly became shop manager!

It is rather ironic that a person eagerly carrying out the Government's policy in one field should be its victim in another. We shed no tears for Alderman Wise!

KEN WELLER.

## FROM RAGS TO RICHES

I wonder if anyone else felt as I did about the story in a recent issue of the London Labour Party's newspaper, 'London News'? This concerned a piece of land originally bought by Acton Labour Party for £1,000. The Secretary-Agent, Syd Rew, boasted that the Labour Party played off several firms against one another. Finally, they managed to sell the land to Mobiloil for £42,000. While homeless families are still being forced into Newington Lodge, no doubt a fine block of offices will go up on this piece of land. A fitting memorial to the Labour Party!



# GETTING 'EM YOUNG

'You are the cream'. That's how new boys are greeted each year by the Headmaster of the fairly typical Grammar School I left this summer. In one form or another these words are spat out at you, at each stage of your 'journey' through the school.

When you're in the first form, it means that you're the 'top' 20 per cent of your age-group in that area. Your mates have gone to the local Tech. or to the Secondary Modern. In the second form it means that 2A are the 'top' 25 per cent. of the 'top' 20 per cent. In the sixth form it means that you have chalked up at least 4 or 5 Ordinary Level G.C.E. passes. The others have left for 'dead-end' jobs. Later it means that you have got 3 or 4 Advanced Level passes and are either bound for a Redbrick university or are staying on a year to try for Oxbridge.

Throughout the school the main thing that matters is 'success'. This means doing well in one lot of exams after another. If you don't pass any O-levels - or just get the bare one or two - 'you've wasted your time and the taxpayer's money'. If you get bare passes at A-level, 'you're not really much good. The Universities won't look at you, except perhaps Hull'. The relationship of this form of education to society was made absolutely clear by the Headmaster: 'You've got to take the top 3 per cent. and push them and push them as far as they'll go. The fate of the other 97 per cent. hangs on them'. (1)

## THE RULES AND THE HIERARCHY

You are plagued with piddling little rules and regulations wherever you go in the school and whatever you do. You must wear a school blazer, a school badge, a school tie in the appropriate house colours (2) and a school cap (below the fifth form). The 'lower' and 'middle' school has to

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(1) 'Traditional' socialists won't be dropping their jaws at this one. After all it was George Bernard Shaw who said (Fabian Essays, 1948) that he wanted 'the dictatorship, not of the whole proletariat, but of that 5 per cent. of it capable of conceiving the job and pioneering in the drive towards its divine goal'.

(2) Prefects and holders of 'colours' for gym, rugger, etc., wear different ties.



line up on the quad before going into morning assembly. If you are late you must report to the front entrance where you are given detention. You must not ride your bike up the approach road to the school - unless, of course, you happen to be a member of the staff. (3) Some masters insist that you line up quietly outside their rooms before going into their period. At all times you must unquestioningly obey the instructions given you by masters or prefects.

There is an arbitrary hierarchy of punishments. Detention, the most common one, consists either of a 40-minute period called 'general detention' (to which boys are sent by various masters and prefects), or of a period of unspecified length conducted by a particular master for 'his own' offenders. A boy I knew once had a 'private detention' lasting 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours. (4) Lines or impositions are another common method of punishment. Some of the more power-mad prefects dish out 250 lines a time for running in the bogs. One R.I. master regularly told his class to copy out chunks of St. Luke's Gospel when he had found that they were more interested in such pranks as letting out grasshoppers over the desks and using red ink to imitate nose-bleeds. Serious and periodic offenders get canings from the Headmaster. For worse offences a boy is put 'on report sheet'. This means that for a week, fortnight, or longer, he carries round a form with him on which he must have the signature of every master whose periods he attends, testifying to his good behaviour. When all these methods have been tried - and sometimes before - threats of expulsion are bandied about and letters sent to parents. If these have no effect, the boy is given the push. Every pressure is brought to make a boy conform, even to some of the most absurd rules. 'His not to reason why'.

At the top of the school's hierarchy is the Headmaster, the all-wise decision-taker, with years of experience in the movement... sorry, the school. He decides what subjects you take, what exams you enter for. He makes rules 'in the interests of the school'. He 'interviews' parents about whose sons he is 'concerned'. His reference is essential for entry to a University, a College, and for most jobs which people leaving Grammar School apply for. When he enters assembly, the school rises to a man, as a mark of respect.

Under the Headmaster are the other members of the staff and the prefects. The latter are allowed to stick beer-mats up in their room and to carve their names in its brickwork. They can play table-tennis during

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(3) The official reason for this rule is safety. It is ironic that when the police carried out one of their annual inspections of bikes, a couple of years ago, the most faulty one was in fact found to belong to a master... who had left it in the boys' shed by mistake!

(4) The master concerned helped found the local CND group.



private study periods or listen to the cricket. They take it in turns to read the lesson each morning. They are the select band of 'licks', 'creepers' and 'keen types', who are given authority over everyone below the sixth form. 'You've got to be tough' the Head Boy tells all new prefects. Last year, one prefect, accepting this advice, gave out over 20 detentions on his first day! Gangs of prefects roam the school during assembly to catch anyone who is late and attempting to get in by any way other than the front entrance. Other prefects make occasional expeditions behind the old air-raid shelter snooping on boys smoking during the lunch hour. Practically all of them are involved in throwing people out of the form rooms at break. (5)

In the summer of 1959, at the height of a campaign to enforce the wearing of school caps, prefects formed road-blocks at strategic points on all the roads leading from the school; boys not wearing caps were sent back to the Headmaster. To those in the sixth form who never become prefects the whole thing is regarded as a farce. But those who are made prefects become 100 per cent. conscious of their position, no matter what their attitude may have been in the dim and distant past. They speak in the cliches used by managers, executives, labour relations experts, politicians and the rest of the scum: 'I'm going to make them respect me'; 'You can't just leave them to do as they like. They've got to be taught discipline'.

