

BRITAIN

The rent battle

ST. PANCRAS, London, does not provide the worst examples of intensified exploitation of tenants since the passing of the Tory Rent Act, but it will be remembered as the field of the most militant action by tenants since the post-war squatters' campaign.

So militant was it that the State exposed the bludgeon normally concealed beneath the cloak of professed democracy. The banning of processions for three months in the Borough of St. Pancras was the first time the Public Order Act of 1936 had been brandished since the "glorious" days of the post-war Labour Government, who prohibited processions (including May Day parades) in the whole of the Metropolitan Police district from March, 1949, to May, 1951.

As everybody knows, the Rent Act is the "Free Enterprise" answer to the housing problem, designed to release a flood of new accommodation and, incidentally, to give justice to the "impoverished" landlords. The inexorable law of supply (very limited) and demand (almost unlimited) in a free market is, of course, operating to the complete satisfaction of every reasonable person. It is difficult to follow the argument of the All-London Private Tenants' Co-ordinating Committee (among others) that it is immoral to put the need for a roof over one's head in the same category as other marketable commodities. Why should housing be exempt from the rules governing the just distribution and equitable exploitation of all other marketable commodities, from bread to breasts?

Yet even the Conservative organization for local government in London, the London Municipal Society, has, in its journal *The Londoner*, shown its unease that some landlords (only a minority, of course) are causing hardship to their tenants.

It is indeed lamentable that many Tories are not showing sufficient faith in the ability of electors to recognise the obvious virtues of the production-for-profit system in respect of their housing needs; for, despite the turgid analytical outpourings of Marx and other economists, the market price of any commodity is simply what you can get for it. The more you can get for the less that you give, the better capitalist you are.

One of the main causes of the St. Pancras dispute has been the introduction of differential rents, although similar schemes are operating in eight other Tory-controlled districts and seven Labour-controlled districts in the LCC area. One of the objections to this is that it involves a means test. Those with bitter memories of pre-war days are understandably, if irrationally, opposed to this. For others it is doubtless only a useful weapon with which to defend their own interests. But in either case one wonders why differentials are generally held to be O.K. in pay but not in rent? Illogical thinking with a vengeance.

The St. Pancras affair shows the narrow limits of the Englishman's much vaunted freedom. To protest is (with reservations, of

IWMA world call

THE TENTH CONGRESS of the International Working Men's Association (Toulouse, September, 1958) agreed to support the formation of "Groups of Friends of the IWMA" in all countries where sections have not yet been set up, with the aim of gaining sympathy for our International and of spreading its principles and propaganda as widely as possible.

A group can be formed by five, ten or more members. It will give you the chance to maintain regular contact with the IWMA and of being in touch with the affairs of the international movement.

We address ourselves especially to comrades and sympathisers in Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas, Uruguay and Argentina excepted.

It is desirable that "Groups of Friends of the IWMA" should keep close contact between themselves in each country and they will receive our Press, propaganda and news of other countries through the international secretariat.

All interested in this proposal should write to the IWMA Secretariat (AIT-CNT), 4 rue Belfort, Toulouse (H.G.), France.

Franco's Prisoners Speak

A documentary record of life and death in the jails of fascist Spain, compiled by political prisoners at Burgos, smuggled out and published by the Spanish Ex-Servicemen's Association in Britain.

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course) permissible; to resist is criminal. The right arm of the law moves into action, cudgelling the discontented with its customary good nature. To resist the law in the name of Justice is criminal; to uphold the law in the face of Justice is the duty of every citizen, including Eichmann. Good-Citizen-Gaitskell was quick to dissociate the Labour Party from the direct action of the St. Pancras tenants and the building and railway workers who supported them. "We say to people who have a grievance against the Council because it has put up their rents that they above all have a perfect constitutional way, if they can find it, of getting things put right. And that way is through the ballot box in the local elections. Thus, in the same way, we shall try constitutionally in the House of Commons to help and protect tenants who have suffered and who are going to suffer from the Tory Rent Act." Force may be used by the State to enforce an iniquitous law, but not by the citizen to resist it.

This is parliamentary democracy. Politicians are concerned above all with getting votes which will put them into power when the next elections come round. The Labour Party has exploited the rents issue no less than the C.P. The difference in tactics lies simply in the fact that the C.P. cannot hope to make much of it in election terms, while the Labour Party can and does.

Direct action is poison to all politicians, for it is a gesture of independence, a rejection of their claim to leadership. What a thought—that the people should take the law into their own hands!

