PRODUCTIVITY—WHAT SYNDICALISTS SAY

BY RENEE LAMBERET

General Secretary IWMA

SINCE the Russian Revolution—the stranglehold of a party on the State—freedom in the broad sense of the term has tended to disappear under the welter of laws enacted by the modern State to replace the old methods, which formed the moral and social code of man and of collective groups.

It is mainly since the last war, however, that freedom has beat a general retreat: everything under the shadow of State control, with an accelerated economy and economic productivity.

Post-war humanity has become less idealistic; it has lost confidence in itself: everything is handed over to the State; within economic organisations, politics has replaced economics and increasing attention has been paid to material gains—to wages, rather than to demands of a social or cultural nature.

Humanity is more heedless than at the beginning of the century; the workers themselves have been influenced into inertia by the cunning policies of governments or of capitalism, and increasingly entrust their material and moral interests to trade union officials.

New panacea?

In this way the ground is prepared for a renewed exploitation of the workers' negligence and heedlessness. Hopes are turned towards technical achievements, the results of work in factory research laboratories, and the new organisation throws up an assortment of bureaucratic functions, in which upstarts and parasites entrench themselves at the expense of factory labour.

Progress is hindered by frightful chaos, which the financiers and State try to solve through productivity. But their economic management is pure Stakhanovism and fascism.

None of the official bodies which extol productivity can inspire confidence among the workers: the capitalist States, which claim to oppose Russia, hasten to adopt Stalinist measures.

The United Nations is not, according to our interpretation of federalism, a federation of nations, in which each has equal rights and duties. It is only the expression of the will of the governments of the big Powers. In resolutions relating to economic and social problems one sees the defects of diplomatic conferences and their limited skill.

Leaderism, preached by the communists, and taken up by socialists and democrats, gives rise to a new conception of industrial and commercial exploitation: the authors of productivity put it forward as a new panacea, aimed at bolstering up failing businesses equally with nationalised industry.

Mirage

They introduce the characteristics of capitalism and its mentality: the urge for profit, the habit of weighing traditional methods against new ones solely on the scales of profit, and by encouraging competition within factories and between similar factories for the conquest of new markets in under-developed countries. Is not this the spirit which has been at the source of many wars?

Their idea is to achieve an *entente cordiale* between Capital and Labour—a formula dear to totalitarian and fascist States. With regard to the new technique of modern exploitation, this consists of brutalising the workers to the point at which they think solely in terms of bigger wage packets: they are caught in the glue of productivity like flies; it is a deceptive mirage which draws them on, and a question which calls for close study by militants.

New servitude

Through the system of productivity, a new series of grades is created within one trade, workers are encouraged to "specialise" to the point where naturally well-endowed craftsmen think only in terms of overtime, piecework, production bonuses and so on, with the aim of reaching the highest possible level of production and, by this means, getting top pay.

Productivity abolishes demands for a shorter working day and its profit is reserved almost exclusively for the financiers, either as private individuals or functionaries of the State, which is rapidly becoming a financier in its own right.

Our view is that productivity, this elastic policy, is a new form of servitude, which splits trades up in such a complicated way that workers cannot understand it and union officials are incapable of explaining it to them.

We have moved far away from the slogan: "Equal pay, equal work," for machines do not give the same returns to different workers. Many factors are involved, including the condition of the machine and the degree of skill of the person using it.

Much is made of re-adaptation, of the struggle against unemployment, but it is never mentioned that many workers are in a state of permanent semi-employment as a result of their low wages. There is thus a growing unbalance between increased productivity and the under-nourishment of the great majority of workers, who do not succeed in getting themselves classed as highly skilled.

Moreover, productivity demands absolute centralisation (the systematising of all means of production and consumption). The worker, like the consumer, is becoming a cog in the State machine, which increasingly restricts individual and collective freedom.

Standardisation, with a view to higher profit through increased production, kills æsthetic taste, art, the liking for the good and well-made product. Altogether it involves a great danger for the workers of all categories: productivity brings with it the abandonment of personality for the sake of profit.

Workers' needs

Faced with political trades-unionism, which marshals workers to carry out these plans, the revolutionary syndicalists of the International Working Men's Association have long since defined their position and determined the aims and means which, today more than ever before, correspond to the needs of the working class.

The I.W.M.A. has always been—and will remain—in the vanguard of claims for a better return from production; that is to say, higher production of better quality, coupled with the suppression of useless toil.

But it lays down one essential condition: that this abundance should be for the profit of the whole community and not of an élite, for the whole world and not just for one country or fragment of a continent; that this abundance should abolish under-nourishment and slums through equitable distribution, instead of causing greater wage differentiation, competition and war.

That it should satisfy the needs of all, assist the general development of culture and humanism and bring freedom about. But such a situation will not be reached as long as the present Statist, capitalist and nationalist form of society prevails.

RENT ACT

(continued from page 1 col 3)

To the local M.P., Mr. Robert Mellish, who was present, that was a terrible thing. Industrial action? Direct action? Tut, tut! No, never!

The Labour Party, he said, was a democratic party and wished to do things constitutionally. His plan was to handle cases individually at Storks-road (H.Q. of Bermondsey L.P.). The Labour Party had no lead to give the slum-dwellers, only to pay the extra rent; and the magic formula for all the ills before them was: "Vote Labour next time."

Rent increases, rising prices, conscription and slum dwellings, like the immense seriousness of the latest H-bomb, are not peculiar to this country.

The workers of the world are all in the same boat.

In every country throughout the world the working class is used, cheated, tricked around by the political racketeers (politely known as politicians or statesmen) acting on behalf of the rich and privileged section of society and, at the same time, satisfying their own vanity and craving for power.

STRIKE!

This system of buying and selling, killing and dying, for profit and power could be ended, but not by governments, politicians or political parties.

The working class produce the needs of the peoples of the world and they distribute the things needed by the peoples of the world.

If the railway workers strike, the trains don't run. If the dockers strike, the ships are not turned round (but for the soldiers being called upon, who are also workers), and if the electricians strike, all is in darkness.

But when a government walks out, it is hardly noticeable. The Head of State works overtime trying very hard to get a new one formed before the people get wise to the racket of government and decide to do without it.

On May Day, workers unite to put an end to government and capitalism! An end to class society, of master and slave, buying and selling, etc.!

It can be done. Not by voting, whether Labour, Communist or any other political party, but by the Strike. The General Strike . . . the Social General Strike.

HARRY HARMER

CONSCRIPTION: BADGE OF THE SLAVE

By Norman Ashton

"All forms of militarism belong to the past. It comes down to us as a relic of days when Kings and Nobles ruled as well as reigned, and when the workers were voteless, voiceless serfs. Militarism and Democracy cannot be blended. The workers of the world have nothing to fight each other about: they belong to a common cast, they have no country."