## INDOCTRINATION

The inculcation of the values of a hierarchically organized and bureaucratic class society is not only inherent in the very purpose and organization of the school but it is also achieved by blatant propaganda methods. All the way up the school, of course, you get the 'basic' stuff drummed into you: grace before meals, loyalty to the school, prayers for the Queen and for the world's leaders, etc. You are taught to look at things in a particular way. You are taught to follow red herrings and to get involved in discussion on marginal issues. You don't discuss the way schools are run or what values they should try to instil. You don't discuss the separation of intellectual and manual labour and the effects it has on both intellectuals and manual workers. Instead you discuss whether or not Colin Jordan, the British Nazi leader, should get the sack as a school teacher.

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(5) The official reason for this ritual is that boys need fresh air and form-rooms need an airing. Sixth formers use the laboratories and the smallest rooms in the school as form-rooms. They are not thrown out!



Open indoctrination becomes most obvious in the sixth form. In many ways the sixth form is taught to feel itself a cut above the rest of the school. It sits in the balcony of the Hall, during assembly. Its members are not thrown out of the form-rooms at break, etc. In fact the Deputy Head frequently tells groups of sixth-formers that, whilst he's no snob, he doesn't consider it the 'done thing' for sixth formers to mix with members of the 'lower' school. (6) It is at this privileged group (aged between 16 and 18) that the propaganda barrage is mainly directed.

For two periods a week the Headmaster takes sixth formers for what he euphemistically describes as 'Philosophy'. One or two examples will show what comes under this heading. The Head enters the room with a copy of the 'Times' under his arm. He picks a page... 'at random'. He reads out a letter - about productivity, economic efficiency, or something along these lines. He moans about unofficial strikes. He ponders whether a higher unemployment figure might 'stop the rot'. When questioned, he gets enraged and shouts out: 'What's wrong with time and motion study? It increases efficiency! This country's going to be wrecked in a couple of years' time by one millionth (7) of the working population. You're going to be the ones to have your spots knocked off!'. On another occasion he gave us a talk on Marxism during which he presented the end of Section II of the Communist Manifesto as the all-time Marxist programme. As this includes points like the 'abolition of children's factory labour in its present form', it is an excellent way of evoking cheap laughs. During this talk (or series of talks in fact) he put across a completely distorted view of Marx's ideas, even in relation to quite basic points. At one stage he attributed to Marx the concepts of 'revolutionary activity' held by Bakunin!

This valuable work of the Headmaster is periodically reinforced by such events as S.C.M. (Student Christian Movement) and other Conferences, attendance at which is sometimes compulsory. The school library also plays its part with its wide selection of progressive papers and magazines (e.g. 'The Times', 'Esso Magazine', 'Nato Newsletter', etc.).

But what about attempts at counteracting this propaganda? What about those who try to challenge some of the precepts of class society? Theoretically, of course, you are encouraged to 'think for yourself'. The Headmaster blames boys for their 'apathy' in not asking him questions

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(6) The Deputy Head is a profoundly philosophical type. He once lectured a boy for accusing the Headmaster of censoring the school magazine. He told him: 'I know you are a strong believer in freedom of speech, but you must be careful that what you say doesn't offend anybody'.

(7) i.e. about 26 or 27 people! Probably all 'Solidarists'!



during his 'philosophy' periods. But if you do think for yourself and become interested in issues a little more basic than the Pilkington Report you are stamped on. (8) As soon as a copy of 'Peace News' appeared in the paper rack of the school library it was removed and torn up; an article against Civil Defence which appeared in one issue was described by the master in charge of the library as 'seditious'. The 'Solidarity' pamphlet, 'The Meaning of Socialism', was also removed on the grounds that the staff have a responsibility for ensuring that boys don't read 'this sort of rubbish'. A boy who used to distribute CND literature round the school was told that he had a 'negative attitude towards life' and that many parents would not be grateful for what he had done to their children. For, as Sir Harold Shearman, Chairman of the L.C.C. Education Committee, said in 1960 (after the Headmaster of the William Ellis School had banned the wearing of CND badges): 'It is an accepted principle that our schools should not be used for purposes of propaganda'!

## COPING WITH A REBEL

At this school recently there was a good example of what happens to a boy with radical political views. He was sent home one morning for asking the Headmaster 'rhetorical questions', after listening to a lot of ranting about the virtues of National Service life. He was also sent out of a period during which the banning of fascist rallies was 'discussed'. He had attempted to point out the significance of the fact that the Government had allowed Mosley's and Jordan's rallies in Trafalgar Square, but had banned those of the Committee of 100. (9) He was not allowed to finish. 'We are fed up with your propagandazing' shouted the Head. Then, after the boy had left the room, 'Now we can carry on with our discussion'.

When the boy left school, a few days later, he was told that he had denigrated everyone in a position of authority. 'You are arrogant, intolerant, ungrateful towards your masters, your school and society at large... I am glad you are not coming back next year'. Later his parents

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(8) The school authorities act in exactly the same manner as Labour Party leaders in relation to the Young Socialists or trade union leaders in relation to the rank and file. They all bemoan apathy. But as soon as people begin to participate on issues they feel strongly about the leaders say it's 'unofficial', 'unconstitutional' etc., and try and stamp it out.

