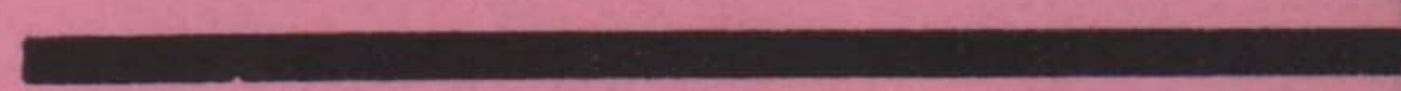


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—SOLIDARITY

FOR WORKER'S POWER



Volume 3 Number 7



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SOLIDARITY

FOR WORKER'S POWER

Volume 3 Number 3

1961

BERKELEY: A FOLLOW-UP

In 'STUDENTS IN REVOLT' ('Solidarity' Pamphlet No. 18) we described the events at Berkeley, California, up to and including the mass rally held in Greek Theater on December 7 at which Mario Savio was dragged from the platform in the presence of 15,000 people. We also referred to the Free Speech Movement (FSM) mass rally, held the same day. Here is news of some later developments.

The clumsy intervention of the police was another typical piece of bureaucratic mis-judgment. Savio had been dragged from the platform and prevented from putting the FSM viewpoint to the 15,000 assembled students (who had just heard President Clark Kerr make vague promises of a partial amnesty for demonstrators and mention possible changes in the rules governing student political conduct). The police intervention provoked profound concern among students and members of the Academic Senate. It gave new strength to the FSM.

On December 8, the Berkeley Academic Senate (composed of all the professors and deans) voted by 815 to 115 for a settlement that went further than the Kerr plan and came fairly close to the FSM platform. The Academic Senate suggested that 'the content of on-campus speech or advocacy should not be restricted by the University. Off-campus student political activity should not be subject to University regulation'. As a well-known weekly put it: 'The Faculty was clearly disturbed by the involvement of the police in academic affairs'.*

The FSM greeted the result of the Senate meeting with considerable satisfaction. It was a step in the right direction. But the militants warned that the Academic Senate had only proposed a settlement. The final authority for changing the rules of political conduct ultimately rested with the Board of Regents of California University - not with the Faculty.

Various local legislators then got hot under the collar. They threatened to launch an 'investigation' into 'just what forces were really behind the law-breaking on the campus'. Papers pointed out that 'students who learned to use sit-ins and other forms of harassment, both legal and illegal, off campus, have now learned to use the same weapons in an academic setting'. They warned that 'Kerr can ill afford to antagonize the Regents or the Legislature'.** Others referred to the 'self-styled Free

* Newsweek, December 21, 1964.

** Ibid.

Speech Movement as being dominated by Civil Rights militants and Trotskyite groups.* Kerr called the student rebels 'an instrument of anarchy and political aggrandizement'(sic!). The students 'had been impressed with the tactics of Fidel Castro and Mao-Tse-Tung' (very sick!).

* * * * *

The next few days were spent in active preparation. Marvin Garson wrote to us:

'Fund-raising and propaganda supporting our position are going on all over California and the nation. Most of it is done by students, but a group of professors, on their own initiative, raised the money to print 60,000 copies of a pamphlet explaining their position. They have loaded them into vans and gone all over the state to propagandize at other universities.

'Everything is done on SOLIDARIST principles. There is a central Steering Committee of 7 people, but it hardly acts like a supreme leadership. Four of its members are on speaking tours out of state, and a fifth has collapsed from nervous exhaustion. Yet all the work goes on, in a chaotically efficient way. There are hundreds of people collecting money for FSM. There are no records kept, no way of checking up on these people, yet the money flows in. We rely on their integrity and enthusiasm, fully aware that a few people are fraudulently collecting money and keeping it.

'All the thoughts in our 'Newsletter' were in the air, in thousands of conversations, before we put them down. If we'd wanted to, we could have put in plugs for SOLIDARITY, or irrelevant attacks on the Communist Party; there was no one to stop us, no official to check the plates before the presses started rolling. But we realized we were acting in the name of the Movement as a whole, using money the Movement had collected. We are not the only ones like this. Every day, leaflets, pamphlets and statements issue from all kinds of autonomous sources (e.g., the Graduate Coordinating Council, the Anthropology Department graduate students, the Undergraduate Association, FSM Press Central (not really very "central"), a group of 9 professors, a group of 200 professors, etc.). But none yield to the temptation to plug any particular cause or faction.

'Not only the campus, but much of the city of Berkeley has become a real community, almost a bee-hive. Strangers approach each other on the street and begin to discuss what the Regents will do, what we should do, and so forth. No one objects to telephone calls after midnight. Communication is now by word of mouth, mass rallies, or leafleting; the daily press is no longer a source of information, but is just a curiosity, a topic of conversation.

'You may think that the articles in the Newsletter stressing alienation (e.g., "DO NOT FOLD, BEND, SPINDLE OR MUTILATE") are only there because we wrote them. This isn't true. These ideas are almost platitudes here by now.

* Time, December 11, 1964.

' FSM is not bureaucratic, nor democratic; it's meta-bureaucratic, a unique combination of anarchy and bureaucracy that is hard to describe. It generates tremendous energy, but wastes an awful lot of what it generates. Volunteers work feverishly all night on their own initiative, then discover that some other group has already finished the task. Thousands of dollars are collected in a week, and hundreds are wasted. But there's no other way of going about it. I'm sure the Paris Commune was like this, but that doesn't mean it's good.'

* * * * *

The meeting of the Regents took place in Los Angeles, on Friday, December 18. A 'vigil' was held outside the hall, attended by some 150 people, including comrades who had driven over 200 miles from Berkeley.

The Regents' decision was pretty blunt. They slapped down the Academic Senate by declaring that they (the Regents) had sole authority over student discipline. They directed the Administration to maintain 'law and order'. As for free speech, they would set up a commission to study the question and report back some time in the future.* The last point was aimed at dividing the Faculty, who had recently elected a very 'moderate' Executive. It certainly didn't fool the students.

The students spent their Christmass holidays organizing and continuing to prepare for the next stage of the struggle. They are undertaking a great research project, digging up dirt on the Regents (who they are, what they own, how they use University funds to aid their own business, how they are appointed, etc.). They are also discussing strategy for when the struggle resumes, possibly towards the end of January. Their spies have discovered that the Regents have instructed legal staff to determine what circumstances would 'justify' closing down the whole University. 'If they did so', one of the students wrote to us, 'I imagine we would declare the place open as the Free University of California, using the classrooms and library under our own management'.

The lessons of Berkeley are being widely discussed in American universities. Savio has flown East and spoken at rallies at Michigan, Columbia, Brandeis, Harvard and Chicago. Our friend Bernard M. writes as follows from Chicago:

'To better control the students, large universities destroyed the only community students in many cases had ever experienced when they eliminated fraternities and the freedom of frat. houses and began herding students into large government-financed dorms. Students began to agitate

* The Bulletin of International Socialism (January 11, 1965) gives the composition of this six-man commission as follows: 1) the Chairman of the Board of the Bank of America; 2) the President of Hunt Food and Industries Inc.; 3) the Director of the Security First National Bank of Los Angeles; 4) the wife of the publisher of the Los Angeles Times; 5) the Director of the Hollister Land Co.; and 6) the President of the Southern California Music Co.

against high rents in these dorms, oppressive restrictions on social life and poor food. As a result American students are beginning to view their role differently. Students had been treated as adolescents by University Administrators but they are now re-evaluating this role. Partly through the influence of graduate students, underclassmen now think of themselves as young adults and want to be treated as such. This change of role will have tremendous implications, not only within the University, which is transitory at best, but throughout society. The Peace Movement and Civil Rights Movement have been instrumental in giving these students the education in direct action that they so beautifully used. At Roosevelt University, Chicago, our comrades in the Wobblies and Anarchist Group have been attempting to stir things up. Mario agrees that of all the universities in the Chicago area, Roosevelt is the most likely to erupt'.

The Wall Street Journal (December 23, 1964) has also been making interesting comments. Although of course it cannot afford to reveal very much about the real operation of American universities, it does point to the manifestations of the underlying problems which have students up in arms: the huge administrative bureaucracy, the factory atmosphere in which it is impossible to really learn, the impersonality of the university which alienates the students in somewhat the same way as the assembly line alienates the worker from his job.