★

So wrote Keir Hardie in a foreword to a pamphlet by Harry Dubery, called "A Labour Case Against Conscription," printed in 1913.

What noble and true words are these. Since then we have seen two world wars, in which millions of innocent lives were lost in a senseless, fruitless battle on a scale never before seen.

What, then, has happened to the inspiration behind these ideas? Why are the Labour Party not campaigning for the abolition of conscription? Are they not followers of Keir Hardie and his theories of Socialism, or have these followers and theories changed?

Let us analyse them. This foreword, penned by Keir Hardie on April 28, 1913, was written at a time when the workers were beginning to organise themselves into strong, revolutionary in outlook, trade unions, which by their mere organising were a threat to the foundations of Capitalism.

In their growth, the trade union movement and the Labour Party have collected along the way many charlatans who proceeded to change and remodel whatever fine revolutionary framework there was.

We find that the Labour Party, far from being an opponent of conscription, is by far its greatest advocate. When in office in 1950, it was the Labour Party who, instead of disbanding the military forces, increased conscription from 18 months to two years, with 3½ years in the T.A. reserve.

This is despotism

It was the Labour Party who, when threatened by a universal stoppage in British dockyards, used without second thoughts young National Servicemen to carry out the work of striking dockers. This would have caused mass strikes all over England 20 years ago, had a Tory government brought in troops to blackleg.

Compulsory military service is the negation of democracy. It compels youth, under threat of fines or imprisonment, to learn the art of war. That is despotism, not democracy.

So continued Keir Hardie in his foreword. What hollow words these are when we find the same people agreeing to the use of young National Servicemen to kill and hunt down coloured people, who seek only liberation of themselves from the slavery of the white population, who have no right to their country, nor to the ownership of its people.

It makes a mockery of Keir Hardie's words that "Capitalism, be it repeated, knows no country, has no patriotism. Militarism strengthens Capitalism by perpetuating the fiction that there must be enmity and animosity between nations. International social democracy says no—that the interests of workers of all countries are identical—and demands co-operation, not war; fraternity, not military rivalry."

The Labour Party, when in office, without discussing in Parliament, used millions of pounds on the production of atomic bombs and weapons, which themselves can be used only for destruction, resulting in universal suffering.

We find that, instead of the Labour Party being the enemy of Capitalism, it is its bosom friend and blood brother.

When in office, the Labour Party, instead of advancing on socialist lines, travelled another path—one of a growing bureaucratically organised society, creating further bosses and a stronger State structure.

Lice of society

The leaders of the trade unions are keen advocates of conscription. Their call is not for complete disarmament, as it should be, but for reduction.

They accept knighthoods from Conservative governments, and, when possible, join ranks with them on denationalisation boards, or any other form of money-bagging position possible.

They are the bloodsuckers of the working-class movement. They are the lice, bugs and vultures of society, eating and crawling their way through on the backs of the workers. The time has come when we must accept them for what they are, the prostitutes of the working-class movement.

We should cast them off our backs, and regroup ourselves into revolutionary bodies, being wary that the structure of our movement will not allow the same people, and others like them, to take office and control again.

Our banners should be for workers' control, and international solidarity. The colour bar should be a thing of the past, and a worker, whatever the colour of his skin, should be accepted for what he is, a brother in the class struggle.

Conscription of workers to fight and further the aims of capitalism should not be mildly objected to, but fought against. No liberty-loving people will tolerate having these old forms of servitude forced on them. Conscription is the badge of the slave.

U.S. LABOUR NOTES BY JOHN LOEB

THE THIRD CAMP

NEW YORK.—For the first time, different working-class groups have joined to form a Third Camp Contact Committee to support the *Third Camp* of world labour against the Wall Street and Kremlin war camps.

Never before have these conflicting working-class groups shelved their disagreements to organise a united group.

And never before have the groups—or any groups—formed an *organised* Third Camp movement.

Though American groups formed the Third Camp committee, organisations in other countries—and individuals, too—should co-operate with the new movement.

I haven't the secretary's address—but you can write for information to Third Camp Contact Committee, c/o "Labor Action" newspaper, 114 W. 14 Street, New York City, U.S.A.

The Young People's Socialist League (Y.P.S.L.), the Socialist Youth League, the Peacemakers and the Independent Socialist League are among American groups forming the new Third Camp Contact Committee.

The Stalinists are at it again. They now support the gangster-ruled dock union—the International Longshoremen's Association—against the American Federation of Labour's new dock union.

Even the Right-wing A.F.L. threw out the old union for racketeering—but the Stalinists support it because John L. Lewis now is supporting the old union.

And the Communist Party wants to affiliate its independent trade unions with a new T.U. federation Lewis wants to form.

Lewis supports the old dock union because he wants it in his new federation.

Stalinist support of the old dock union makes the Stalinists allies not only of gangsters, who run the union, and shipowners, who like the corrupt union, but also of certain fascist leaders of the corrupt dock union.

These fascists are powerful members of the Roman Catholic political machine.

To add to dockland confusion, New York State Governor Dewey is fighting with his fellow-Republicans in the national administration over dockland.

Dewey wants to eliminate charges that racketeers have influence in his administration, so he apparently is fighting New York dock racketeers.

But the national Republican administration seems to want to support the racketeers and their old dock union — because shipowners like racketeers and the shipowners have much influence in the national Republican administration.

This is why the national administration-controlled Labour Relations Board has seemed to favour the old corrupt dock union over the new American Federation of Labour union.

However, Dewey apparently has forced the Labour Relations Board to hold up approval of the election to decide which union would represent New York dockers. Though the old union won, Dewey charged that the corrupt union used gangster terrorism to influence voting.

Beating and stabbing occurred.

If another election is held, I predict the American Federation of Labour dock union will win.

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Notices

SYNDICALIST WORKERS FEDERATION:

Readers interested in activity, or wishing for more information about the SWF are invited to contact the group secretary or local representative in their district

Interested readers in areas not mentioned below should write to the National Committee, see Page Three for address.

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Who are the terrorists?

"Troops treat Mau Mau to tea and buns. . . . The band played the 'Eton Boating Song' and 'Blaydon Races'—the regimental march past and Geordies' anthem—and soon the African babies were squealing out the tunes. . . ."
—News item in the "News Chronicle."

★

WHAT IS A HERO? A "Hero" is generally a young person who departs to another country and, with machine-gun, bomb and revolver, proceeds to prove his right to possess it. He is already a "Have" but would be a still greater one. His exploits, with civilisation's murderous weapons, against native peoples sometimes provide the Latrine Press with headlines extolling his bravery. At other times, headlines proclaim him as a hail-fellow-well-met . . . and show what a deep understanding he has of the working of the native mind. Who, indeed, but a really dyed-in-the-wool "Have" would have thought up playing that dreary dirge, the "Eton Boating Song," to the Kikuyu? AND stuff them with buns and tea. While the kids squealed—not being Etonians, they did not sing, they squealed, the pigs!