(9) This was in July 1962, before the general ban on Trafalgar Square meetings.



received a series of what can only be described as poison-pen letters.(10) They also received a personal visit from the Headmaster. The Head had in fact other sticks to beat the boy with. He could have pointed out that in one subject he had done no real work at all. In fact he mentioned this. But the weight of his invective was aimed at the boy's politics. The Head claimed that the boy had read Lenin and Trotsky at an early age. (this is unadulterated bullshit). He also claimed that this had narrowed the boy's outlook on life. He expressed fear that his school would be blacklisted by the University, if the boy were given a place and maintained his 'negative attitude'. When the boy was nevertheless accepted, his parents received a letter reminding them of their son's 'duties' to the school.

## THE 'DEMOCRATIC' FACADE

The dictatorship, however, is not absolute. At school you are introduced to the sort of 'democracy' you will experience in the outside world. You don't discuss or take decisions on any of the fundamentals of running the school. But you can elect monitors to take the register to the office every morning! The democratic facade is kept up by the existence of a General Purposes Committee, on which sit representatives from each form in the school. On paper, it is quite constitutional for the G.P.C. reps. to question the Headmaster!

As in the world outside, decisions taken by minorities are paraded as being collective ones. Thus, when a boy refused to go to the sixth form party, or to pay his contribution towards it, he was told that he was insulting the girls (from the Girls' Grammar School) whom 'he' had invited!

Education along the lines I have described naturally generates opposition. Boys 'muck up' the masters. They take the piss out of prefects. Sometimes you even get something approaching mass action. On one occasion a fourth form spontaneously went 'on strike' during a gym period, because the master had recommended that it shouldn't be allowed to go swimming that term. I'm not saying that we can expect to hear of full-scale revolts in the near future. School is very much a transition stage in anyone's life. You know that sooner or later you're going to leave. On the other hand I'm sure that only a handful of boys share the sentiments expressed in the end-of-term assembly: 'We thank Thee for this term, its discipline and its freedom', and 'Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing, thanks for mercies past received.!!!!'

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(10) I have seen these letter myself. The description is no exaggeration. One of the things held against the boy was that he described the dropping of the A-bomb on Hiroshima as a 'crime' !



## EDUCATION... FOR WHAT?

When 'Lefts' talk about education they chat away about extending 'our' school building programme, about providing more teachers, about improving facilities for this, that and the other. If you're a 'real Left' you may also add naughty things about Public Schools and shout about 'equality of opportunity'. But what all these 'Lefts' say is based on the assumption that, in some miraculous way, education is 'neutral' and that it bears no relation to the class society outside the school.

The opposite is the case. The regime in the school is a reflection of the class society outside... and in its turn tends to reproduce and reinforce it. More education of the present type may provide more and better administrators for capitalist society. It will also result 'in the mass production of individuals who are going to recreate the same society, of individuals who will be made to embody in their personalities the existing social structure and all its contradictions. Education today, in Britain or in Russia, by the school or by the family, aims at producing people adapted to the present type of society. It corrupts the human sense of integration into society which it transforms into a habit of subservience to authority. It corrupts the human sense of taking reality into account into a habit of worshipping the status quo. It imposes a meaningless pattern of work which separates, dislocates and distorts physical and mental potentialities. The more education of the present type is supplied, the more of the present breed of man will be produced, with slavery built into him.' (11)

There is nothing fundamentally socialist about all this. In the field of education - as in so many other fields - the 'Left' today is speaking a largely irrelevant language. Its objectives - both short-term and long-term - are in fact indistinguishable from those of modern capitalism itself. This is a measure of its integration into bureaucratic society.

If, in this article, I had described a girls' school, a co-ed school, a technical school, a secondary modern school or even a boys' grammar school in another area, much of what I have written would no doubt be different. But only in its details. Some schools are certainly more strict and authoritarian than others. (12) Basically, however, their purpose is the same.

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(11) From 'Solidarity' pamphlet No.6, 'The Meaning of Socialism' by Paul Cardan.

(12) This fact is well illustrated by Birkenhead School (a 'public' school) where until recently prefects were allowed to beat other boys. They would strip a boy, tie him to a chair in the prefects' room and take running swipes at him, sometimes until his back bled. It sounds just like 'Tom Brown's Schooldays', doesn't it?



The 'traditional Left' ignores the authoritarian teacher-pupil relationship. It disregards all the pressures which prepare people to accept their lot in the bureaucratic class society. It confines itself to asking occasional questions in 'the House' about the more extreme examples of indoctrination. And in its next breath it asks for more education of the present type. Its MPs and Aldermen dish out prizes on speech day. Prizes for proficiency in this type of education!

Boys and girls at school aren't nuts, however. Most of them have some idea of what is relevant to their position and what is not. Many feel that modern education is a training in conformity, in acquiescence... a means of producing regiments of robots. Let's get 'Solidarity' round the schools as well as round the factories !

ROBIN KELSALL.

## UNCRITICAL SUPPORT ?

'OUR SUPPORT FOR THE RETURN  
OF A LABOUR GOVERNMENT IS  
NOT DEPENDENT UPON IT HAVING  
LEFT-WING POLICIES'.

### WHO SAID IT ?

Editor 'Tribune' ?  
Editor 'Daily Worker' ?  
Editor 'Newsletter' ?  
Editor 'Young Guard' ?

ANSWER P. 19.