But the lessons have sunk in deeper still. The New York Times quoted Savio as saying that at times it was necessary to 'radicalize the Socialists'. He added: '(The university) can tolerate the Democrats and Republicans and the radical socialists. But it cannot tolerate the Civil Rights Movement because it advocates things with consequences.'

Those of us with experience in the traditional left (Social Democratic, Stalinist or Trotskyist) know exactly what he means. The traditional left is tolerated here too. Its resolution-mongering, verbal 'leftness', manoeuvring, emphasis on capturing positions in the trade unions or Labour Party and reluctance to engage in anything unconstitutional or unofficial are a threat to no one. They are in fact the built-in safety valve of the whole system.

* * * * *

In Berkeley meanwhile 799 students are still awaiting trial (at the end of January) for 'trespassing' and 'resisting arrest' at the December 3 Sproul Hall sit-in. The Administration has refused to withdraw the charges, although this will mean that if convicted, the students will have 'criminal records' and thus be unable to obtain any type of civil service employment. Further developments may well hinge round the outcome of these trials.

The 799 defendants have recently announced that if brought to court they will insist on individual trial by jury, as is their right. This would block all local courts for at least 2 years and cost the Administration several million dollars. The defendants have also warned that they

would all be seeking to subpoena Governor Brown and President Clark Kerr. The authorities then proposed a deal. Two of the charges would be dropped and the defendants given a small fine for trespassing plus 6 months on probation, while 'leaders' got some gaol (up to a month). In exchange, the defendants would undertake to plead 'nolo contendere' (I don't wish to challenge'). To their very great credit the defendants refused.

A monstrous shambles is in the offing. To drop the charges would be a complete capitulation on the part of the authorities. To press them could start the whole ball rolling again. Meanwhile the FSM have adopted the following anthem, sung to the refrain of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony:

Keep the students safe from knowledge
Keep them loyal, keep them clean
That is why we have a college
Hail to IBM machine!

about ourselves

Since the last 'SOLIDARITY' (over 3 months ago!) our most significant publication has been 'Students in Revolt'. This tells the story of the student struggle at Berkeley, USA, against the university authorities (for a follow-up, see article in this issue).

Our first print of this pamphlet was 1,000 copies. This sold out in 10 days. The second print (1,250 copies) is selling extremely well. We still want orders.

The response to the pamphlet has been very encouraging. It is to be translated into Swedish, French and German. We hear that the Students Union of University College (London) has passed a resolution of solidarity with the Berkeley students, and sent it to the Free Speech Movement.

The Kent Solidarity Group has reprinted Victor Serge's 'KRONSTADT 1921'. It can be obtained from us for 6d. (9d. post free).

Within the next few weeks we will be publishing Paul Cardan's 'MODERN CAPITALISM AND REVOLUTION', a 120 page book. It will cost 3/6d. (4/1d. post free). This is a major contribution to an understanding of capitalist society today (as distinct from that of Bakunin or Marx). Few revolutionaries seem to be able to advance ideologically beyond the turn of the century. This is perhaps unfair. Some of the more 'advanced' sections of the paleo-marxist movement have progressed as far as the year of Lenin's death (1924)!

This publication has involved us in a very heavy outlay. To finance it we need a substantial sum - in fact about £100. We are therefore appealing for contributions. Readers of 'SOLIDARITY' will know that we rarely ask for money (the last occasion was in March 1963). We ask for help on this occasion in all seriousness, not to pay back debts, but to assist us in financing our most ambitious project so far. Please send what you can now. Orders (with money) for the book itself would also be most welcome.

ABOUT 'SOLIDARITY' GLASGOW

Glasgow now has its own entirely autonomous 'Solidarity' group. They produce their own paper. The first issue of 'Solidarity' Glasgow appeared three weeks ago. The next issue will soon be out, as well as several pamphlets dealing with Glasgow Housing, Glasgow Underground, and the problems of architects. The paper is available from 'Solidarity' Glasgow, c/o P. Tobin, 11 Minguloy Street, Glasgow N.2. Subscription: 4/6 for 6 issues.

A leaflet published by the Glasgow group states their objectives very clearly. We quote:

'With so many militants around wanting to help the workers during struggles with the employers, a group has been set up to try and do this. It will allow people who are not directly involved in disputes, either on the job or in the union, to take solidarity action with their fellow workers. ACTION will be the main purpose of this group, not resolution-passing nor arguing about the fifty "royal" roads to socialism, nor swopping the newspapers of the various left-wing "in-groups".

'The object of the group is to help create working class consciousness and solidarity, by propaganda and STRUGGLE, and create sympathy for strikes and other working class action among the public, who are too easily turned against their fellow workers by the vicious propaganda of the yellow press.'

'The group could be extremely valuable during "unofficial" disputes, when the workers are deserted by the bureaucratic trade union leaders. It is then that they lack the finance and organization of the trade union apparatus and that the need for outside help is greatest.'

'The group will not seek to "lead" or "get in" on strikes for factional ends. Nor will it be a self-appointed messiah trying to take the workers along one of the "correct" paths to socialism. Instead it will line up with the workers against the bosses (be they state or council officials, or private employers). We will put ourselves at their disposal during strikes, go-slows, overtime bans and work-to-rules, and try and help by producing and distributing literature, flyposting and slogan painting, providing transport and organizing supporting demonstrations.

'WE CALL ON ALL MILITANT LEFT-WINGERS TO SUPPORT THIS GROUP.'

We can't say how much we welcome this development. The formation of such viable, independent groups is what is needed to create a strong libertarian movement.

ABOUT THE NORTHERN LIBERTARIAN ALLIANCE

This group consists of Anarchists, Solidarists, members of the SWF, ILP and Commonwealth. It aims to bring together members of all libertarian groups for action in common.

Jim Pinkerton, the secretary of the Alliance, writes: 'By meeting together in the Alliance we have discovered that our differences are not as great as some of us had imagined when we were operating in isolation...

'In order to help the formation of similar alliances elsewhere, the Northern Libertarian Alliance is willing to act as a "clearing house" for all interested groups. Many groups may be unaware of the existence of people in other organizations who are operating in their area. So if all groups will write to me, I will split these up into suitable regions, and send a full regional list to each group.' Will anyone interested please write to Jim Pinkerton, 12 Alt Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

In our next issue we hope to announce the setting up of a more formal SOLIDARITY organization in the London area.

READ

resistance

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE COMMITTEE OF 100

CONTENTS OF CURRENT ISSUE (FEBRUARY):

1. Industrial Action - a Must. by Bill Christopher.
2. Telephone Sabotage. (second of a series)
3. In the Glass House. by Daffid Davies.

6 MONTHS SUBSCRIPTION : 5/- , from
'RESISTANCE', 13, Goodwin Street, London N.4.

THE FINGER PRINT MYTH

Some weeks ago the National Council for Civil Liberties published a 'Handbook of Citizens' Rights'. In this booklet, ordinary people were informed, in simple language, of their legal rights. The outcry was amazing. The People (December 13, 1964) denounced the booklet all over its front page. Such knowledge was dangerous! Lord Shawcross, Chairman of the Bar Council from 1952 to 1957 and former Labour Attorney General called it 'a useful guide for the inexperienced criminal'.

The outcry against the NCCL 'Handbook' epitomizes the contempt of those who administer the law for those who have to submit to it. In such a society it is essential to know one's rights. But it is just as important to have an idea of the means available to the authorities to subvert these rights. Sheer bluff is one. Tame magistrates is another. Then there is electronic eavesdropping. An old (but only recently unclassified) method is the fabrication of evidence. This may be done at O level, as in West End Central Police Station. But there are A level techniques too, **for** advanced students.

In the December 12, 1964 issue of the Swiss magazine 'L'Illustré', J.A. Widmer published an interesting article on the possibility of planting finger prints. A technique for doing this, he tells us, was developed by a British ex-policeman (the British public, of course, wasn't informed of this great national achievement). The paper describes some of the possible repercussions: crooks and criminals might claim they had been framed. In making the facts more widely known 'Solidarity' is thinking of other possible repercussions... and of rogues of a different order. After all, anti-bomb demonstrators have had their prints taken on a number of occasions. We are concerned lest in this streamlined era certain people might make use of the New Technology to secure convictions...