★

WHAT IS A TERRORIST? A "Terrorist" is usually a coloured human being who, after having been robbed, exploited, despised, flogged and humiliated by a "Have" or "Old School Tie" ruling class, is driven at last to assert his right to live his own way in his native land; to meet force with force; and to be just as merciless as the civilised Professional Mass Murderers, have been.

BILL ORGAN

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Direct Action

SYNDICALIST WORKERS FEDERATION
INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

FIGHT IN THE COLONIES

Repression continues unabated

While the shadow of the hydrogen bomb hangs over the whole world and statesmen swear they will use it if necessary for the defence of freedom, democracy and Christianity, repression of subject native peoples continues with unabated viciousness and hypocrisy. We give below a summary of recent news from Africa and the West Indies.

* * *

KENYA: The Colonial Secretary's plan for what is called a multi-racial government has been accepted by the political leaders of all races. The Council of Ministers which is to be set up will include three European unofficial members, two Asians (one representing the Hindu community and one the Moslem), and one African.

Although this is in inverse proportion to the population of the four races, and although the white settlers have been promised that there will be no changes in the system of franchise or in land policies before 1960, an African member of the Kenya Legislature has been found who is willing to play ball with his masters.

Meanwhile, plans are afoot to send half the 51,000 Kikuyu in Nairobi to three large prison camps for "rehabilitation" or back to the overcrowded Reserve.

Barry Harvey Hayward, 17-year-old Kenya Police Reserve officer, was recently fined £25 for a "technical assault" on a Mau Mau suspect. In giving his evidence, he described as "fun" his action in throwing lighted matches at the suspect after he had been told that water which had been poured over his head was paraffin.

Guchu Gathiongo, *a former Mau Mau "general"* who had been recruited into Hayward's screening team, was sentenced to two years' hard labour for actually setting the suspect alight.

* * *

UGANDA: Sir Andrew Cohen, Governor of Uganda, has declared the state of emergency in Buganda Province to be at an end, and the Great Lukiko (parliament) has agreed to form a committee to meet Sir Keith Hancock, who has been appointed by Mr. Lyttelton to advise on constitutional matters.

As far as the Tory Government is concerned, the question of the deposition of the Kabaka is closed, but the Baganda have declared that they "will never select another Kabaka as long as Mutesa II is still alive," and they are likely to prove as unshakable in this resolve as have the Bamangwato over the deposition of Seretse Khama.

* * *

SOUTH AFRICA: Dr. Malan's fascist Government is once again pressing for the immediate incorporation of the three British-ruled territories of Bechuanaland, Swaziland and Basutoland into South Africa.

Under the 1909 Act, establishing the Union of South Africa, there will be no transfer before the Africans have been consulted but, knowing how much "consultation" helped the Africans in Nyasaland and the Rhodesias, it is impossible to feel confident that a bargain will not be struck with Dr. Malan, which will add another million black serfs to the Boer estates.

Some 60,000 Africans are to be forcibly evacuated from the western districts of Johannesburg to a new native township eleven miles away.

The most significant measure in this year's South African Budget is a provision to limit government expenditure on native education to £6,500,000 a year. While the other racial groups will continue to receive the full, if somewhat mixed, blessing of State education, Africans will now have to pay for any expansion of the grossly inadequate education services granted them.

* * *

BRITISH HONDURAS: In an attempt to discredit the People's United Party before the first general election based on universal adult suffrage (due to take place as we go to press), an "impartial inquiry" into the alleged connections between the P.U.P. and the pro-Communist Government of Guatemala has been conducted by Sir Reginald Sharpe, a Q.C. appointed by the Colonial Office, who has decided that some of the allegations were justified.

The P.U.P. is said to hold as predominant a position in British Honduras as the People's Progressive Party did in British Guiana, and the Government of the colony is afraid that they will win a majority or even all nine of the elective seats in the Legislative Assembly.

It will depend on the results of the general election whether the second stage of the constitutional changes planned, introducing elected members into the Executive Council, will be carried out.

* * *

BRITISH GUIANA: Dr. Jagan, leader of the People's Progressive Party, has launched a civil disobedience campaign by defying an order restricting his movements to the Georgetown area. Other members of the party, including Mrs. Janet Jagan, have been charged with holding an illegal procession to protest against his arrest.

After they had all been released on bail, further demonstrations were organised by their supporters, who include most of the colony's population.

THE STATE: OUR ENEMY

No compromise with forces of repression and war is IWMA's call to workers

SINCE the First of May, 1886, 68 years have brought changes in the type of struggle the working class must carry out for the emancipation of humanity. In the 19th century, oppression was a direct and brutal tyranny of the employing class, supported by the State, which protected its interests. In 1954, most of the world's workers no longer know their own "boss"; yet their conditions have not improved. Statistics are not available on this question, but the "Boss" State controls an ever-increasing number of workers, absorbed by State-controlled or nationalised concerns. This evolution should logically, prompt workers to consider the State in this new form, but skilfully-conducted propaganda tends to make them ignore it.

The evolution of relations between capital and labour fully confirms the position of those who drew up our doctrine and our tactics of struggle. The Chicago Martyrs, for example, who were executed proclaiming their undying opposition both to the employing class and the State, their Anarchist belief, not wishing—as did the Marxists—to dissociate the State and capitalism, and to strengthen the State in the false hope of seizing control of it to overthrow capitalism.

Effective domination

Long and conclusive experience has proved them right: all support or collaboration, in whatever form, direct or indirect, with the State only results in strengthening it, and leads eventually to an even worse subjection of the world of labour.

The modern barons of industry and commerce, thanks to the power of finance and to the new means which application of scientific discoveries has made possible, have made of the State a technical apparatus, which strives to give to groups of countries, and through them, unified control.

Through a strict system of collective regulation, the State, whether it fights against capitalism to substitute itself, or whether it supports the capitalist system, leads to the subjection of the workers. The absorption of the private sector by the State results in an even more effective domination than that of private capitalism, one of a totalitarian nature; it is the coronation of State Socialism.

Rejuvenated State

State or reformist socialism changed the road of the workers which, up to the end of the 19th century, had been a struggle of conscious minorities to obtain greater freedom and well-being for the people. By launching out on the conquest of the political power of the State, by municipal or parliamentary collaboration, or yet again by secret intercourse with the proletariat's classic enemy, finance, the political parties have brought the majority of the workers to the most facile solutions, to labour or political internationals under Marxist leadership.

Together, they have this way rejuvenated the State: nationalism, once weakened by the action of the International Working Men's Association, our First International, today recruits blind and fanatical supporters among workers decoyed by a false internationalism; in the name of economic salvation of the State, communists and socialists are not afraid to enslave other peoples. This policy can be carried out only with the aid of armed force, to a point where budgets for the army, air force, navy and police absorb, through taxation on wages, half the energy expended by manual and intellectual workers.