## DEFORMED WORKERS' STATE!

OVERHEARD IN MILLIONAIRES ROW  
(OUTSIDE 'SOVIET' EMBASSY):

'If the Russians continue testing H-bombs at the present rate, in a few years' time they'll have a totally deformed workers' state. Physically, as well as politically. Their contribution, perhaps, to the "New Socialist Man"?!.



# COUNCILS OF ACTION

CUBA WEEK came and went. We travelled to the brink and back. Yet not a single local council was moved to announce its 'plans' for 'protecting' its citizens against the hazards of nuclear war.

The monstrous fraud of Civil Defence continues, up and down the country. Opponents of the Bomb are continuing to expose this deception. The campaign which begun in Dartford (Solidarity II,3) and Crayford (Solidarity II,5) is being extended. Here and there, the conspiracy of silence is being breached...

## 1. TWICKENHAM

The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Twickenham met on November 1st for another of their cosy, monthly rubber-stamping sessions. To the casual observer the whole thing is a bit like a 'bingo' session. The 'weirdies' in their robes and chains assemble, the Mayor's private God-hollerer makes some sanctimonious noises and then it's heads down, we're off!

The Mayor reads out the numbers which refer to items on the agenda. Anyone who is awake and wants to air his lungs yells 'Bingo' or 'Mr. Mayor'. The whole bunch then relax, with one eye on closing time, while the worthy has his waffle. Then we're off again, with the Mayor interrupting to say: 'Recommendation at the bottom of page 234 - agreed?'. 'Agreed!', and it's heads down all the way home!

This was how the meeting went, with a minor rumpus whilst discussion raged over some important decisions affecting three wards, which had been taken without prior discussion by the Council. Presumably, someone's financial corns had been crushed!

We then got to the report of the Civil Defence Committee. The Chairman rose, proposed its adoption

and awaited his rubber-stamp. But from then on the normal pattern went bent.

The public gallery contained five members of the Thames Valley Working Group, Committee of 100. One rose and started to read a prepared speech analysing the usefulness (?) of Civil Defence in the Borough. Meanwhile, another Committee member hopped over the dividing barrier into the Council chamber, distributing copies of the speech and a letter to the press. He also started distributing the letter to the open-mouthed brethren of the Council.

As the Mayor was being presented with his copy he mumbled: 'You can't do this!'. He was promptly answered: 'I am doing it, brother!'. The distribution session was brief. The Deputy Mayor, puce with rage, grabbed the distributor, who had to complete the job by hurling the remaining letters at the assembly (one local press report said 'they fell like autumn leaves'). The distributor was then removed after a short, somewhat confused interlude involving a one-way swing door and the Deputy Mayor, whose colour became even brighter when told: 'Calm down,



brother; I'll stand here while you cope with the door'.

The public gallery (half demonstrators, half Tory women) was in uproar throughout. The first speaker had been removed by the Mace-bearer. A second was now delivering an unrehearsed contribution, his set speech having been torn from his hands.

Calm came at last. The Mayor regained his wind. The meeting settled. But not for long... Speaker number 3 rose to enliven the proceedings. He was removed with some violence. It was left to number 4 (the only girl in our party) to carry on. As she spoke the councillors

began to regain their procedural senses. One proposed that 'the meeting be adjourned whilst the police dealt with the disorder in the public gallery'. But before a vote was taken she (the disorder) had quietly left, unnoticed, leaving the councillors with a motion and nowhere to put it.

The press coverage was enormous, even if somewhat inaccurate. The dust took at least a week to settle. The best quote was attributed to the Mayor. He is reported as saying: 'The cheeky blighters... I was sorely tempted to hit them with the Mace!'

EDWIN BERRY

## 2. ILFORD

On Wednesday, October 17, Ilford Civil Defence held an 'open night'. The advert said that ALL questions on Civil Defence put by members of the public would be answered. Eleven members of Ilford YCND went along. We questioned the local C.D. Officer, Mr. Sains, for about an hour. What preparations had been made for the people of Ilford - and of the whole country - in the event of a nuclear war? We received few satisfactory answers. Two of Mr. Sains stock answers were that some preparations couldn't be disclosed until after the war had occurred... and that 'he had been attending C.D. lectures for 30 years' and knew all about it !!

We challenged Mr. Sains to a public debate on C.D. and nuclear war. He refused, writing to us that it wasn't his line of duty to discuss with us !

The press publicity was good. The 'Ilford Recorder' (Oct. 25, 1962) ran a story entitled 'CND are not impressed with C.D.'. Mr. Sains was quoted as saying that he wouldn't accept our challenge to debate as 'it would be a waste of time. I feel these young people are misinformed'. A rather different reason to the one he gave in his letter to us. On November 1st the 'Ilford Pictorial' ran a similar story.



During the Cuba crisis, some mothers from Ilford CND called on Mr. Sains at his H.Q. and asked him what evacuation plans Civil Defence had made for them and their children, should the crisis develop into a war. The Civil Defence Officer told them to write for an appointment and slammed the door. On November 1st, both local papers carried long stories and pictures about this. The 'Ilford Pictorial' gave it front page coverage.

Having received no answer from the C.D. Officer we decided to ask Ilford Council itself what preparations it had made. On Tuesday, November 20, I attended the monthly meeting of Ilford Borough Council. I entered the public gallery and listened to the proceedings (which is more than some councillors appeared to be doing). Eventually, the report of the Civil Defence Committee was read... and formally adopted (in about half a minute, as usual). Or, at least, the report was almost formally adopted, for at this point I decided to chip in. If the councillors had nothing to say on Civil Defence, I certainly had.