' What I have just been told by Mr. Marsh (an ex-police officer of 7, Marcia Avenue, Shotton Colliery, Co. Durham) is quite amazing. Under my eyes I have seen the myth of finger prints explode. Finger prints were hitherto thought to be an infallible method of investigation and of establishing judicial proof. This isn't so any longer. In a few months' time, when the work of criminologist Marsh is better known, courts will no longer be able to accept finger prints as absolute proof.

' It remains true that no two human beings have exactly the same prints. Sixteen points of similarity between two finger prints are still

necessary to conclude that they belong to the same person. What is new is the fact that it is possible to transplant finger prints.

'Mr. Marsh's method would enable one for instance to transplant YOUR finger prints (yes, you, reading this paper). They could be taken to the scene of a crime where you personally could not possibly have been. And this could be done without you even knowing it. What's more the method is simple, cheap and infallible. Any amateur photographer could do it.

'Mr. Marsh first 'brings out' the finger prints he intends to copy, using traditional police methods of mercury and chalk. The print is then copied on an Ektachrome photographic paper and developed. At this stage, the picture of the original finger print can be made to stand out on the film. All that is now necessary is for the person using Mr. Marsh's method to cut out the print and to mount it, like a small seal. From now on, it is possible for this person to stamp his subject's finger prints wherever he likes. The police won't be able to make head or tail of it. In the present state of knowledge it will be impossible to distinguish a genuine from a planted finger print.

' This is not new. A Frenchman (Bertillon) once developed a similar system. But his method wasn't perfect. A detailed examination of his prints by the method of "poroscopy" showed certain flaws. The word "poroscopy" refers to the technique of searching for skin pores on the finger prints and these vary from person to person. These little openings (pores) can be just as significant as the lines of the finger prints themselves. Bertillon's artificial finger prints contained no "pores", whereas Marsh's artificial finger prints are as perfect as the original.

' Here then is the fulfilment of the great dream of spies, crooks and criminals: "irrefutable" proof by finger prints no longer exists! The No.1 method of getting suspects convicted will vanish. In days bygone when finger prints were found on a weapon, there was no doubt that the owner of the prints had used the weapon. But Marsh's method would enable anyone to create the impression that such and such a person was present at a given place (whereas in fact nothing could be further from the truth).

' All this isn't just theoretical speculation: on two occasions while on secret police work in Uganda Mr. Marsh tricked the police. "There had been a burglary where I lived. While awaiting the arrival of the police I had used my stamp. I stamped my own finger prints on the window sills. The police collected all the prints, including my own synthetic ones.

'Some time ago Mr. Marsh sent authentic and stamp-on finger prints to the Police Commissioner in the West Riding, a department reputed for its skill in the finger print business. The police refused to comment on 'such a controversial subject'. Ex-Detective Superintendent Fred Cherrill* Scotland Yard's most famous finger print expert (recently deceased) had

* The Guardian (December 24, 1964) reports that Cherrill's 'most famous case' was that of the Maidenhead trunk murder in 1948 which later led to a kitchen porter being executed for murdering a woman recluse. The 'smallest possible fragment of a finger print' led to a conviction.

been asked to comment. He refused point blank. He was drawing his pension and clearly didn't want to compromise himself.

'I have seen dozens of letters from British lawyers appealing to the science of Mr. Marsh. These reactions from interested parties tell quite a story about what Mr. Marsh has called 'the great trickery of finger prints'.

'The police used to say that the perfect crime doesn't exist. This may have been true, but isn't quite true now. What could stop someone, for instance, from collecting finger prints left by Prince Philip on a glass of whisky at some official reception, making a seal of them, and then stamping them on the scene of the Glasgow to London train robbery? One can easily see where all this could lead to: blackmail*, manufactured evidence, etc.

'In the U.S.A. people are already most interested in these discoveries. An M.P. from Durham may raise the matter in the House. It is already expected that thousands of men, condemned to prison on the sole evidence of their finger prints will invoke the possibility that the prints were planted. All that remains to be done is for the police to recognize that frauds of this kind are possible and that "Marsh-prints" are undistinguishable from the real thing.'

* Is it really far fetched to suggest that the Police might do exactly the same? It is now widely known that they may plant evidence, when it suits them. What is perhaps less well known it that they have been incited to commit other acts of civil disobedience. In October 1964, Lord Shawcross spoke to the East Sussex magistrates, at their annual meeting. He deplored the fact that 'the barriers protecting suspected and accused persons were being steadily reinforced'. Of the Judges' Rules, governing the questioning of suspects, Lord Shawcross said: 'Of course the Police often ignore the rules - and they are quite right to do so'. ('Sunday Telegraph', October 11, 1964).

LIBERTARIAN SOCIALIST, ANARCHIST and SYNDICALIST

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS CAN BE HAD FROM:

BERNARD MARSZALEK,
Solidarity Bookshop,
713, Armitage,
Chicago, Illinois
U.S.A.

TOM CONDIT,
P.O.Box 77265,
San Francisco,
U.S.A.

'STRIKE',
c/o Freedman,
2849 Mayfield Rd, #1
Cleveland 18,
Ohio, U.S.A.

MARXISM: A REVISION(IST) COURSE

You've heard of U (upper class) and non-U talk. But what about L (left-wing) linguo? Can you read papers like The Newsletter, Red Flag, Vanguard, Militant? How expert are YOU at the good old jargon? Here's a test paper. Cover up the answers (on the right) and get cracking.

QUESTIONS

ANSWERS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Mo - what - oly what -italism is based on super-profits? | 1. Nop; cap. |
| 2. Dic-what-ship of the what-letariat? | 2. Tator; pro. |
| 3. List various types of a) tasks b) struggles | 3. a) Historic; immediate; varied; before us; urgent; concrete (see cement section). b) Class; all-out; political; cultural; principled; many-sided; one-sided; inner-Party; etc. |
| 4. What-illating petty bourgeoisie? | 4. Vac. |
| 5. What must we do soberly? | 5. Evaluate, estimate, assess, anticipate (correct answers). Go down to the nearest pub (wrong answer) |
| 6. List moods to be avoided (Hint: moods usually travel in pairs) | 6. Pessimism and despondency; complacency and passivity; cynicism and confusionism; recklessness and adventurism. |
| 7. What does one do with cadres? | 7. One develops them, trains them, and boldly promotes them (poor things!). |
| 8. List as many words ending with -ism as you can think of (obvious ones, like social, Stalin, imperial, fasc, don't count). | 8. Chauvin; diversion; eclectic; narrow sectional; exceptional; liquidation; adventur; revision; opportun; confusion; tail or Khvost (obsol.); Keynesian; Sch- (got you there!). |
| 9. What is happening to the contradictions in the situation? | 9. They are increasing, developing, deepening, sharpening. Also unfolding. (Sometimes they even gather momentum). |

10. How do contradictions get started? 10. They stem from or flow out of situations. Sometimes the roots of problems stem from contradictions (a botanical anomaly).
11. List various kinds of front. 11. Popular; broad; united. (avoid the common typographical error: untied front - see cheesecake section).



*the untied
front*

TECHNO - SEX

The cells
are strangely happy
tonight
through sector three
there breathes
an exciting
wave
of induced feeling
we lie
cocooned
waiting our turn
erotic images
flicker
around
our dreaming minds
tapes talk
with detached concern
of the falling
birthrate

they impress
with figures
that are
irrefutable
but reassure
that
our virility
has not
been questioned
our next message
amid
the changing
darkening
colours
is a wish
that we may all
relax
and have
a multiple conception

after
the music begins
and sector three
proceeds
with its
appointed
task

Del
Foley

BOOK REVIEW:

THE DISARMERS: A STUDY IN PROTEST

by Christopher Driver (Hodder and Stoughton, 25s.)

The first thing to say about this new book on the unilateralist movement is that it is the best so far. The second is that it isn't much good. You will find more information in it about CND and the Committee of 100 and their predecessors than in any other single place, and this information is put together with sympathy and understanding, but the research and writing have clearly been done in a hurry. The book gives the general impression of a rough draft which needs to be pulled to pieces and put together again, and it certainly shouldn't have been published in its present form.