Absorption by the State goes even further. When machine production became established, a century or so ago, in the more highly developed countries, socialists foresaw a new world, in which injustice and social inequality would be banished. These struggles of conscious minorities brought together scientists and workers; divided by their origins, they were united in the search for universal well-being. But, at the dawn of our own machiavellian century, politicians destroyed this growing unity. If science once represented a hope for conquering obstacles opposed to human emancipation, it is now—to the misery of the oppressed—devoted to channels which lead to the destruction of life.

Towards destruction

How can it be that scientists involved in thermo-nuclear research have directed all their efforts towards total destruction? How is it that men of science, and certain physicists in particular, have abandoned the traditions of pure research to apply themselves to discoveries with a sole purpose: destruction, thus making themselves accomplices in methods of enslavement?

Their position doubtless arises from their ideological and economic integration with a State system: they arrive at total consecration to National Defence, even at the price of total destruction of people and freedom.

It is high time to realise where this exaltation of the State leads. Times have changed? Yes, but only insofar as forms which were present 50 years ago have now been pushed to their extremes. In this world, which is clouded by the concept of the "Messiah State" and the enslavement of thought to safeguard it, the road to salvation is one of not separating economic struggles from the development and strengthening of human consciousness—ideas posed by the International Working Men's Association in its First Manifesto:—

Our conduct

"The Congress of the International Working Men's Association declares that this association, with the societies and individuals which belong to it, recognises as the basis of its conduct towards all men truth, justice and morality, without distinction of colour, belief or nationality."

The I.W.M.A., its spiritual heir, is the only hope of the world of labour. Is not the proof that our aims and principles are so directly bound up with our methods of struggle? No compromise with capitalism or the State: compromises always end by bringing results directly opposed to those which are sought.

Not with H-bomb

No compromise, either, by taking part in wars—a compromise almost everywhere put forward as the solution of the lesser evil. After all, what can we have in common with that terrible weapon of destruction, the atomic bomb?

We want to destroy the capitalist and statist structure of the world, and the H-bomb would be of no service to us whatever. We are interested solely in discoveries which can raise the well-being and culture of the people.

We can go forward, without contradicting ourselves and without despair, despite the slowness of our way and the retreats inflicted on us by a coalition of repressive forces; conscious minorities must end by making the right prevail.

After so much experience and the confirmation that is daily given us through the setbacks of all other systems, the International Working Men's Association reaffirms on this First of May its aims, its principles and its tactics: Against all collaboration with the employers or the State, against all war and all forms of nationalism, against all oppression and colonialism, through the direct action and universal solidarity of those who fight for emancipation.

For the Secretariat of the International Working Men's Association,
R. LAMBERET, Secretary.

DEFENCE GUARDS FOR NEGRO HOMES

NEW YORK. — The mounting wave of bombings of Negro homes by terrorists trying to drive the Negroes from formerly all-white neighbourhoods has prompted the formation of anti-racialist defence guards in America.

The guards, comprising both Negroes and whites, are determined to protect Negro homes because racialist police refuse protection.

Seven Negro families in Memphis, Tennessee, formed the latest-organised defence guard.

The refusal of Washington to give Negroes protection against terrorists is causing many Negroes to adopt a position against both Moscow and Washington—and in support of the Third Camp of the world working class.—**J.L.**

UP GO THE RENTS — WHY?

Another May Day. . . .

Thousands of workers here in this country and in other countries throughout the world are forming processions and marching to meetings to celebrate Labour Day.

On this day the feeling is for Solidarity. Now that the Labour Party is no longer responsible for running things, more of its leaders remember May Day, and so come out and try to make a bit of a show.

Their great battle hymn, their message to the workers, is: "Out with the Tories, in with us." And: "Victory is ours if we stick together."

Do the workers, the trade unionists, the co-operators and the members of the Labour Party ponder over this call since witnessing six years of so-called Socialism presented by a Labour Government? No, they don't. They re-echo the call.

They, with the members of the Communist Party, chant: "Out with the Tories, in with Labour," in spite of Labour's record of rising prices, continued housing shortage, wage-freezing, strike-breaking, along with its imperialist policy towards the colonial peoples—all normal symptoms of capitalism.

In addition to the multitude of demands by organised labour for higher wages, lower prices, "Don't rearm the Germans," etc., there is now widespread protest and disgust against the law that will enable the landlord to increase rents.

This year the landlord is going to be allowed to increase the rent of old and tumble-down slums, many of which were condemned in 1939. If he can prove that he has done a specified amount of repair work, then he can collect and continue to collect extra rent for his derelict slum until such time as it just collapses.

There was a meeting held recently in Bermondsey, called by the local branch of the Labour Party to discuss the new Rents Bill. From the floor, local trade unionists called for the formation of Tenants' Committees and some for industrial direct action in order to smash the new law to put more money in the landlord's pocket.

Continued on Page 4, Column 1

SYNDICALIST WORKERS FEDERATION

MAY DAY RALLY

SUNDAY, MAY 2nd at 7.30 p.m.
(Doors open 7 o'clock)

SPEAKERS:

JOSEPH MURUMBI
(Secretary of the proscribed Kenya African Union)

A MEMBER
of the exiled Spanish National Confederation of Labour, C.N.T.

KEN DENSON
(for the S.W.F.)

Chairman: JOHN SCOTT

Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1.
(Victoria Station — 2 minutes)
—ADMISSION FREE—

DEMOCRACY AND US

Reflections on H-bomb

I DO not think that our civilisation is any worse than those which have gone before. Indeed, in many ways it is much better. We may not have been such divinely-inspired creators of beauty as the Ancient Greeks, but slavery is not an accepted part of our social system.

We may not have thrown up such geniuses with pen and brush as the men of the Renaissance, but we look with abhorrence on religious persecution. We have no Shakespeare, no Michelangelo, but neither do we have bear gardens and public executions. The common people are undeniably less brutal, less intolerant, less narrow-minded today than they were in any other age.

And this in spite of the gas chambers, the concentration camps, the mass executions, and the terror-stricken, destitute, forsaken men, women and children who have in our time fled in their thousands from tyranny and persecution. Even in spite of the hydrogen bomb.

For all these things have been abhorrent to most men. They have been unwilling spectators of the brutal methods of the modern inquisitors—fascists, Bolsheviks, McCarthyists and others who call themselves defenders of democracy—and they have witnessed vicariously, through broadcasting and the Press, the most gigantic public executions in history, Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The unresisting

Abhorrent, yes, but if in the 21st century there are any left to write the history of our age, it seems likely they will record the astonishing fact that the common people of the world looked on and did not lift a finger to help the crucified, and that when the hour of their own crucifixion arrived, they died as helplessly, as unresistingly, as they had lived.