I rose. 'I would like to put a question to the Council on Civil Defence' I shouted across the Chamber. The councillors turned round in amazement. What? A member of the public, pretending to be a councillor! Actually speaking! The impertinence of it! 'Sit down' said the Mayor. I thought of those still in gaol for uttering these seditious words... But perhaps the Mayor was a Committee supporter!

I continued to speak. Two attendants approached me and told me to shut up. I ignored them. 'I have asked the Civil Defence Officer these

questions and received no reply' I shouted across the chamber.

The next few minutes were rather noisy. I kept shouting my question. The mayor kept shouting back down his microphone. The attendant shouted at me to leave. One councillor also joined in the 'all talk' session. More words were probably spoken on Civil Defence in these few minutes than in the last 20 Council meetings put together.

The mayor eventually conceded defeat, despite his loudspeaker. 'Take him out' he yelled to the attendants. At this they grabbed me and led me out.

Both local papers ran good stories of the events. Both pointed out that I had intervened in the Council meeting because I had received no satisfactory answers from the Civil Defence Officer about local plans in the event of a nuclear war. They also pointed out that the said officer had refused to participate in a public debate on the subject.

In fact both papers put my case admirably. By now, 40 - 50 thousand people will have read it. 'Playing councillors' can be quite an effective means of propaganda!

RON BAILEY.

ANSWER: (see page 16)

In thought: the lot. In words: Editor, 'Young Guard', in November 1962 issue.



# HAD YOUR W.E.D. YET, BROTHER?

(W.E.D. = War Emergency Dose )

Every week the desk in the lab where I work piles up with useless and unsolicited information in the form of technical journals. Wading through them is sometimes brightened by finding crude pieces of jingoist propaganda dressed up as technical fact. Recently I came across a prize specimen, which almost made the monotonous day bearable.

In 'Chemical Age', (the self-styled 'Weekly Newspaper of the Chemical Industry'), there was an article entitled 'CIVIL DEFENCE - COULD YOU COPE?'. This highly technical subject, obviously of stupendous interest to working chemists, was written by a 'well-known chemical industry safety expert'. It dealt, very superficially, with the 'problem' of Civil Defence in industry. It used industrial accidents and fire hazards as a kind of blind, but this scarcely what was obviously a propaganda article: part of the latest recruitment drive of the civil defenders. As such the article was notable but not exceptional. Most of the technical press carry such stuff every so often, usually aimed at expressing 'the opinion of the industry' on controversial subjects. This particular specimen threw a great deal of light on the mentality of the Civil Defenders and their bosses. A few quotations will illustrate the level to which Civil Defence propaganda is sinking.

Civil Defenders are nothing if not 'honest', up to a point of course. After all, there are some things it just isn't good for people to know about. For example, how

useless Civil Defence is! So we are treated to a few paragraphs of heart searching. 'The biggest difficulty is still that of making the individual worker...civil defence minded'. 'Civil defence...conveys an incorrect impression (that) it cannot prevent an attack nor...blast damage or fall-out'. But don't despair. C.D. is there. And so are the shelters. 'If there is only to be about four minutes notice of an attack, there will be little chance of the workers being able to get shelter in time to avoid injury, unless the shelters are within a very short distance of the actual place of work...'. All four-minute milers, please line up behind the bosses' car. On the command: go! (given by your C.D. manager): GO!..... like a blue fart.

Apparently not only workers, but some bosses are difficult to persuade to become 'Civil Defence' minded. So incentives will be provided. In particular 'certain payments...qualify for income tax relief'. There now! You and I, 'volunteers', can work their bloody scheme. We will be taxed to pay for it. But THEY will get the tax relief.

Anyone who thought that life 'after the Bomb' would be different is in for a rude awakening: 'If a plant has to be evacuated, its owners will want to leave it in such a state that it may readily be brought back into production, as soon as conditions allow, even though the raw materials position may well be difficult'.

To say nothing, we would add, of the 'difficult' worker position.



Or are we just part of the raw materials? Who knows, the plant manager may even have to manage on his own someday.

I have saved till last the prize 'civil defencism'. If they ever issue Civil Defence medals again, the idiot who thought up this one will surely be entitled to a

pawnshopful of them, all to himself. 'In order to minimize the effects of fall-out on personnel a 'war emergency dose' of radiation (75 roentgens) has been laid down. This may not be exceeded by anyone without authority'. We assume the figure was reached after long negotiation with the usual responsible trade union officials. Only the wildest of cats would strike for more!

E. B.

# PIED-PIPERS OF GLASGOW

The Cuban crisis saw develop a number of new features in the struggle against the bomb. Amongst these was an interesting form of public assembly which took place in Glasgow.

Two supporters of the Committee of 100 went, at dinner time on the Tuesday, into a central square in which meetings and assemblies are rigidly prohibited. There they sat down. No banners, no leaflets: just two sitters. Gradually, passers by gathered and asked what they were doing. They were simply told that these two did not want to die over Cuba. Questions and discussion developed. When the police broke up the group, after about an hour, about 150 people had gathered.

That same evening about 40 supporters went to 6 different parts of Glasgow having agreed to meet in the centre at 8.0 pm. where there was to be a meeting to discuss Cuba. They sat-down in ones and twos, repeating the morning's performance. Groups gathered around them. The police said that unless they moved on

they would be charged with 'obstruction'. Each sitter then rose and addressed the crowd about him, saying that he had been warned and that he would move on if they cared to follow. This most people did. All the groups then converged onto the centre of the city. The final meeting was about 1500 strong. It had been convened in less than two hours, simply by this method.