What does The Disarmers consist of? It is fairly long (more than 100,000 words), but regrettably has no illustrations. The first half tells the history of the growth of the movement over nearly twenty years, from a speech by Bob Edwards to an ILP meeting at St. Helens (January 1943) to the demonstration by the Committee of 100 at Wethersfield (December 1961). Chapter One describes the prehistory up to the emergence of the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War (November 1957) and of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (January 1958). Chapter Two describes the Aldermaston March. Chapter Three describes the movement's attack on and temporary victory over the Labour Party, and Chapter Four describes the Labour Party's counter-attack on and final victory over the movement. Chapter Five describes the development of the Committee of 100 down to January 1962.

The second half of the book examines various aspects of the movement. Chapter Six describes three "episodes" - the part played by the Committee of 100 in the Moscow Congress of the World Council of Peace (July 1962); the part played by CND and the Committee of 100 in the Cuba Crisis (October 1962); and the part played by the "Spies for Peace" and the "March Must Decide" Committee in the last Aldermaston March (April 1963). Chapter Seven describes four "side effects" - on the Police, with particular reference to what happened at the end of the Trafalgar Square sit-down (September 1961) and during Greek Week (July 1963); on the Law, with particular reference to the Trial of the Six (February to July 1962), the appeals of George Clark (January 1962 and November 1963), and the trials of Peter Moule and Terry Chandler (November 1963 to March 1964); on the Prisons, with particular reference to the Prison Reform Council's pamphlet Inside Story (February 1963); and on Civil Defence, with further reference to the "Spies for Peace". Chapter Eight describes the response of the Christian Churches to the challenge of the Bomb (Driver used to be the Guardian's religious expert before he became its Features Editor). Chapter Nine describes some examples of unilateralism in literature - mostly in drama, particularly the dreadful, dated plays of Charles Morgan (The Burning Glass) and David Mercer (Climate of Fear), and the nice little sketches of David Campton (Four Minute Warning). Chapter Ten describes various theories of disarmament and non-violence.

WHAT'S WRONG?

What's wrong with The Disarmers? To begin with, it is inevitably derivative - Driver doesn't know the movement from inside, and he isn't himself much of a scholar. In fact he has relied almost entirely on three kinds of material, all rather unreliable. The first kind of material used is original work by other people. Thus the first half of the book - the narrative section - is based mostly on David Edwards' unpublished thesis on the development of the unilateralist movement down to October 1961, and partly on such other sources as Hugh Brock's pamphlet The Century of Total War (first published as a series of articles in Peace News), Herb Greer's book Mud Pie (based on an article in the Spectator), and Richard Exley's unpublished thesis on CND's first year. The second kind of material used is conversations with and communications from all sorts of people inside and outside the movement, ranging from Sir Joseph Simpson and Canon Collins to Peter Cadogan and Charles Radcliffe. Thus the narrative often stops short for a page or two of personal opinion or reminiscence. The last kind of material used is press cuttings from the Guardian and a few other papers. These provide the background and fill the gaps.

There is certainly enough - and possibly too much - material for a book on the unilateralist movement. But such a book must be judged less by the mere amount of material used than by the way it is used, and here The Disarmers fails. True, the theses are academic (and unpublished), the pamphlets are brief (and out of date), and the only other book so far is almost worthless (and out of print); but Driver has failed to take the opportunity of writing the first authoritative book on the subject. Perhaps he couldn't help the book being derivative, but surely it needn't have had so many other defects, as follows:

CARELESSNESS.

1. It is careless. Driver seems to be ignorant of literary and bibliographical etiquette, which is important in a serious book. It doesn't matter if you get stuff from someone else, provided you say so properly, and this Driver too often fails to do. For example, he takes his account of the closing scenes of the Trafalgar Square sit-down from Greer, and says so; but he also takes his account of the formation of CND from Greer, and doesn't say so. Similarly, he takes his account of the RSG system from The RSGs, 1919-1963*, and says so; but he takes his account of the "Spies for Peace" episode from Resistance Shall Grow**, and doesn't say so.

This sort of carelessness has damaged the index and bibliography - mechanical aids that are useless unless they are reliable. There are plenty of examples. Hugh Brock's pamphlet and Herb Greer's book, which are both used as basic source material in several places, are acknowledged in footnotes but excluded from the bibliography. Solidarity doesn't appear in either the index or the bibliography, though it is mentioned several times in the text. Similarly, the "Spies for Peace" and their pamphlet don't appear in either the index or the bibliography, though they are mentioned and even quoted several times in the text.

* Solidarity Pamphlet 15

** Solidarity Pamphlet 14 (jointly with the ILP, the London Federation of Anarchists, and the Syndicalist Workers Federation)

BERTRAND RUSSELL.

There are other oddities. Authors mentioned in the bibliography are given initials instead of first names, which may be all right, say, for "P. M. S. Blackett" but is plain stupid for "B. Russell". The index has been compiled by some kind of a nut, who has put one of the references to Wayland Young under an entry "Wayland", and has given two separate entries to the same Michael Howard. There are also some factual errors in both index and bibliography. A.W.R.E. does not stand for "Aldermaston Atomic Research Establishment", Inside Story was not written by Jane Buxton and Margaret Turner, David Campton's plays have been published, and so on. But this leads to the next defect.

2. It is inaccurate. Driver says at the beginning of the book that "no doubt" it contains some mistakes. It does indeed. The proportion is smaller than in Greer's book, but The Disarmers is meant to be taken seriously, and all the more pity that Driver actually gets some things wrong that Greer managed to get right - such as the John Connell who should have got the Committee of 100 invitation that went astray, and Frank Cousins' reaction to the formation of the Committee. There are plenty of other mistakes. Ramsay MacDonald and Lansbury were not the first Labour Party leaders after World War I, for they followed Adamson and Clynes. John Hersey's Hiroshima was published before Autumn 1946, in the New Yorker. The New Left was formed around the New Reasoner as well as the Universities & Left Review; it appeared after Suez and Hungary, not before; and the Partisan was a public restaurant and coffee-bar, not a club. The Justices of the Peace Act dates from 1361, not 1381, and was designed for vagabonds surviving the French war, not the Peasants' Revolt (this is right in one place and wrong in another).

MORE MISTAKES.

Most of the Committee of 100 members in court on September 13th 1961, including Michael Randle, got one month, not two. Driver accepts Greer's statement that Fenner Brockway was "the only prominent figure remaining on the scene" at the end of the Trafalgar Square sit-down, although Lord Kilbracken was also there and was in fact mainly responsible for bringing the police behaviour to light afterwards. There were seven Committee of 100 demonstrations on December 9th 1961, not three. Trafalgar Square was booked by the "Keep Britain Great" movement for Easter Monday 1962, not 1963.

Many readers will already have noticed that there are errors in Driver's account of the "Spies for Peace" episode, but unfortunately it is still impossible to give all the facts. It does seem odd, however, to suggest in one place that the "Spies for Peace" belonged to "the anarcho-syndicalist wing of the Committee of 100", and in another that they might be found "among the readers of the Trotskyist magazine Solidarity"; Solidarity, of course, is not a Trotskyist magazine, as its readers (and the Trots) have known for four years*. Similarly, the leaflet "Against All Bombs"**, which was distributed by Committee of 100 delegates in Moscow in July 1962, was not a "Trotskyist political critique"; Driver should know this, since the Guardian, which called it a "Trot-

* see especially By Their Words Ye Shall Know Them, Solidarity Pamphlet 4

** see Solidarity Vol.II No.5

skyist leaflet" on July 11th and "Trotskyist in argument" on July 12th, did have the courtesy on the latter date to print Ken Weller's objection to the term as well. Peace News didn't "break" the bricks story, for Freedom printed Donald Rooum's original version of his case at the same time - his Anarchy article was a later version (Freedom, incidentally, isn't mentioned in the book). Anyway, the police planted bricks on eight people on July 11th 1963, not four.

These aren't the only mistakes in the book, but they are quite enough. The trouble isn't that there are mistakes, but that there are so many which could have been avoided. Driver hopes to correct them all in the next edition of The Disarmers, so if you find any more, send them to him at 6 Church Road, London N.6. At the same time, he might take another look at some of his personal judgements, which will raise many eyebrows in the movement. He calls Pat Arrowsmith "practical" and "level-headed", Peter Cadogan "tough-minded", Terry Chandler an "absolute" pacifist, George Clark "a remarkable talent for organisation and leadership", and Peter Moule "level-headed". Rather than say anything embarrassing, let us go on to the next defect.