True, it is not ordinary people, but men seeking power, who are directly responsible for the plight of our civilisation. True, it is not ordinary people, but scientists, who have placed in the hands of fools and madmen discoveries which threaten the very existence of mankind, and perhaps even of life itself on this planet.

These brilliant scientific minds have gone on, year after year, inventing bigger and better ways of killing, have said they are doing it in the interests of scientific knowledge, and that they are not responsible for the use to which that knowledge is put.

But they know, if anyone does, the terrible implications of their discoveries, and they cannot escape from their responsibility.

Nor is there any escape from the responsibility of those technicians, draughtsmen and engineering workers who have made it possible to produce such weapons and who are even now engaged in multiplying them.

Are the soldiers who took part in the Massacre of the Innocents excused because it was their bread-and-butter? If the arms factories were closed tomorrow there would be unemployment and perhaps hunger. If they are not closed very soon, there will be nothing but death.

There is no escape from the responsibility of those political, social and religious leaders who justify the production of instruments of mass destruction to defend democracy or Christianity. Mother of Christ! Would your Son have told His followers to defend their faith with the hydrogen bomb?

There must be many, of course, who sincerely believe that these weapons are a deterrent to any potential aggressor. We are told that this is the considered opinion of many men, both scientists and statesmen, who are best able to judge.

What desperate-ostrich thinking this is!

Did these "humanitarians" even hesitate before Hiroshima? But then they knew the Japanese would not be able to retaliate on Sheffield or Pittsburgh.

Democracy the cry

In the end, however, we come back to our responsibility for all those things which are done in our name. From this, too, there is no escape.

Democracy has been the great cry of our age, the idea being that since everyone cannot have his own way, the will of the majority should prevail, or else that a sum should be made of all our individual wills and a kind of average struck—"the golden mean."

This is a dangerous enough idea in itself, for it does not allow the dissenter to contract out; but in the modern nation-State, in which the subjects are numbered in millions or even hundreds of millions, it is disastrous, reducing men and women to mere units in a gigantic calculating machine.

In truth, parliamentary democracy is the most bogus gift in history. It is run by professional politicians who, whichever side of the house they happen to sit on, are usually the allies or henchmen of economic interests of one sort or another, and in any case have a vested interest in parliament itself.

Breeds irresponsibility

In other words, it is a system of government like any other, in which the privileged few govern the unprivileged many. It is surely obvious that were this not so, the many would hardly remain unprivileged for long.

It never seems to have occurred to admirers of western political institutions that, far from breeding a sense of social responsibility, what we call democratic government encourages irresponsibility, although most people probably realise in rather a vague sort of way that they don't really have much say in the way the country is governed.

In his book, "The Open Society and its Enemies," Karl Popper draws a distinction between what he calls a tribal or totalitarian society and an open or democratic society. A tribal society is one in which it is generally accepted that the loyalty of the individual should be towards the whole tribe rather than towards other individuals, in which only the survival and expansion of the tribe as a whole is thought to matter.

Its customs and institutions are more or less fixed, immutable, or at any rate they can only be changed by decree or revolution.

An open society, on the other hand, is one in which individual men and women are recognised as having individual consciences and are considered to be of consequence as individuals, not simply as citizens. It is also a society which can be modified by discussion and compromise, reform and evolution.

Think for yourself

But this distinction is only valid inasmuch as the nonconformist is tolerated and allowed to lead his own life in his own way. To speak of liberty of conscience when a man may not even refuse to kill his fellow men without suffering imprisonment is the grossest hypocrisy.

The fundamental distinction between a tribal and a non-tribal society is the distinction between collective responsibility and individual responsibility.

Two thousand years ago a man called Jesus taught that the individual is responsible for his own acts, and that it is not what society says that matters, but what his own conscience says. Man must think and act for himself.

In the tribal society of the Israelites this was a revolutionary doctrine that encouraged people to rebel against both the Jewish and the Roman laws and customs in the name of truth and justice. And so they crucified Him.

Few of those who call themselves Christians now seem to believe that Christ's teaching was for all men in all times. They cannot see that if He came back He would be a rebel, an outcast among those who honour His name, and that in the end they would crucify Him again.

We heard a lot about the collective guilt of the German people for the rise of Hitler and the crimes of the Nazis. True, those who did nothing to resist them are not without guilt, but it is as individuals that they were responsible, not as a nation.

Easier to accept

Collective responsibility, national responsibility, is much easier to accept than individual responsibility, because it is so diluted that we hardly notice it. In any case, if we leave the decisions to others and they do things which are foolish or wicked, we never really feel their crimes are our crimes, because it is so much easier to say we had no authority or influence, and that there was nothing we could do about it.

But usually it goes much deeper than this, so that most people are quite willing to let a political party or the government make their moral judgments for them. It is doubtful if it even occurred to them that any ethical question was involved in dropping an atom bomb on Hiroshima.

Collective responsibility means individual irresponsibility. Ethically speaking, collective responsibility is meaningless; there is only your responsibility and my responsibility.

This, surely, is the essence of what that crazy prophet, that lunatic rebel from Nazareth, was saying to the people who had invented the scapegoat. And that is why they stopped His mouth with dust.

Human solidarity

It is in the nature of men to love their children. It is even in their nature to find all children lovable, even black ones. It needs only quite a little stretching of the imagination, only quite a little cherishing of the natural plant of human solidarity, for them to feel sympathetically disposed towards the parents of those children, or towards those children when they have grown into men.

There is much that is false and evil in our civilisation; but it is because I believe that something better could be made of it, that I do not wish to see it perish.

DOV

NORTHERN LETTER

Sunday-school socialism's anniversary

IT was my pleasure to attend in March the anniversary meeting of the N.E. Union of Socialist Sunday Schools. On this occasion, an address was given by Victor Feather, assistant secretary of the T.U.C., and various comrades from the different schools competed in singing and elocution.

Although trophies are awarded to the winners, no great emphasis is laid on the competitive spirit in these events.

There was general applause and approval when Jim Simmons, the president, in his opening remarks, said that the Labour Movement seemed to be more concerned with winning votes than with making Socialists. The main point of Victor Feather's speech was that there was no such thing as the "self-made man" beloved of many Tories.

The Socialist Sunday School movement is an independent and non-partisan organisation, whose main work is teaching the basic principles of Socialism and encouraging the comradeship of the Labour Movement. Members of all left-wing organisations are to be found in its ranks.

Its object, as stated in the constitution, is: "To assist in the work for Socialism and working for International Peace by instilling well-founded knowledge that will prove for communal welfare. Theological questions to be avoided, attention to be paid exclusively to this life and its duties. Such teachings to be definitely anti-militarist in character. . . ."

And further: "[Schools] shall not, directly or indirectly, affiliate to any other organisation. Except those organisations of a purely cultural, educational or recreational nature."