U.S.A.—The Pennsylvania Railroad was closed down by a 12-day strike of 20,000 maintenance and repair workers which began on September 1. One of the main points of dispute was a demand for greater job security, first made three years ago. A union spokesman described the settlement terms as "very good".

MALTA—5,500 dock workers employed by Messrs. Bailey Ltd. struck on October 5 after the suspension of 800 men who, in support of a wage claim, refused to do overtime and night work. The strike ended on October 11, when the suspended men were reinstated.

ADEN—The port, airport, shops and restaurants were closed down by a general strike called by the Arab TUC in protest against the Industrial Relations Bill passed by the Legislative Council on August 15. This Bill, introducing compulsory arbitration and wages councils and outlawing strikes and lock-outs except where approved agreements exist for the voluntary settlement of disputes, received the Governor's assent on August 18, and the strike was called off by the TUC.

"Just when we were beginning to doubt whether we have a glorious future, the old men of the party release their memoirs and raise suspicions that we did not have a glorious past." Anthony Wedgwood Benn.

Literature

"Direct Action" pamphlets:—

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Union bosses declare war on direct action

THE 1960 Trades Union Congress at Douglas, Isle of Man, which will always be celebrated for its double-talk on the H-bomb issue, was also notable for an attack on militants who take unofficial strike action. The indignation of the union bosses at anyone daring to question their authority was unbounded—so was their arrogance.

"The trade union movement today," declared H. Douglass (Iron and Steel Trades Confederation) "is an extremely powerful machine, and it can only be driven by experts."

The whole authoritarian philosophy of labour (and Labour) leaders is summed up in this one sentence. We, the experts, will drive the machine (of trade unionism or the State); all you need to do is to pay your fares and sit tight.

"Who is to decide where the vehicle is going?" asks Douglass, referring to the rebels in the unions. Who indeed? It is because many workers have begun to realise that it is just being driven round and round the block of big business that they are in revolt.

"It has been suggested that workpeople have taken the law into their own hands because of the failure of the unions to protect the interests of their members," said Sir Thomas Williamson for the T.U.C. General Council. This is not the "calculated slander" he called it, but the natural truth.

The main energies of most trade union leaders are engaged not in furthering the interests of their members, but in restraining them from taking direct action to enforce their demands. The wages and conditions in many industries—notably transport—are a disgrace, and in those where they have improved considerably since the war, it is thanks to the greater prosperity of the industries and the militancy of the people who work in them, not to the union bosses.

As for using the trade union movement as an instrument to achieve socialism, that would be using an industrial weapon to secure a political end (so runs the dogma), and who really believes that the labour (or Labour) leaders really want socialism anyway?

The very idea of a so-called political strike (or social strike, as it should be called, for it bypasses the political labyrinth in which all causes are lost) is anathema to these men. This is illustrated by the rejection of a proposal for a mass May Day demonstration and a one-day national strike to press the Government on behalf of the Old Age Pensioners.

"How silly we should look," said Harold Collison for the General Council, pointing out that they were being asked to use an industrial weapon to resolve a non-industrial matter, "if we made this suggestion for a one-day strike—even though we do not agree with it—and then the majority of unions found that their constitutions did not allow it or it was inappropriate." Of what use are workers' organisations bound hand and foot by constitutional tape? "Why, oh why," asked E. Williams (Boilermakers' Society), "must the General Council so often, when a motion contains a spark of activity, hasten to suffocate it?"

No true-blue Tory could be more vehement in condemning any attempt by workers' organisations to challenge the political privileges of the gentlemen of Westminster than right-wing Labour M.P.s. Speaking on their behalf, *Socialist Commentary* declared that the "basic assumption [of the Labour Party Constitution] was that policy was made, ultimately, by the political leadership" personifying the party to the public. "The separation of political and industrial issues . . . has always been understood. . . ." And of the pending H-bomb debate at Scarborough it said: "The issue is not an industrial one on which the unions might be expected to have the last word, but the most fundamental political issue of all—the defence of the country." The issue is not political (nothing affecting the lives of non-politicians in even the smallest way is the preserve of politicians); it is social, as any socialist should understand. Nor is the issue "the defence of the country"; it is the survival of mankind!

Yet we are told that workers' organisations must not interfere;

that they must not take industrial action for a political aim; that they must leave it to the politicians to determine their fate. The history of mankind is littered with absurd doctrines—but none more absurd than this! On the contrary, the workers must, must, must take direct action—for survival and for socialism!