OMISSIONS.

3. It is incomplete. No one would expect The Disarmers to include everything, but take a look at what it includes and excludes, for example, in the account of the Committee of 100. The origins and formation are fairly well covered, and so are the first two big sit-downs. The Trafalgar Square sit-down is covered sufficiently, if clumsily, with bits and pieces about it all over the book. But even in these early stages, there is nothing about Polaris Action and little about the Embassy sit-downs against the Russian and American tests. And on December 9th 1961, Wethersfield gets nearly all the attention, Ruislip and Brize Norton hardly any, and Bristol, Cardiff, Manchester and York none at all.

After 1961, Driver seems to have picked events more or less at random. In 1962, we get the Trial of the Six, a passing reference to the Air Ministry demonstration in September, and the Cuba Crisis; nothing about the National Committee, the regional Committees, the specialist Sub-Committees, the various working groups, the Convenor system, the Parliament sit-in in January, the Parliament Square demonstration in March, the American Embassy demonstrations in April and July, the Holy Loch and Greenham Common demonstrations in June, and the Honington demonstration in October. In 1963, we get the "Spies for Peace", Greek Week, and the court cases; nothing about Russell's resignation in January, the Parliament demonstration in April, the Marham demonstrations in May, the Porton demonstration in June, and the growth of Resistance. In 1964, all we get is Pat Arrowsmith's last prison term; nothing about the Rosyth and Ruislip demonstrations and the visit to the Rotundas at Easter.

In fact, most of the important things about the Committee of 100 aren't even mentioned, let alone discussed. There is no reference to many people who played an important part - Michael Harwood, Brian Manning, Pat O'Connell, Jon Tinker, Jon Tremain and Ken Weller and half-a-dozen obvious names. One can't help noticing that more attention is paid to what has happened in London than to what has happened in the rest of the country, and more to what happened before 1962 than to what has happened since. The trouble isn't that the book doesn't include everything, but that it doesn't include enough, and that what it does include is too often sketchy and confusing. This again leads to the next defect.

4. It is journalistic. This is hardly surprising, since Driver is after all a journalist (if employees of the Guardian acknowledge such a description), but it is still regrettable. The Disarmers isn't as bad in this way as Mud Pie, but it is bad enough. Nearly every chapter begins with a punch-line, whether this fits or not, and nearly every story ends with a moral, whether this makes sense or not. All too often, Driver sacrifices a good point to a cheap phrase. The trouble is that it is much more difficult to write a good book than he realises. But it is better to be journalistic than academic or polemical, and at least he is a good journalist. He is a lively writer with a lively mind, and even his cheap phrases are funny.

WORTH BUYING?

Because of these defects, The Disarmers is not worth buying in its present form, but it is well worth reading. Apart from being the best book on the subject, it has genuine merits of its own. Driver has dug up some interesting things, such as the results of several public opinion polls about the Bomb and related subjects. (It is a pity he doesn't mention the one taken by National Opinion Polls in April 1963, which asked Londoners who they thought was to blame for giving away the secrets in the "Spies for Peace" pamphlet - 37% said "the Government", and 50% said "no one".) Another merit is that Driver has put his knack for a striking phrase to good use. He misses few chances of making cracks at all sorts of people who deserve them - the leaders of the Labour and Conservative Parties, The Times and the Church of England, Canon Collins and J. B. Priestley, Bertrand Russell and Ralph Schoenman, Stuart Hall and George Clark, and so on.

It is significant that he makes no cracks at the rank and file of the unilateralist movement. If it were notable for nothing else, The Disarmers would be notable for treating the people who have created and sustained the movement with the seriousness and respect they deserve and seldom receive. Driver is not persuaded by the unilateralists or by their enemies, but there is no doubt which he likes best. It is now up to him to turn his book about them into something worth while.

NICOLAS WALTER

remember franco's prisoners

THE CHRISTIE - CARBALLO DEFENCE COMMITTEE STILL NEED YOUR
HELP. MONEY WILL HELP CONDUCT PROPAGANDA ON BEHALF OF
THE PRISONERS AND WILL HELP IMPROVE THEIR MATERIAL CON-
DITIONS. SEND WHATEVER YOU CAN TO THE TREASURER, MARY STEVENSON,
21, RUMBOLD ROAD, FULHAM, LONDON SW6.

BEHIND THE WALL

In a recent issue (vol.III, No.5) we described impressions one of our comrades brought back from Czechoslovakia. Another SOLIDARITY agent now reports from Ulbrichtland.

Paying a visit to Eastern Germany (or the "German Democratic Republic", to give it its official name) is like a journey into the past. The statues of Stalin have disappeared, the main streets are no longer called "Stalinstrasse", but politically the system remains unchanged. The people are kept in abject ignorance of what happens in the outside world, both East and West. A visitor cannot but sense the dissatisfaction seething below the surface.

I know the GDR quite well, having relatives and friends living in Dresden. I have made four visits to them during the past ten years. My last visit was for three weeks in August of this year.

My host was Erwin S. He teaches Science and Maths. He is 34 years old. He was originally a miner but chose to teach instead although this meant a slight reduction in salary. As a miner his basic wage was 720 DM per month (net); he now earns slightly more than 600 DM net.

His wife, Hilde, is also a teacher. She is the headmistress of a high-school with a staff of 28. Her salary is 952 DM per month (net).*

Both Erwin and Hilde are active members of the "Socialist Unity Party", the equivalent of the Communist Party. Erwin is the "leader" of the "Free German Youth" (the Communist youth organisation) for the largest suburb of Dresden. This background information is important, for when I refer to my hosts, the reader will be aware that I am speaking of people moderately high up in the East German hierarchy! The same applies to most other comrades I know in the GDR.

Most of the time there I talked politics. My friends liked to listen but preferred to say little in return. This was unavoidable, for their knowledge was

* £1 = 11.55 DM. National minimum wage is 300 DM per month. Most agricultural labourers earn this. Tram workers earn about 350 DM. Postmen slightly less than 400 DM. "People's Police" start at 400 DM, after two years rising to 600 DM. Old age pensions are 90% of previous salary.

so limited. For example, none of the Party members with whom I spoke was aware that the Cuba crisis had arisen because the Soviet Union had placed nuclear missiles on that island. Their version was simply that the American Imperialists had suddenly blockaded "socialist" Cuba. The great Khrushchev, by brilliant statesmanship, had forced the Americans to lift their blockade. In fact, apart from Hilde, the comrades obviously didn't believe me. Since returning to London I have mailed them copies of "Soviet News", issued at the time of the crisis by the Russian Embassy here.

There was an equal lack of knowledge about the Hungarian Uprising in 1956. They knew nothing of either the Workers' Councils, or the murder of Imre Nagy, although Hilde had since visited Budapest and her host there had told her how he had witnessed Russian tanks firing at crowds of women queuing in front of shops. Even in Eastern Germany the truth trickles out at times!

The "Stalin speech" which Khrushchev made to the 20th Congress has only been published in a very abridged version, and this only in a theoretical journal, read only by Party members.

This ignorance is not confined to current affairs. As might be expected, Rosa Luxemburg is one of the "national heroes" of the GDR. But, apart from her "Letters from Prison", none of her writings are available. There was general astonishment, and thinly veiled disbelief, when I mentioned the disagreements Rosa Luxemburg had had with Lenin on the nature of the party organisation and Rosa's prophetic anticipation that Lenin's bureaucratic centralism must lead to dictatorship. The same applied to her disagreements with Lenin on the national question. Since returning I have sent Hilde Rosa's "Leninism or Marxism". But I am limited in what I can send, as it is not permitted to send printed matter in or out of the GDR.

Although Hilde teaches history she had no knowledge of the terms of the 1939 Hitler-Stalin Pact, of the clauses that carved up Eastern Europe, between the two dictators, or of the handing over of thousands of German anti-fascist refugees in Russia to Himmler's Gestapo. I brought back with me two official history books published in the GDR for use in schools. In neither of them is there any mention of this pact which made possible Hitler's attack on Poland in 1939. Any mention of the policy of the German Communist Party in the years before Hitler, when Communists and Fascists frequently made a united front against the social-democrats, was treated as raving idiocy.