One supporter told us that his group went to a railway station and sat-down inside the barriers. They were thrown out by railway police. They then sat by a news-vendor's stall outside. He asked what it was all about. When told, he started shouting the 'odds', gathering a crowd for them.

So far as we know no one was arrested. One of the biggest and liveliest meetings held in Glasgow for many months was arranged virtually spontaneously.

A Glasgow correspondent.



# FREE

On reading your booklet 'The Truth about Vauxhall' I felt as a frustrated ex-shop steward at Vauxhall Motors that I must congratulate you on an article that with a few minor exceptions is as near to the truth in my opinion as anything I've seen to date. The interest on the shop floor at Dunstable today has been quite unique. The few booklets that were available have been in great demand.

I feel that if you could possibly repeat your canvassing next Monday at either starting time or the dinner hour you would sell a lot more.

I must request that you treat this with the discretion that is necessary under such circumstances as you are well aware exist here.

M. L., Dunstable.

\* \* \* \* \*

We have received the following letter from a London busman. We publish it, not because we necessarily agree with what it says, but because it represents a rank-and-file viewpoint, perhaps often thought but rarely put into words. -

I agree with everything you say. Yet I know that as far as Hammersmith garage is concerned the matter is a dead issue. The situation in our garage is so moribund that I long ago stopped taking part in any of its affairs. This is not

the usual cry of those who do not wish to get involved. In the past, at crowded union meetings (and that was long long ago) I have time and again been publicly denounced by our union representative as a 'communist' and all the rest of the childish and idiot rubbish. When we had the last seven weeks strike our garage (and Shepherds Bush) were the only garages in the whole of London who at the beginning voted to go back to work. In the second voting, when the whole of the committee publicly voted to resume work, I was the one and only member of the uniformed staff who stood up and voted to stay out. One single hand held up at a mass meeting to stay out on strike. So you understand that it is not a desire to conform that shapes my attitudes.

I belong to no group within the garage. I long ago resigned from the sports club and the art section so that I would have no ties within the garage. Even when some weeks ago a small group tried to push through a vote of no confidence in the union representative I took no part in it, for the particular group involved had even less to offer than the group now in authority. It seems to me pointless to change wardens merely out of pique. The union representative and I ceased to be on speaking terms long long ago. To make any impression in that atmosphere would be as fatuous as a dedicated socialist looking for converts among the Young Conservatives.



# FOR ALL

I'll march with you in street protests and I'll give out leaflets in the garage as I have done in the recent past.

I'll stand at the gate with the first pickets as I have done on half a dozen occasions and I will argue and explain my views in the canteen, the lavatory and the conductors' room as I do virtually every day. But in all honesty I must confess I cannot sit at a table and form one of a committee.

I am genuinely sorry that my letter should read like this. But if at any time I can help with the distribution of leaflets (purely as an individual within the garage) I will always be willing to do it.

Arthur M., London W.14.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have thoroughly enjoyed and valued the reading of 'Solidarity', for as you state 'there is nothing quite like it' - for its somewhat startling down-to-earth expression of opinions and insight into current affairs.

You may consider me a philistine, but your constant decrying of leadership and organization has me somewhat puzzled. I agree with you that the leadership in many unions and parties is bureaucratic, but this is encouraged by the very people who elect them to office, as they are lazily inclined to leave everything

to somebody else.

The only remedy for this state of affairs as I see it is mass education on socialism, to which I think that 'Solidarity' is a great contribution.

Another problem is how do you get people to desire to read or listen to subjects other than pools, racing, dogs, not forgetting the latest craze Bingo !

James D., London NW9, AEU.

\* \* \* \* \*

I received from you a copy of 'Solidarity' which I had no desire to read and will be pleased if you refrain in the future from sending me your literature.

I have no wish to correspond with or receive literature from people round the fringe of the Labour Movement who act as policemen for the right wing.

We have deliberately withheld this comrade's name: 'Solidarity' is pleased to offer a prize of 2½d. for the first answer received correctly guessing to which organization this comrade belongs.



# WHITE GUARDS? OR WORKERS? - 2

We continue in this issue our translation of Ida Mett's 'La Commune de Cronstadt' begun in 'Solidarity' II, 6.

The story of the Kronstadt uprising of March 1921 has deep implications for revolutionary socialists. Before these can be brought out, however, a record of the facts is needed. The 'left' today has a vested interest in 'forgetting' these facts - for they deal with things that show up how shallow and reactionary is much of its present thinking: what is a workers' state, what is workers' management, what is the bureaucracy, what should be the relationship of class and party, etc.

In this issue Ida Mett analyses the programme of the Kronstadt rebellion. In our next issue the rebellion itself will be described, as well as the methods used by the Bolsheviki in its suppression.

The delegation of Kronstadt sailors which had been visiting the strike-bound Petrograd factories returned to Kronstadt on February 28th. That same day, the crew of the battleship 'Petrovavlosk', having discussed the situation, voted the following resolution:\*

'Having heard the reports of the representatives sent by the General Assembly of the Fleet to find out about the situation in Petrograd, the sailors demand:

1) immediate new elections to the Soviets. The present Soviets no longer express the wishes of the workers and peasants. The new elections should be by secret ballot and should be preceded by free electoral propaganda.

2) freedom of speech and of the press for workers and peasants, for the anarchists and for the Left socialist parties.

3) the right of assembly and freedom for trade union and peasant organizations.