CANADA

STEEL UNION PICKS BAD SEASON FOR STRIKE

EDMONTON, ALBERTA.—The middle of August marked the start of a nation-wide strike against Dominion Bridge Company Limited, the biggest structural steel fabricating firm in Canada. The strike was called by the United Steelworkers of America, who represent most of the shop workers across the country. The main issue in the strike is not money (Dominion Bridge workers are amongst the best paid in the steel fabricating industry) but national bargaining.

The union argue that as Dominion Bridge is a nation-wide company, it should negotiate with the union on a nation-wide basis. The company try to maintain the fiction that each branch is completely independent and free to negotiate local settlements with the union. The hypocrisy of this statement is shown by the actions of the company in the different branches, where the local management has consistently refused to discuss such issues as pensions and health and medical insurance on the grounds that they are administered on a national basis and cannot be varied from plant to plant.

The union has succeeded in playing right into the hands of the company in the organisation and timing of this strike, so much so that it has now little chance of success. The union seemed determined to force a showdown with the company, even at the expense of the workers it is supposed to represent. The time to strike would have been in the spring or early summer, when the shops had plenty of work on hand, and not the early autumn, when orders usually fall off in anticipation of the coming winter. Then again giving the company a couple of months in which to prepare for the strike was sheer folly. All outstanding work was farmed out to "rival" firms before the strike even started, and here in Edmonton the shops were so empty that half the men were laid off a week before the strike began. Now, with the strike over a month old, the company is in no hurry to settle with the union, and even if a settlement were to be reached there would be little work in the shops all winter and many of the workers would be out of work until next spring.

The constant pool of unemployed workers in Canada encourages the employers to ignore not only union demands, but also recommendations of "independent" conciliation boards set up by the Government. For example, prior to the Dominion Bridge strike a conciliation board recommended wage increases and national negotiations on pension and medical and health insurance, but the company ignored it. The conciliation board set up this spring to consider the demands of the non-operating railway unions for a 25 cents an hour increase has finally come out with a recommendation for a 14 cents an hour raise—which the railways immediately refused. The "non-ops" are now holding a strike vote and will very probably be on strike by the time this appears in print. Over in British Columbia the lumber operators have rejected a conciliation board recommendation of 10 cents an hour increase for lumberjacks. The lumberjacks, represented by the International Woodworkers of America, are now holding a strike vote which could tie up the whole lumber industry in B.C.

This seemingly permanent body of unemployed workers (over 300,000 in mid-August, one of the supposedly good months for finding work) is a mute condemnation of the whole capitalist system which, notwithstanding the praise heaped upon it by its captive press, radio and television, cannot even find a job for everybody willing to work.

B. G.

Revolt widens against Algerian war

WHEN is a war not a war? When it takes place in Algeria. This six-year-old riddle and answer continues to confuse France and make possible the most outrageous distortions of even the capitalist version of democracy. The law forbids the use of conscripted troops for internal police duties. Algeria is a *département* of France. If the troops in this outpost of the Metropolis are not just picking dates, they would seem, judging from the number of dead and wounded brought back over the Mediterranean, to be fighting. Who are they fighting? Outside France the rumour goes that it is the Algerians. The Government states that there are no Algerians, only French Algerians.

If there are no Algerians, there is no enemy, and if there is no enemy, there is presumably no war—only the suppression of subversive elements. The conscripts are then fulfilling police duties, and this is illegal. Young men who do not want to go and shoot at a non-existent enemy and be shot at in return by the same elusive force, and who do not even wish to torture Muslims in their off-duty periods, are apparently therefore entitled to refuse. Not so: they can receive anything up to five years' imprisonment for taking the constitution too literally.

In a state like de Gaulle's, when legality has served its purpose and more drastic measures are required, the authorities have no hesitation in finding them. The observers who say fascism is not so far away in France are speaking no less than the truth.

De Gaulle arrived with his courtiers, during a grand tour of the country, at Grenoble; he was enthusiastically welcomed, except that the visit was boycotted by all student and youth organisations. A small incident, but part of a general pattern.

Another 1,000 soldiers deserted during September and October. The *Union Nationale des Etudiants de France* has called for a great demonstration by all youth organisations and trades unions, in favour of a cease-fire and constructive negotiations, at the end of October. *Jeune Résistance* has distributed leaflets in favour of desertion and clandestine activities. *Action Civique Non-Violente* asks would-be objectors to refuse to fight and to undertake civilian work, beneficial to the community, accepting imprisonment if necessary. These and countless other manifestations are an indication that youth has had enough. These are signs, too, that the rest of the community is war-weary.