Not far from Dresden lies the old town of Chemnitz, now named Karl-Marx-Stadt. We stayed there for a few days as there was a "Treffen" (meeting) of Young Pioneers, attended by some 20,000 pioneers from all over the republic. We mingled with them as they visited all the exhibitions, mostly devoted to increasing production. We marched with them down streets decorated with identical flags, flying from every window, and listened with them to the exhortations of Walter Ulbricht, who explained how all his life he had fought for peace (as in 1939, when in Moscow he assisted in formulating the pact with Hitler?). All pioneers were issued with a little booklet, printed especially for the occasion. It was titled "Love Walter Ulbricht, and Learn from Him". (Imagine a British organisation telling children to love Lord Home... or Harold Wilson!)

The young people are the object of a great drive for "speed-up" and "efficiency" in industry. Books, pamphlets and posters all display photographs of 10- and 11-year-olds working at the bench, building "socialism". According to Ulbricht, this will arrive in approximately fifty years. My hosts assured me that a "Treffen" like this could never occur in a "capitalist" country. I agreed...

The ignorance of the comrades was not confined to politics. Hilde (remember, headmistress of a high school!) had never heard of Sigmund Freud. This is not surprising in a way, as his writings have been banned by both Nazis and Stalinists. Sartre and de Beauvoir she knew of, but only as "fighters for peace". None of their books are obtainable. She was not aware of the fact that Howard Fast was no longer a member of the American Communist Party.

In economic terms the GDR has during the past few years made considerable progress. There have been great improvements in the standard of living, although they are well behind this country and Western Germany. But, to be fair, all the heavy industry is situated in the West, and they have had virtually to start from scratch. And, whereas, Western Germany has had millions of dollars pumped in from the USA, the "assistance" given to Eastern Germany by the USSR has been of a dubious value, to say the least. (excessive war reparations, etc.).

The housing problem has been tackled with a vengeance. Flats have appeared everywhere. They are well built, largish, and most of the modern ones are centrally heated. For a three-room flat one expects to pay something like 30 DM per month all in.

Clothing is also much better than a few years ago. It is comparable in price with English clothing, except for nylon and wool, both of which are five times as expensive as here. Food is plentiful, although meat is rather scarce. Most butcher's shops have queues half-an-hour before opening.

The press and radio give virtually no news, apart from the speeches of Ulbricht and the Kremlin. These media are used extensively to push the party line on increased production, and to denounce "shirkers". TV services operate all day, and most families have a set. A set can be hired for about 2/- a week! It is easy to pick up Western Germany stations (I picked up the BBC quite clearly every evening), and I cannot but feel that the ignorance of current affairs of which I have been speaking is confined to the Party members, who decline the opportunity to listen to the "West" either out of "principle" or through fear of so doing. It is significant that everyone talks of their "Party leaders" at every level with a greater awe, almost with servility, than any Western worker does of his employer.

Unfortunately I had little opportunity to discuss with non-Party people. Perhaps this was, in one way, an advantage? At least Ulbricht's toadies in King Street won't be able to argue that my observations are based on discussions with "counter-revolutionary fascists".

JOHN LAST.

NEWS FROM BORSTAL

I have been sending copies of SOLIDARITY to a friend of mine at Portland Borstal. It might interest your readers to know about the circumstances.

I first met this bloke while I was working as a group counsellor to a group of boys at a 'Rehabilitation Centre' for homeless 'offenders'. After I left, I heard from him that he was at a Reception Centre awaiting allocation for Borstal 'training'. Could I send him something to read?

The only newspapers which are allowed in Borstal are 'The Times', 'The Daily Express' and the 'Daily Mail'. The libraries contain little else but 'good clean fun' adventure stories, westerns and the like.

My friend - whose whole life more or less centered round the Trot infiltrationist movement within the Y.S. - tried to establish a forum for 'political discussion' as part of the 'training programme'. This was used as the occasion for an outburst of resentment against the whole authoritarian system and its representatives - however well meaning - in the Borstal. The staff, obviously terrified of what they had unleashed, quickly moved in and banned all further political discussion in whatever context.

Prior to this I had sent him some copies of SOLIDARITY as ammunition for the discussion group. Rather to my surprise he was allowed these - perhaps the censor did not bother to investigate the contents.

When the Governor discovered the use to which they were being put he ordered them to be confiscated on the pretext that they contained classified information. Before this they had enjoyed a considerable underground circulation although I guess that their popularity was not so much due to an appreciation of the political content as of the debunking style in which it was expressed! This at least made sense.

The strongest weapon of the radically dispossessed is irony, or false surrender, a cynical conformism which allows a secret inner world of choice, action and freedom to survive. Liberal reformers are suckers for this line. Listen to T.R. Fyvel in 'Insecure Offenders': 'As I drove away from Pollington I felt as if the whole camp was like an organization geared single-mindedly to the task of teaching these youngsters who had got into trouble the simple social lesson of today: learn to think and conform'.

All that this sort of nonsense gets from the Borstal boys I've known is a long, low sick laugh. Their lie in the service of the institutional lie liberates them from the compulsion to live it as truth. In other words they corrupt the process of mystification at its source.

But their penalty for acting out their collective alienation is to be annexed as social object for others, to be studied, measured, classified, trained, treated, cured, or whatever method is most appro-

priate in persuading them to abandon an essentially subversive humanity to institutionalized norms and procedures. Any act of retaliation, any attempt to re-appropriate a meaningful context for becoming what they are, but are not allowed to be, any project for reclaiming their self from its reified excrescence is met with a massive onslaught of contradictory assertions: you are mad, bad, sick, deprived, unfortunate, irresponsible, maladjusted, etc, etc. All this is mediated through impressive rituals: the courts, the psychiatric interview, the group counselling session and so on. Since their 'crime' is a refusal to participate in a collective bad faith, or at least to be mystified by it, their punishment is to be subjected to a false guilt, which one is tricked into choosing as one's own, as the price of 'survival'.

What must now be done is the insertion into the situation of a counter game, and of a counter ritual. In these it would be axiomatic that although the game is objectively lost before it has begun, it is in fact the loser who wins out in the end, because he alone knows he loses and can affirm himself in defeat. This is not pessimism. It remains a technique which perpetually accomplishes its own depassment. It invalidates the invalidators. That this is possible is shown by Genet, Sillitoe and Burroughs in their various ways. What remains to be done is to translate these ideas into practical methods of struggle.

Coming back to SOLIDARITY. I sent my friend a copy of your book on the Hungarian Revolution. He was allowed it after I had sent a rather nasty letter to the Governor. The book was apparently a great success. If you would like to get tin

touch with this guy, he is a mine of inside information about the local subculture. He is even recognised by the authorities as an informal leader whose subversions have to be indirectly legitimised or at least integrated into the institutional framework. I think he might provide you with a very bright article when he comes out early next year, as he can express himself with enviable precision.

Philip C.

GLASGOW STREET SONG

There is a happy land,
doon at Duke Street gaol,
where all the prisoners stand,
tied ta a nail.
Ham and eggs they never see,
dirty water fer their tea,
there they live in misery,
God save the Queen.

Glasga Corporation came,
wi' a great big plan,
ta build multi-storied flats on this
happy land.
Sixteen murderers buried there,
Sa watch yersel' gooin up the stair,
Or a big hairy hand'll grab yer
hair,
God save the Queen.

THERE IS A CONSTANT DEMAND FOR
BACK ISSUES OF 'SOLIDARITY'.
WOULD READERS WITH UNSOLD BACK
ISSUES OF THE PAPER PLEASE
RETURN THEM TO US. WE'LL PAY
THE POSTAGE.

a docker remembers

The author of this article has been a Merseyside docker for over 30 years. The chronicle of his life is a chronicle of the changing face of capitalism in the docks. It is a chronicle of constant struggle. In the early 1930s a docker would pawn his book to buy his next meal. Today he refuses Saturday work because he wishes to live the life of a human being. This is an index of the road trodden and of the problems that still lie ahead.

1932 - 1939

1932 was a cold and dismal year. It contained the aftermath of the depression. The greater part of a million persons were unemployed and I was one of them.