4) the organization, at the latest on March 10, 1921, of a Conference of non-party workers, soldiers and sailors, of Petrograd, Kronstadt, and the Petrograd district.

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\* This resolution was subsequently endorsed by all the Kronstadt sailors in General Assembly and by a number of groups of Red Army Guards. It was also endorsed by the whole working population of Kronstadt, in General Assembly. It became the political programme of the insurrection. It therefore deserves a careful analysis.



5) the liberation of all political prisoners of the Socialist parties and of all imprisoned workers and peasants, soldiers and sailors belonging to working class or peasant organizations.

6) the election of a commission to look into the dossiers of all those detained in prisons and concentration camps.

7) the abolition of all political sections in the armed forces. No political party should have privileges for the propagation of its ideas or receive State subsidies to this end. In the place of the political sections, various cultural groups should be set up, deriving resources from the State.

8) the immediate abolition of the militia detachments set up between the towns and the countryside.

9) the equalisation of rations for all workers, except those engaged in dangerous or unhealthy jobs.

10) the abolition of Party combat detachments in all military groups. The abolition of Party guards in factories and enterprises. If guards are required they should be nominated, taking into account the views of the workers.

11) the granting to the peasants of freedom of action on their own soil and of the right to own cattle provided they look after it themselves and do not employ hired labour.

12) we request that all military units and officer-trainee groups associate themselves with this resolution.

13) we demand that the Press give proper publicity to this resolution.

14) we demand the institution of mobile workers' control groups.

15) we demand that handicraft production be authorised provided it does not utilise wage labour.

## ANALYSIS OF THE KRONSTADT PROGRAMME

The Kronstadt sailors and the Petrograd strikers knew quite well that Russia's economic status was at the root of the political crisis. Their discontent was caused both by the famine and by the whole evolution of the political situation. The Russian workers were increasingly disillusioned in their greatest hope: the Soviets. Daily they saw the power of a single party substituting itself to that of the Soviets. A Party, moreover, which was degenerating rapidly through the exercise of absolute power and which was already riddled with careerists. It was against the monopoly exercised by this Party in all fields of life that the working class sought to react.

Point (1) of the Kronstadt resolution expressed an idea shared by the best elements of the Russian working class. Totally 'bolshevised' Soviets no longer reflected the wishes of the workers and peasants. Hence



the demand for new elections, to be carried out according to the principle of full equality for all working class political tendencies.

Such a regeneration of the Soviets would imply the granting to all working class tendencies of the possibility of expressing themselves freely, without fear of calumny or extermination. Hence, quite naturally, there followed the idea of freedom of expression, of the Press, of Assembly and of organization, contained in Point (2).

We must stress that by 1921 the class struggle in the countryside had been fought to a virtual standstill. The vast majority of the Kulaks had been dispossessed. It is quite wrong to claim that the granting of basic freedoms to the peasants (as demanded in Point (3)) would have meant restoring political rights to the Kulaks. It was only a few years later that the peasants were exhorted to 'enrich themselves'... and this by Bukharin, then an official Party spokesman.

The Kronstadt resolution had the merit of stating things openly and clearly. But it was breaking no new ground. Its main ideas were being discussed everywhere. For having, in one way or another, put forward precisely such ideas, workers and peasants were already filling the prisons and the recently set up concentration camps. The men of Kronstadt did not desert their comrades. Point (6) of their resolution shows that they intended to look into the whole juridical apparatus. They already had serious doubts as to its objectivity, as an organ of their rule. The Kronstadt sailors were thereby showing a spirit of solidarity, in the best working class tradition. In July 1917 Kerensky had arrested a deputation from the Baltic Fleet that had come to Petrograd. Kronstadt had immediately sent a further deputation, to insist on their release. In 1921 this tradition was being spontaneously renewed.

Points (7) and (10) of the resolution attacked the political monopoly being exercised by the ruling Party. The Party was using State funds in an exclusive and uncontrolled manner to extend its influence both in the Army and in the police.

Point (9) of the resolution demanded equal rations for all workers. This destroys Trotsky's accusation of 1938 \* according to which 'the men of Kronstadt wanted privileges, while the country was hungry'.

Point (14) clearly raised the question of workers' control. Both before and during the October Revolution this demand had evoked a powerful echo among the working class. The Kronstadt sailors understood quite clearly that real control had escaped from the hands of the rank and file. They sought to bring it back. The Bolsheviks meanwhile sought to vest all

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\* The accusation was made in answer to a question put to Trotsky by Wendelin Thomas, a member of the New York Commission of Enquiry into the Moscow Trials.



control in the hands of a special Commissariat, the Rabkrin (Workers and Peasants Inspection) \*.

Point (11) reflected the demands of the peasants to whom the Kronstadt sailors had remained linked - as had, as a matter of fact, the whole of the Russian proletariat. The basis of this link is to be found in the specific history of Russian industry. Because of feudal backwardness, Russian industry did not find its roots in petty handicraft. In their great majority the Russian workers came directly from the peasantry. This must be stressed. The Baltic sailors of 1921 were, it is true, closely linked with the peasantry. But neither more so nor less so than had been the sailors of 1917.

In their resolution, the Kronstadt sailors were taking up once again one of the big demands of October. They were supporting those peasant claims demanding the land and the right to own cattle for those peasants who did not exploit the labour of others. In 1921 moreover there was another aspect to this particular demand. It was an attempt to solve the food question, which was becoming desperate. Under the system of forced requisition the population of the towns was literally dying of hunger. Why incidentally should the satisfaction of these demands be deemed 'tactically correct' when advocated by Lenin, in March 1921, and 'counter-revolutionary' when put forward by the peasants themselves, a few weeks earlier.