Debré's government has indulged in an orgy of arrests, seizing of newspapers, restrictions and prohibitions. Sixteen Frenchmen and Muslims accused of aiding the FLN were convicted and sentenced from anything up to 10 years and a fine of £5,000 by a *military tribunal*. The trial consisted primarily of justifications by the prosecution and condemnations by the defence of the role the Army had played in Algeria. Francis Jeanson, who organised one of the many underground networks for assisting deserters and FLN agents, managed to escape to Switzerland only to be arrested and deported, probably to Italy. He was given the maximum sentence in his absence.

One hundred and twenty-one writers, artists, teachers, scientists, etc. (including J.-P. Sartre, Françoise Sagan and Simone de Beauvoir), issued a "declaration of the right of refusal to participate in the Algerian war"—one of the biggest setbacks for official policy. The "Manifesto of the 121", as it is now called (although about 250 have signed), has become a rallying point for all serious opposition. Its terms are, however, not ones which could be universally accepted by the Left. It ends:

"We respect and regard as justified the refusal to take up arms against the Algerian people.

"We respect and regard as justified the conduct of Frenchmen who esteem it their duty to render help and protection to Algerians, oppressed in the name of the French people.

"The cause of the Algerian people, who are contributing in a decisive way to the ruin of the colonial system, is the cause of all free men."

Some Anarchists have signed, including Anne Guérin, Georges Naval and Siné, the cartoonist. "When parents vote they are stabbing their children in the back," is the caption on one of his propaganda postcards. The vast majority are not attached to any political party, and indeed all the parties have taken good care not to be associated in any way with the Manifesto or the Jeanson case. The Communist Party in particular finds itself in a difficult position, for while many of its younger members are emotionally attracted by these illegal moves, the Party regards them as outbursts of bourgeois idealism.

As one French member put it to me, "Lenin said that Communists should take part in wars, even reactionary ones, in order to carry on the struggle against all war. Who would tell the soldiers about Communism if we did not go in the army?" It should be added that this comrade is employed in an armaments factory and

that Maurice Thorez, secretary of the French Communist Party, had used the same words two days previously.

Twenty signatories have been charged with inciting desertion, but it is difficult to see how the rest could be brought to trial in face of an increasingly doubtful public opinion. The Government has already made its biggest tactical blunder by banning all entertainers concerned from state-subsidised theatre, radio and television. The French Actors' Union and National Theatrical Federation have protested and token strikes have been called. The ban has temporarily put an end to television plays and American films are being substituted.

Ten thousand members of the *Fédération de l'Education Nationale* and other teachers' unions have signed a manifesto in support of all moves to end the war. All those in State schools stand to lose their jobs. Jo Pyronnet, another teacher who has already lost his post, is organising a pacifist manifesto for the right to refuse, on behalf of *Action Civique Non-Violente*. Not to be outdone, the extreme Right have also issued a petition of "intellectuals" supporting war. A veritable war of manifestos is being waged. Judging from the diversity of support for a settlement, this flurry of paper activity may be only a prelude to more serious mass action and widespread individual disobedience.

Like the nuclear weapons campaign in Britain and the racial integration struggle in the U.S., the Algerian war is a secondary issue which has become of primary importance. Purists will not agree, but it is often by fighting hard for limited objectives and by forcing the State to reveal itself in its true colours that the masses can discover what primary issues are.

T.S.

Postbag

I ENCLOSE an October copy of "Progress" (rank-and-file apprentices' paper). The district branch of the AEU is attempting to ban it and the reaction of the managers has not been too friendly either. The circulation has, however, in spite of all attempts to crush the magazine, increased to 500 copies a month. Arthur Tweedale has been forced to resign as shop steward, despite the fact that he was solidly supported by the men in his department. Please send 40 copies next edition of "World Labour News."

Rochdale, Lancs.

BRIAN BAMFORD

AN ASSOCIATION to propagate the idea of direct international relations between libertarian comrades all over the world has been created in Paris, using "Interlingua", an auxiliary language already utilised by international scientific societies. Readers of "World Labour News" can get further information by writing to the secretary: A.I.C.L. (Amical Interlinguista de Cultura Libertari), Charles Marchal, 8, Avenue Jean-Aicard, Paris XI3, France, enclosing an international reply coupon for answer.

Paris, France.