On Merseyside where I live, the struggle to keep alive was tense. The menfolk were lured towards the waterfront because of its offer of a days work. I was living in two rooms with a wife and baby boy to maintain on 26/- a week unemployed assistance. From this I had to pay 12/6 per week rent.

The lure possessed me. Soon I was participating in one of the many dockland rackets to get a job. Dockers needed two requisites in those days: a Transport and General Workers' Union badge and a Board of Trade Tally which bore his registration number. Thus fully equipped he could appear on the muster, at 7.45 am, to be hired for four hours. The pay was 1/6 per hour with double pay for overtime.

I met a docker who was dying a lingering death and whose tally and badge were lying upon the mantelpiece doing nothing. He suggested that I

should assume his identity and go down and try and get myself a job. I did, and though I was unlucky on the morning muster, I managed to connect on the 1 pm muster, working at a ship called "The Baronesa" (Houlder Line). We were discharging meat, and the only requirement for the job was a good pair of legs and a strong back. All the fores and hinds of beef had to be carried towards a horse-drawn wagon which, in those days, were widely used as transport.

After a couple of days I was becoming acclimatised to the jungle which was what the docks were at that time. I soon learned you could pawn your tally or lodge it as security for a cup of tea and a sandwich. You could do the same with your docker's hook which was the only tool you needed to help you. I also learned that clever racketeers were making dole-cards and union badges and selling them to unlicensed dockers to help them compete with registered dockers: hence the great overflow of aspirants, offering their services for a days work.

Many ships only had a days work in them, so scant were the cargoes. The men in their solicitation for work, had to compete like savages round a carcass. Many were the moves to attract the boss's eye. These were the days of the ale-buyer. One local

pub had no empty glasses one day because they had all been filled up awaiting for the boss to arrive. On another occasion it was rumoured that the boss had lost a 10/- note. Within minutes £10 was found. Of course the church played its part. A visit to the parish priest with a tale of woe, would result in a note to the union official or the boss. One could be fixed up with no trouble... apart from God bless you.

In many instances a man had to go to the boss before he could join the union. The boss would pay the £1 entrance fee and stop it out of your wages at so much a week. I had to do this myself.

Pawnshops were plentiful in those days. If a docker had a decent suit you could rest assured it was pawned every Monday morning and redeemed the following Saturday, and this was as regular as clockwork. Spare-ribs and cabbage, or a pan of scouse were his luxuries. Bread and marge were his most popular morning diet.

You could work like a son-of-a-bitch from 8 am till 12 noon only to be told to muster at 1 pm, when you might find some bloke who lent his missus to the boss or bought him his ale, or knew his brother, would take your place at work from 1 pm till 9 pm or maybe 11 pm. It was a wonderful system! Men were treated as cattle. You could actually work for eleven different bosses within the space of 5½ days.

The militant Trade Unionist was non-existent, but the active Daily Worker seller could be trusted to land himself a paid official's job whereby his name became 'My hands are tied - so, boys, I can't do anything for you!'. In seven years (between 1932 and 1939) wages rose by 2/- per day. In 1939 we found ourselves,

according to statistics, the third highest paid labourers in the country, at 14/- per day. I don't think any industry created so much profit for the boss as we did. Those were the days of the luxury liners of Cunard and White Star - so 14/- per day was chicken feed.

By the time 1939 arrived I had been branded as a communist within the union. Anyone who attacked the lethargic policy of the union or roused them into doing something must be a communist. Nevertheless, I soldiered on and being a fully fledged docker by now, was wondering what would be the dockers' lot, if a world war broke out. Peace-in-our-Time-Chamberlain brought in a number of government decrees that prepared us for war. The year 1939 ended with War-in-our-Time.

1939 - 1945

The war brought a uniform type organisation to the docks industry. Ernest Bevin (General Secretary of the TGWU) had accepted the position of Minister of Labour in the capitalist administration that was prosecuting the war. The dockers had to be 'organised' to handle more goods. A scheme called the Ministry of Transport Scheme was foisted upon the Merseyside docker, on the basis of compulsory 'voluntary' acceptance. The TGWU hierarchy had signed its acceptance and told their membership that if they did not sign on the dotted line, they would have to leave the industry. It was a magnificent scheme for the boss, and the bureaucratic moguls who held office (Jobs for the Boys).

Gibson Jarvie was Port Labour Superintendent, on an expense account. TGWU officials were ushered in to regulate, regiment, and discipline

the dockers into a docile labour force. This was paradoxical when one considers the previous role of Bevin. In 1929, at the Labour Party Conference, in a debate on war and peace he was arguing with Aneurin Bevan and said: "If and when another major catastrophe, namely war, should sweep the world, I will call upon the forces of my union (TGWU) to go on strike, and use them as a bargaining force against the warmongers." Yet here he ~~now was~~ prepared to send workers to prison under the new regulations instead of calling upon the might of his union as he had said he would.

I myself had been rejected by the RAF as unfit for service and was placed in Grade 4. So I was to see the long days of dock work (8 am 'till 9 pm) as being my war years. My enemies were no longer the master porters and stevedores, but the Trade Union officials who had been telling me for years that there was 'no compromise between Capital and Labour' and were now the culprits in just such a compromise and acting very awkward towards progressives in order to further their careers as hired servants of the ruling class.

Many were the hazards with which dockworkers were faced. There was the May Blitz. There was 'voluntary' overtime on a compulsory basis, which meant you could not leave a gang short-handed or dictate your terms of working overtime. Though all shops were usually closed at 9 pm and you might be living on your own, having evacuated the family, you were fully expected to work all the hours God sent. We surrendered temporarily our Trade Union principles and allowed our agreements to be placed in cold-storage until the war was over (this was supposed to be a patriotic move). We accepted our war-time working rules.

During these years Port Labour Battalion troops from the USA were used in many instances to load and discharge ships. So were Royal Engineers (dock groups). As the Manpower Board called up many fine dockers, so the amount of conscripted labour increased. These were the years when the employers, operating on a cost plus basis, really made the plus pay. Dead men were often booked as being operative (it was only a matter of a number being booked and somebody paid).

Bomb-damage to the dock-system was tremendous. This meant more muddle and inconvenience. Finally the docker refused to work after 7 pm because of the incessant air-raid warnings after that hour. In return the employer forced upon the night worker a new shift: 8 pm 'till 8 am (instead of 12 midnight 'till 6 am). The ships were now working 23 hours out of 24. Some of the concessions won at this time were fares when travelling an unreasonable distance to work, canteens open when on night work and an extra ration of tea and sugar.

And so the war ended without a cheer. The docker had become an automaton obeying a White Paper whose clauses contained words like 'lawful orders', 'breach of contract', etc, which he was assumed to have accepted. Like elastic, these terms were stretched to any distance by the employer or his agents to terrorise the docker into a docile do-as-you-are-told unit of production.

As men returned from the services it was evident that the system did not suit them. Their attitude was 'Is this what we fought for? Not ruddy likely!' A big change became evident. The seeds of discontent were about to sprout, not in spontaneous outburst but in a slow progressive crawl towards stabilised employment.

1945 - 1964

This was a period which in its earliest years produced some of the finest dock leaders. They emerged from all quarters: men like Constable, Dickens, Brandon Johnson, Timothy, Wally Jones, Aylward. Through their 'unofficial' activity they shook the very foundations of the TGWU. It seemed as though an earthquake had really occurred.

In 1946 there was an unofficial national strike lasting 5 weeks. We demanded 25/- a day instead of 16/-, 2 weeks holiday with pay, medical centres to be established within the industry, pensions for retired dockers, one muster a day, and other minor points. Together these demands made up what became a famous document: The Dockers' Charter. The strike ended with the Charter becoming union policy... and with Mr. Justice Evershed 'enquiring' into the problem of the 25/- demand, but only granting a further 3/- a day.