There are ten precepts which the children learn; among them is: "Remember that all the good things of the earth are produced by labour, and whoever enjoys them without working for them is stealing the bread of the workers."

The S.S.S. has a book of songs, which are sung in all schools, although many of these bear the stamp of 19th-century Socialism ("Would you gain the Golden City," for example). Perhaps they are none the worse for that. Some of the tunes could be bettered, and, of course, there are "The International," "Red Flag," "England Arise" and "We Will Up And March Away," written especially for the S.S.S. which has been called the Children's International.

The S.S.S. was founded about the same time as Francisco Ferrer founded his Modern School in Barcelona. It stems from the same root, and probably owes something to his influence during his stay in England, before he returned to his native land to face what he knew to be a frame-up trial and certain death, to witness for his ideals.

It is a great pity that the S.S.S. has not its former strength, for it is a movement that merits the support of all libertarian socialists. Mention should also be made of its organ, "The Young Socialist," which is 2d. monthly. Among its contributors will be found our I.W.W. comrade, John Loeb, well known to readers of "Direct Action."

Syndicalist Workers Federation

BRITISH SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION seeks to establish a free society, which will render impossible the growth of a privileged class and the exploitation of man by man. The S.W.F. therefore advocates common ownership and workers' control of the land, industry and all means of production and distribution, on the basis of voluntary co-operation. In such a society, the wage system, finance and money shall be abolished and goods produced and distributed not for profit, but according to human needs.

CLASS STRUGGLE. The interests of the working class and the ruling class are directly opposed. The S.W.F. is based upon the inevitable day-to-day struggle of the workers against those who own and control the means of production and distribution, and will continue that struggle until common ownership and workers' control are achieved.

DIRECT ACTION. Victory in the fight against class domination can only be achieved by the direct action of the workers themselves. The S.W.F. rejects all parliamentary and similar activity as deflecting the workers from the class struggle into paths of class collaboration.

THE STATE. The State in all its forms is the enemy of the workers, and cannot exist within a classless society. The S.W.F. does not, therefore, hope to use the State to achieve the emancipation of the working class: it does not seek to obtain seats in the Cabinet or Parliament. Nor does it desire to build a new State on the ruins of the old. Any attempt, by an allegedly working class party, to create a new State, can only result in a new ruling class.

ORGANISATION. To achieve these aims, the workers must organise. They must replace the hundreds of craft and general trade unions by syndicalist industrial unions. As an immediate step to that end, the S.W.F. aids the formation of workers' committees in all factories, mines, offices, shipyards, mills and other places of work, and their development into industrial unions, federated to an all-national Federation of Labour.

INTERNATIONALISM. The S.W.F., as a section of the International Working Men's Association, stands firm for international working class solidarity.

LITERATURE

Michael Bakunin and Karl Marx by K.J. Kenafick 5s 6d

Bulgaria—A New Spain (C.A.B.A.) 9d

Social General Strike by Tom Brown 3d

"Industrial Worker" and "Solidaridad Obrera" 3d a copy

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Mass trials in SPAIN

(I.W.M.A.) The beginning of 1954 brought a tragic balance-sheet of Franco's repression against opposition forces: many anarchists, syndicalists, socialists, republicans and communists have recently been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for subversive activity—classified as banditry, according to the custom of Franco's courts.

* * *

Accused of "military rebellion," of "illegal propaganda against the Franco régime," and of reorganising the C.N.T. (clandestine National Confederation of Labour), 17 prisoners, two of them women, were sentenced to jail terms from one to 15 years at a Madrid court-martial on February 5. Sentences were:—

Cipriano Damiano Gonzales, Emilio Quiñones Ocampo, Celedonio Perez (15 years); Enrique Sanz Rodriguez, Manuel Muñoz Martinez, Bernardo Torremocha Arias, Pedro Torremocha Avila (10 years); Juan Sana Magrina, Tomas Aparicio Salvador, Sebastian Calvo Saher (5 years); Agustin Barrera Corona, Miguel Castell Balada, Eduardo José Estevez, Ignacio Serra Via (4 years); Benita Barcena Bustamente (2 years); Pablo Borjas Martinez, Juanita Iglesias (1 year).

An army officer, Major José Pardo Andrade, accused of conspiracy with the syndicalist prisoners, was sentenced to 6 years, 6 months and a day by the same military court (addition of "one day" to a sentence means no remission can be granted).

Many protests against this monstrous "trial" were sent to Spain from working-class organisations throughout the non-Stalinist world.

* * *

Eleven members of the Spanish Socialist Party appeared before a court-martial in Ocana Jail a few days after the Madrid trial, charged with "activity against the security of the State."

Main accusation was that they had distributed anti-Franco propaganda published by Spaniards exiled abroad.

One member of the group was acquitted; the others sentenced to jail terms. Heaviest sentences were: Rafael Gonzales Gil (15 years), Mateo Garcia del Sancho and Anselmo Plasencia Iglesias (10 years).

* * *

On March 26, the trial opened in Vitoria, Northern Spain, of 17 Basque trade unionists, accused of taking an active part in the strike movement two years ago.

One, Emilio Jose Agote, told the court that the police had beaten him on the stomach for three days with rubber truncheons in order to extract a confession of guilt.

Other prisoners told a similar story of torture and of being held incommunicado for 20 days. Sentences ranging from six months to 10 years, plus heavy fines, were demanded by the State prosecutors.

* * *

Latest of the series of mass political trials in Franco Spain was held in Ocana Prison on Tuesday, March 30.

On alleged charges of attempting to reorganise the clandestine Communist Party, 34 men were sentenced to terms of from one to 20 years' imprisonment.

The charge of "communist" is used frequently in Spain to discredit anti-fascists and to alienate sympathy with the accused abroad.

Often, the prisoners so called are syndicalists, anarchists, socialists or republicans, who have opposed Stalinism as they oppose fascism.

It is significant, therefore, to note that the "Daily Worker" reported this case in just 16 lines at the bottom of its third page on March 31.

Significant, too, that the trial coincided with the return by Russia to Franco of prisoners from the fascist Blue Division, which fought with the Nazis on the Eastern Front during the war.

* * *

These trials and the fierce repression of all opposition elements in Spain are the direct result of America's military and economic aid to Franco. The Spanish dictator, with his régime temporarily stabilised by dollar injections, has a free hand to persecute those who have always been in the front line of the struggle for human freedom.

The *Libertarian*

ORGAN OF THE NORTH-EAST-LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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IMPORTANT

In accordance with the decisions of the 4th National Congress of the S.W.F., the seat of the National Committee for the coming year has been moved to the Manchester area, and all correspondence for the National Committee should be sent to:

J. Pinkerton,
12, Alt Road,
Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

Money intended for the National Committee should be sent to:

A. Gould,
116, Charlestown Road,
Blackley,
Manchester 9, Lancs.

Correspondence and money for "Direct Action" and other literature should be sent to:

Publications Committee, S.W.F.,
25a, Amberley Road,
London, W.9.