What was so 'counter-revolutionary' about the Kronstadt programme? What could justify the crusade launched by the Party against Kronstadt? A 'workers and peasants' regime that did not wish to base itself exclusively on lies and terror had to take account of the peasantry. It need not thereby have lost its revolutionary character. The men of Kronstadt were not alone moreover in putting forward such demands. In 1921 Makhno's followers were still active in the Ukraine. This revolutionary peasant movement was evolving its own ideas and methods of struggle. The Ukrainian peasantry had played a predominant role in chasing out the feudal hordes. It had earned the right itself to determine the forms of its social life.

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\* Whom has history vindicated in this matter? Shortly before his second stroke Lenin was to write (Pravda, January 28, 1923): 'Let us speak frankly. The Inspection now enjoys no authority whatsoever. Everybody knows that there is no worse institution than our Inspection'. This was said a bare eighteen months after the suppression of Kronstadt.

(It is worth pointing out that Stalin had been the chief of the Rabkrin from 1919 till the spring of 1922, when he became General Secretary of the Party. He continued to exercise a strong influence over Rabkrin even after he had formally left it. Lenin, incidentally, had voiced no objection to Stalin's appointment or activities in this post. That only came later. Lenin had in fact defended both Stalin and Rabkrin against some of Trotsky's more far-sighted criticisms - see I. Deutscher, 'The Prophet Unarmed', p.47-48 -) Ed. 'Solidarity'.



Despite Trotsky's categorical and unsubstantiated assertions, the Makhno movement was in no sense whatsoever a kulak movement. Koubanin, the official Bolshevik historian of the Makhno movement, shows statistically, in a book edited by the Party's Historical Institute, that the Makhno movement at first appeared and had developed most rapidly in precisely those areas where the peasantry was the poorest. The Makhno movement was crushed before it had had a chance of showing in practice its full creative abilities. The fact that during the Civil War it had been capable of creating its own specific forms of struggle leads one to guess that it could have been capable of a lot more.

As a matter of fact, in relation to agrarian policy, nothing was to prove more disastrous than the zig-zags of the Bolsheviks. In 1931, ten years after Kronstadt, Stalin was to decree his famous 'liquidation of the kulaks'. This resulted in an atrocious famine and in the loss of millions of human lives.

Let us finally consider Point (15) of the Kronstadt resolution, demanding freedom for handicraft production. This was not a question of principle. For the workers of Kronstadt handicraft production was to compensate for an industrial production that had fallen to nought. Through this demand they were seeking a way out of their intolerable economic plight.

TO BE CONTINUED.

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER ISSUE CONTAINS:

MALCOLM CALDWELL ON THE INDIA-CHINA ISSUE  
MARTIN ENNALS ON BRITAIN'S SECRET POLICE  
THE FULL TEXT OF FRANK COUSINS' BRIGHTON SPEECH  
BILL VESTER ON THE CURRENT STAGE OF DETERRENT POLICY  
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## YOUTH AGAINST THE BOMB

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JANUARY ISSUE (OUT DECEMBER 19) CONTAINS:

PETE LATARCHE (YCND CHAIRMAN) ON THE FUTURE OF ALDERMASTON - STATEMENT ON YCND DETAIL POLICY ON TRADES UNION PERSUASION - REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATIONS OF YCND - JOE TAYLOR : IS THE YOUTH CND FINISHED? - SPECIAL PULL-OUT ON CIVIL DEFENCE - CND'S NEW 3-POINT STATEMENT EXPLAINED - ANDREW TAIT : HOUSING & BOMB EXPENDITURE - REVIEWS, POEMS, FEATURES, ETC.



# review

## THE BOMB, DIRECT ACTION AND THE STATE

(Published by Syndicalist Workers' Federation, 25A, Amberley Rd., London W9.  
Price 6d.)

This pamphlet should be read by everyone active in the struggle against the Bomb or in the struggle in industry. It clearly shows the relation between the two. It explains the shortcomings of those who see the fight against nuclear weapons as an end in itself. But it also provides a devastating and documented exposure of those political sophisticates who would divert the mass movement against the Bomb into the narrow straight-jacket of Labour Party resolution-mongering. It pitilessly pillories their abstentionism from the real struggle.

'Solidarity' particularly welcomes this pamphlet. To our mind it shows a certain evolution in syndicalist thinking. The features of capitalist society are clearly recognized as having changed. Modern capitalism is seen as having 'different contradictions' from those described by Marx. State capitalism is explicitly recognized as capable of 'eliminating the boom-slump cycle'. The relation of the Leninist concept of organization to the capitalist environment in which it developed and flourished is analyzed... in an almost marxist manner. Despite nostalgic references to the First International, revolutionary ghosts (both marxist and anarchist) are on the whole allowed to rest in peace.

The whole approach to the developing mass movement is a dynamic

one, not a static one conceived in terms of great eternal absolutes (State, politics, authority: BAD - rank and file, mass action, initiative: GOOD). The authors are intensely aware of a process, involving thousands of human beings whose thoughts and actions are in a state of constant evolution, and constantly impinging on one another. Disillusionment with traditional politics will lead to a deeper insight. The worsening of the arms race will lead to a wider understanding of the other factors involved in the question of the Bomb. 'When we tackle one social problem, we discover others, until we are confronted by the general social problem: class society and the State.'

We thoroughly agree with this method. Syndicalists and Solidarists can certainly work together to help foster this necessary mass consciousness.

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