Arthur Deakin, who had succeeded Bevin as General Secretary of the TGWU, was a strong man in dealing with unofficial activities. He was also a strong advocate of wage restraint, a policy that met with strong opposition from the rank and file. In 1947 the Regulation of Employment Act (Docks) was created under the guise of a fair deal for dockers. It was accepted by the TGWU executives in the manner of 'sign or dig out'. This is the scheme under which we work today: a real deviation from union policy. The TGWU believes (according to its own constitution) in going forward at all times for workers' control of industry. The scheme smelled very strongly of 'Joint Management' - with the

employer holding all the aces. It has been the cause of many protests, token strikes and lengthy unofficial strikes because of its inadequacies and anomalies. The employers and their agents have twisted it, until it became a complete farce. It does, however, in some instances, protect the docker. Because of its clause on continuity of employment many men have survived the 'hire and fire' rule.

The halcyon days of Tom Mann and Ben Tillet had now returned. The solidarity of the docker was unquestioned. However slowly their leaders were leading them on, retaliation from the disciplinary board came quickly. We had survived the war against the dictator Hitler. Why should we bow the knee with cap in hand to a dictatorship of 'Joint Management'?

The role played by the paid officials of the TGWU and the lack of activity they showed towards progress caused much apathy and discontent. A Portworkers' Committee was formed of non-Communist (although not anti-Communist) dockers who wished to prevent the red herring of 'Communist inspired' being used against them. I was a member. The purpose of the Committee was to instil into the docker the need for his union to fight for the demands of the Charter. A great campaign was launched. A National Liaison Committee was formed and the climax came when seven of its leaders were arrested in "The White Hart" in Stepney, and prosecuted by Sir Hartley Shawcross. The case became a real blot on the copy book of Aneurin Bevan who was then Minister of Labour. The dockers appeared on three charges: if they pleaded not guilty to the first charge they were automatically guilty on the other two and vice-versa. Because of the disagreement shown by the jury a state of no further prosecution was declared by Shawcross. The

seven men were released, though not really acquitted. This case added much fuel to the fire of hatred that burned within the dockers' innards. It showed him his real enemy in the colours of the state machine.

In 1954 the Blue Union arrived on Merseyside. Nearly 10,000 men left the ranks of the TGWU* and rolled into the new environment created by the NASD (National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers). New democratic principles offered the docker the opportunity to function as he had always wished to, with election of his own officials, government of his union by elected lay members and much more freedom within the organisation. This was a body blow for the TGWU. They set about a direct policy of rehabilitation to regain lost ground. Naturally they had the mighty TUC on their side. They presented to the TUC Disputes Committee a complaint about poaching. The NASD Executive, trying to ease the tension, suspended its northern members. This resulted in yet another famous High Court case before Mr. Justice Stone, in which Francis Spring asserted that he had not been 'poached' and claimed his right to remain in the ranks of the NASD. Spring won, and the NASD accepted back all those they had suspended.

Over the years the members have faced the greatest battering ram of oppression by those who do not want the union to survive. Yet it has survived and in 1964 we are now recruiting gradually towards a membership that can claim full status of recognition. The NASD was expelled from the TUC (and also, auto-

matically, from the Labour Party) and relegated to the wilderness of go-it-alone politics.

In 1961 I wrote to Hugh Gaitskell regarding my individual right to join his party. He replied as follows:

" House of Commons,
London, S.W.1.
24th April, 1961.

Dear Mr. D.,

I have now had opportunity of considering your letter of 13th April about the individual application for membership of the Labour Party. I should explain that by our rules individual members of the party must among other things "if eligible be a member of a trade union affiliated to the Trades Union Congress as a bona fide trade union". As you will be aware the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers union has never been affiliated to the Labour Party, but it was affiliated to the Trades Union Congress. However as a result of a dispute the General Council suspended the union from membership and the Congress in 1959 excluded it from affiliation. Therefore I regret to say that under our rules the union's members are not eligible for membership of the Labour Party. As a union official you will, I am sure appreciate that Mr. Underhill had no alternative but to draw attention to the conditions of individual membership of the party.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) HUGH GAITSKELL."

* For a full account of this 'prison break' see the Autumn 1960 issue of International Socialism ("Docks: Breakaway and Unofficial Movements" by B. Pennington.)

Gaitskell made his position quite clear. Only applicants who belonged to bona fide trade unions, affiliated to the TUC, would be considered and allowed to join. Yet the NASD was formed in 1872. Its early struggles are recorded in histories of trade unionism to be found in the British Museum. The monstrous octopus called the TGWU was only created in 1921, fifty years later, by Bevin in his lust for power. The TUC was formed in 1868 in Manchester. One of its purposes, incidentally, was to protect the small minnow Trade Union from being swallowed up by the big brother union. It has now completely reversed its role.

We must now consider our future. The NASD has been described as the engine that drives the TGWU. Its militancy is our future. Its plans are definite, and should be the means of achieving definite progress.

THE FUTURE

Many changes must take place within the industry. The administration must be changed. 'Joint Management' has completely failed. If the industry is not to be nationalised then the multiplicity of employers must be greatly reduced without creating a capitalist monopoly. An Industrial Trade Union is a vital need of the workers, instead of the huge cumbersome organisation we now have. Courts of Enquiry have been set up on various occasions and each has established the failure of the employers and the union leaders to really understand the struggle in which the docker is engaged. In all phases of his struggle to achieve economic security the docker has always had to go it alone in 'official' or 'unofficial' action. If the mighty strength of the TGWU had been

used on occasions as a bargaining force then we would not today be grovelling in the mud, cap in hand, asking for a measly 25/- extra per week. Our main problem of a living wage would have been settled.

I believe that all agreements should be national. The antediluvian system of port customs and practices (with each port having its own agreements) should be abolished. If we could achieve one Industrial Union instead of five unions the disciplinary measures entrusted to local boards of the National Dock Board could be handed over. The union could, if necessary, deal with its own members. Today the boss and his agents dish out punishment when they have decided to report a man and have him disciplined.

Mechanisation of the industry is a must. But this should be done with efficiency and not profits in mind and without redundancy of established workers. With automation we have seen some of the technical robots that threaten our livelihood. It is only by a militant insistence to maintain our manning scales that the machines have not arrived on the scene as yet. The appointment of safety officers should be enforced by the Board of Trade working in close touch with the factory inspectors and Trade Unions. Their presence might reduce our figure of 2,000 accidents per year. Toilet conditions both on ship and quay must be improved. A docker should no longer have to take home all the rotten filth that abounds as a hazard within his job.

Recently, in Liverpool, we were handling with our bare hands bales of used surgical dressings. The stuff was so rotten that the bales fell apart, only to expose used sanitary towels. I have heard employers describe a consignment of carbon black as being a 'clean' consignment. Yet when

you handle this obnoxious stuff you soon put on the guise of a minstrel. The washing facilities supplied to combat the blackness consist of a bucket of water, some rags and soft soap shared between eight men. We do, of course, get extra pay when working this cargo.

The whole problem of dockland cannot be solved by a mere programme of gradual change. The whole complex system should be changed with a great sweep. 'Socialism' and workers' control of the industry would ensure that we reaped the harvest of our own productivity. It would ensure that the industry would be more economic and a real benefit to the general public. The Trade Union would act as an educative organ from which all progressive ideas would emanate. The drive for a 30-hour week would end. If the best scientific brains were harnessed to the workers' own organisations, machinery would soon be introduced that would revolutionise dockwork. Thirty hours would be the most we would have to work.

But I am afraid I am looking for Utopia. The docks will still be there when I am dead and gone. The jet plane will not supplant the cargo ship in my time and I feel certain that Bevin, Deakin, and Cousins will all arise again, in the being of

similar characters, not prepared to lose one iota of their power over 'their' mighty union. They will still use all the moves of political strategy, backed by the TUC, to batten down on the militants and to curry favour with Ministers of Labour, Chambers of Commerce, and Joint Management Boards. I am certain they will survive.

Our own solidarity, unquestionable as it is, is our salvation. It will win us many small victories. Our grandsons will probably carry on where we leave off, struggling to make the industry fit to work in. Time may be on our side, but in 32 years I still have to use my docker's hook, and nurse it as one of my best friends. Varicose veins, rupture and premature old-age are beyond cure within our industry. We live with them. Our language is also our own. About the lightest thing we handle regularly is our wage packet. (In windy weather one must watch it does not blow away from one's hand.) The parasites living on the backs of the docker are gradually and steadily outnumbering the docker: many times we have five people giving one docker the same order.

These are my morbid memories. I hope you have enjoyed reading them.

STEVE DORE.

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