Farewell to 'Old Guard'

SILVIO CORIO

SILVIO CORIO, one of the last survivors of the libertarian "Old Guard" in this country, died on January 11, aged 78. For 50 years he had lived and worked in England.

Right to the end of his life he remained an active militant. On November 29 last, he attended the Congress of the S.W.F.—of which he was a foundation member—and took an active part in the discussions, making practical suggestions for the development of syndicalism in Britain.

To attend libertarian congresses was no new experience for him. In 1905 he was one of the delegates from Britain to the International Anarchist Congress of Amsterdam. Then, in 1913, he represented an Italian Waiters' Union, which he helped form in London, at the International Syndicalist Congress in Holborn Hall.

In the years before the first world war he helped Jack Tanner—then a syndicalist militant—in producing the revolutionary paper, "Voice of Labour."

He knew Kropotkin, Malatesta, Rocker, Jean Grave and other great theoreticians of the libertarian movement.

His companion of many years was Sylvia Pankhurst, one of the leaders of the Suffragettes and editor, during the years of revolution which followed the war, of the "Workers' Dreadnought." Corio, a skilled printer, helped produce the paper, and edited it when Sylvia Pankhurst was jailed for sedition.

He fought against fascism everywhere, and particularly the Mussolini variety in his native Italy. Since the Abyssinian war, when he and Sylvia Pankhurst began publishing "New Times and Ethiopia News" in opposition to fascist imperialism, he had helped produce that paper and was a frequent contributor to its columns.

We of the S.W.F. shall not forget Silvio Corio. He was a fine comrade and one we could ill afford to lose. Our deepest sympathy to Sylvia Pankhurst and to their son, Richard, who is maintaining the anti-militarist tradition his father set when conscripted in Italy.

MAT KAVANAGH

Another link with the past was broken by the news of MAT KAVANAGH'S death on March 12, also at the age of 78. For more than 60 years, since coming to England from his native Dublin as a youth, he had been an active member of the Anarchist movement.

Mat Kavanagh was best known as an open-air speaker. In Liverpool, during the winter of 1941, I found old comrades who remembered hearing him at meetings before the 1914-18 war.

He returned to Dublin during the war and took part in the Easter Rising of 1916.

During the inter-war years his activity was mainly at Southend, where he worked at his trade of barber. Throughout the Spanish Revolution he was active in support of the C.N.T.-F.A.I. In 1940, Kavanagh was arrested under the Defence Regulations and imprisoned with Mosley and other fascists at Brixton. After two weeks, the authorities apparently realised Mat was an anti-fascist. He was released and settled in London, where he became a regular speaker in Hyde Park.

G. FICCAPELI

IT IS ALSO with deep regret that we report the passing of our comrade G. Ficcapeli of Cardiff. Although he was perhaps not widely known, Comrade Ficcapeli was a loyal supporter of 'Direct Action,' and always ready with solidarity for refugee militants.

K.H.

IS McCARTHY TO BE AMERICAN HITLER?

IT has taken the conflict between America's No. 1 fascist, Senator Joseph McCarthy, and brasshats of the U.S. Army for the evils of so-called McCarthyism to get a wide airing in the British Press.

For years, the attitude of most British papers and politicians has been to down-pedal news of witch-hunting by the Un-American Activities Committee and such-like bodies. As recently as March 13 this year, Sir Hartley Shawcross—Attorney-General in the Labour Government, who conducted the Old Bailey prosecution of the seven dockers in 1950—declared:—

"This [McCarthyism] is primarily a problem for Americans to solve, and I think they will. They are quite able to look after their own affairs. We sometimes disapprove of the things they say and the methods they adopt, but in the end they always do the right thing."

This head-in-the-sand attitude reminds one of the attitude taken by those who kept quiet about the evils of German Nazism during the 1930's.

"In the end they always do the right thing." Shawcross, then, evidently approved the execution of the Rosenbergs last June, and the alliance of America with Franco Spain. He approves, too, the rearming of Western Germany, which can only result in the resurgence of Junkerism and Nazism.

Reign of terror

Shawcross may have his own reasons for keeping silent. It is high time, however, that British workers realised that the continued subservience of this country to American capitalist interests will have disastrous results for them.

McCarthy is the spokesman for American monopoly capitalist interests—particularly for the oil millionaires of Texas and for important sections of the Roman Catholic Church.

He and his henchmen have instituted such a reign of terror in America that the ground has been well and truly prepared for a totalitarian State there.

The McCarthy technique is not new. It is based on the "Big Lie" beloved of Josef Goebbels and on the maxim that if you throw enough mud at your opponents, some of it will stick.

This may sound crude but, given a public opinion sufficiently injected with the serum of "Red hysteria," it works.

Remember, the American witch-hunt is not a recent development. It dates back to 1947 and, for seven years, has been carried into every aspect of life in America. Education, literature, films, the Protestant Church, radio and TV, social welfare services . . . all have been attacked and/or "purged."

To claim, as do some erstwhile left-wingers such as James Burnham, that the American Administration is concerned solely with protecting itself against Russian espionage and Stalinist infiltration is not true.

Such limits have long since been passed, and it is clear to all but a Shawcross that the aim is to crush any and every vestige of liberal or progressive thought and activity.

American way of life

Who but a fool could claim that the proscribing of the book "Robin Hood" as seditious—on the ground that the outlaw of Sherwood Forest stole from the rich to give to the poor—has anything to do with the Cold War, which Washington is trying so hard to fan into flame?

Who but a knave dare suggest that the censorship on similar grounds of a play by Aristophanes, written more than 2,000 years ago, is anything but a reflection of the bonfires on which Hitler's brown-shirted thugs used to burn "non-Aryan" literature?

Yet these are but two tiny examples of what is actually happening in America.

Anything not in conformity with the American way of life is suspect, "Red." And what is this American Way of Life? The way of monopoly capitalism, of profits and flag-wagging, of Coca Cola and the juke box. And, above all, the overriding idea that it is America's mission to rule the world.

McCarthy is in the vanguard of this dollar crusade, but he and his henchmen are by no means alone. Let us take a few examples of Federal laws which have marked fascist tendencies.

First, the Smith Act, which dates from 1939. This threatens any who "abet, advocate or teach the necessity, desirability or propriety of overthrowing any Government in the U.S.A. by violence."

It is under this Act that many leading American Stalinists have been jailed for terms of up to 25 years. The use of informers and stool-pigeons by the prosecution is customary, and they are well paid—witnesses receiving $50 a day.

There is no question of espionage in these trials. The fact that the accused are Communists who possess and circulate Marxist literature is sufficient proof of guilt.

Then there is the MacCarran Internal Security Law of 1950, named after Senator Pat MacCarran (Nevada), who represents metal mining interests and works with the Catholic Church and the National Association of Manufacturers.

Reactionary legislation

This forces Communist or fellow-traveller organisations to register with the State, answer all questions that may be put to them, and debars members from foreign travel. Mail from such groups must be stamped "Communistic" on the envelope.

Under this Act, concentration camps have already been established for the internment of "subversives" in the event of "insurrection or war."

Yet another example of this reactionary legislation is the MacCarran-Walter Immigration Act of 1952, directed against immigrants and making provision for their rescreening at any time. It was this Act which prevented Charlie Chaplin from returning to America.

Under it, a 65-year-old Swedish-born woman, Mrs. Halverson, of Portland, Oregon, who had lived in America for 50 years, who married an American citizen and was mother and grandmother to native-born Americans, was arrested and recommended for deportation. Her crime? Having been at one time associated with a movement for unemployment relief.

Up to July of last year there had been more than 100 other such cases. The Act also provides for the screening of crews of foreign ships docking in America.

The role of the Federal Bureau of Investigation must not be forgotten. It is this organisation, working on Gestapo lines, that is responsible for screening activities. Teachers, professors, actors, producers, civil servants, entertainers and others have lost their jobs thanks to the work of F.B.I. informers.

Trade unions, too, come under attack. Six members of the United Electrical Workers Union were suspended at the General Electric's Schenectady plant in February, because they refused to answer questions at a McCarthy hearing.

Typical of the callousness of McCarthyism is the treatment of the Rosenberg children, Michael and Robert, since their parents went to the electric chair.

They were expelled from one school and have been hounded from one home to another by the authorities, innocent victims of the Red hysteria.

Let us not forget, however, that there are still some in America who have kept their heads and their integrity. One such is Professor Albert Einstein, who recently called on Americans to refuse co-operation with "inquisitions" which violated the constitutional rights of the individual.

Intellectuals, he said, were in a special position, as they have strong influence on the formation of public opinion.

The only answer

"That is the reason," he said, "why those who are about to lead us towards an authoritarian Government are particularly concerned with intimidating and muzzling that group."

Our fellow workers of the I.W.W., itself listed as a "subversive" organisation, despite its consistent anti-Stalinism, are making a courageous fight against growing American fascism. Here is a quote from an "Industrial Worker" editorial (March 19, 1954):—

"Solidarity of labour is the only answer to the attempt of reactionary forces to smash, discredit and/or control the labour movement.

"This does not mean a 'united front' with Communists. That policy is as detrimental to labour as collaboration with McCarthyism. It does mean that labour organisations must not use McCarthyism as a wedge to gain immediate ends against other unions.

"To collaborate with McCarthyism, directly or indirectly, is to strengthen McCarthyism. But any union man knows that McCarthy, who is now making a bid for leadership, is the spearhead for Fascism.

"There is no lesser of two evils in a choice between reaction of the 'Right' and reaction of the 'Left.' Both inevitably mean enslavement of labour."

Let's hope organised American labour follows this lead of our I.W.W. fellow workers.

He stole to get Govt. relief

NEW YORK.—The American big business Press almost ignored the case of a modern American Jean Valjean—34-year-old George D. Johnson, of America's capital, Washington, who stole a trifling amount so he could go to jail and his wife and two children thus would become eligible for government relief money.

Johnson, a roofer, wasn't technically unemployed. His firm just had no work. So he couldn't obtain government relief—though he wears steel braces for a permanently injured back.

He lost one eye in the Army—but never received a pension.

To get a jail sentence and thus obtain relief and food for his family, Johnson held up an ice-cream store, stealing $11.

He got a very severe jail sentence for a first offender—a year.

And the judge said that if Johnson couldn't pay a $250 fine, he would have to serve an additional six months.

The judge reminded Johnson that hunger doesn't give anyone the right to rob.—**J.L.**

MARGINAL NOTES **BY GERMEN**

Rearming GERMANY

IS A DISASTROUS POLICY

THE hydrogen or nitrogen bombs, together with other monstrous and calamitous products of military science, are but the results of badly-adjusted relationships among the human species. By principle, humanity should be inclined to reject methods of force to guarantee its existence. Despite the lack of this ethic in man throughout the ages, we—isolated, in a minority, with the risk of being labelled dreamers—opt for the road of pacification. In the same way that the man who shouts loudest in an argument is not therefore right, we don't believe that he who piles up the greatest destructive material is right either.

The international political dispute between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. is the best possible proof of our point. The right to be correct appears to be guaranteed on the basis of building up armaments, however they assure us, by pathetic and ingenuous verbosity, that the defence of freedom, by one side or the other, is protected by the army.

The resurrection of fascism, also seeking to justify its own defence, is a sample of the madness of the Western governments. So that Western Europe may be insured against the threat from red totalitarianism, we are allied with black totalitarianism.

It's well known that Franco was, and still is, an enemy to freedom of association; that his régime is opposed to the trends of modern democratic thought. But he gets protection from the United States; his system is strengthened and his hopes of political stability increased in hopes of a showdown with communism.

The fact that there has been fundamental difference of opinion within the Labour Party, and that the policy of German rearmament was approved only by a tiny majority, shows the discredit of such methods, not only among English politicians but throughout this country and Europe. That politically-advanced Germans themselves oppose the rearmament of their country shows what an equivocal position it is.

At a time when the parliamentary opposition talks of reducing the period of conscription in Britain, the act of reorganising an army which has three times committed aggression passes all understanding.

The sole reason or argument used in favour of this method is the verbal assurance of the present West German Government. The arguments against the rearmament pact are those of experience. History, unfortunately, tends to repeat itself. And if, once it has become a determining force, the German politico-military movement commits the same actions again, why set up obstacles which will later have to be destroyed?

The German people, like the Russians and Spaniards, know full well that when we cast a critical glance at their countries, it is aimed against the State, the régime or the psychology which causes its institutions. Again it will be the German people, together with their brothers in other countries, who will be sacrificed—the eternal victims of every crusade.

Without any desire to upset international relations, let us recall what American policy was during the last world war, and we shall understand that Washington's tendency to protect fascism is not new. It took the bombing of Pearl Harbour by the Japanese to decide America to line up with the Allies. The present protection afforded Japan will not wipe out the tragedy of Hiroshima. . . . Many of those who were living in France during the Nazi occupation have reason to know its terrors—and the indifference towards them of the American representative at Vichy.

Europe runs the risk of being dragged along towards communism. It will become even more vulnerable if America continues to ally herself with movements which, by principle and essence, are parallel to Stalinism. German rearmament, like the stabilising of Franco, are hardly factors making for harmony between peoples—still less among those who have had a close-up view of totalitarianism by living under and experiencing it during the war and pre-war years.

Military decisions should be based initially on consultation of the people, never the rulers; then American and English partisans of this German military resurrection would learn the real thoughts of those who, at the end, always have to offer their skins in defence of freedom.

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