CHARLES MARCHAL

I HAVE distributed papers at work. Some that have read them like the paper very much, but the union secretary is making trouble and says the papers should not be given to his members. Looks like he is trying to build himself a big Socialist Empire!

Llanelli, Carmar.

F. G.

A LOCAL comrade who manages a food stall in the market, sends the following information. As you probably know, most of the grapes imported come from Cyprus, but last month a huge consignment arrived from Turkey, which undercut the Cypriot ones (1s. against 1s. 6d.). I thought this might have some international significance—or maybe just plain cut-throat competition?

We had the marathon ban-the-bomb marchers here last Thursday (Sept. 15) and a meeting was held in the Public Library. The Secretary of the Labour Party chastised the Mayor (also Labour) for welcoming the recent Territorial Army demonstration, but failing to do time to welcome the CND.

Wolverhampton.

J. L.

AUSTRALIA—The nationwide strike of Australian seamen from July 26-29 in protest against an award by the Commonwealth Industrial Court, has resulted in further £A500 fines for contempt of court. Disciplinary action against dockers provoked direct action by dockers in Melbourne, Freemantle, and Newcastle on September 12. Fifty-seven ships were made idle.

On October 5 there was another 24-hour stoppage of Melbourne dockers, in protest against amendments to the Commonwealth Crimes Act enlarging the area of treason and subversion and threatening still further free speech and the right to organise.

Trains, buses and trams were brought to a halt for two hours in Sydney on September 22 by a strike of 8,000 Government transport employees in support of a demand for £A2 a week rise.

MOSCOW—CABBAGES AND COMMISSARS

THE VOICE of the Russian courier crackled from the loud-speaker: "When the plane reaches Moscow airport, please do not take with you any English or foreign newspapers or magazines. It is not allowed and be careful not to leave any in your baggage. If you do and they are found, the customs officers will be very angry."

Then, and not till then, did we feel we were beyond the Iron Curtain. Arrived at Moscow, we surrendered our passports, to be given to the Intourist hotel and not returned to us until, a week later, we left for another part of Russia. Never before did the old passport seem so valuable; to let it go gave one a sort of Burgess or MacLean feeling in miniature.

We were lodged in the Ukraina Hotel, "the first in the Soviet Union", one of Moscow's six "skyscrapers", though nothing like the American architecture of that style, in quantity or quality. Our rooms were spacious, clean and comfortable, with private phones and baths. Morning, a view of the Kremlin from the bedroom window, then to breakfast. "First," said the waiter, "you must get your meal coupons." We tried. "To get coupons you must bring your passports." To the bureau. "We must not give you your passports. Not until you leave." After negotiations, the bureau agreed to let us have one passport between two persons. Back to the desk, much telephoning, then "I have no authority to issue your meal tickets". "But the tickets are there—can't we just borrow?" More telephoning. "Nyet." The voice on the other end had no authority. Back to the dining room. "No coupons, no breakfast." No passport, no authority, nobody at home. Nyet. Two hours later we got our breakfast.

One constantly meets this declining of decision or responsibility in Russia. A simple matter that a Swiss waiter would brush aside, in Russia seems to involve phoning the Kremlin.

The large and lofty Ukraina, built only some five years ago, yet seemed curiously Victorian, like an English railway station with potted palms and rubber plants. Would the food, too, be old-fashioned and comfortable? Alas! It was much worse than the decor. Of poor quality and little variety, it was badly cooked and served. Little butter and milk, no salad, no fruit, the only vegetables tomatoes, onions and cabbage. Cabbage twice a day, every day, sometimes twice in one meal.

Protests produced a slight improvement, but food was still going back to the kitchen in impressive quantity. Rather oddly, it seemed manual workers in the party were more revolted by the food than were the school teachers and what is usually termed "petty middle class", who were more than half our number. Certainly, such a table would cause a strike in most British works canteens.

Nor was there much opportunity of stoking up outside the hotel, for good food, in shop or restaurant, seems scarce in Russia. For example, I never saw any fruit on sale in Moscow. In fact, the only fruit I ever saw in Russia were small green bitter apples, for which queues formed in Leningrad. A London Communist couple did, however, see some large and beautiful peaches on show at the permanent exhibition of products of the U.S.S.R. On asking if they might buy some, the lady in charge said: "This is an exhibition, not a shop."

I spent three days on conducted tours of Moscow and four days exploring the streets, main and back. Museums and art galleries are crowded with conducted parties. After the casual, individual atmosphere of London's museums, this seemed like the "Strength through Joy" movement. During the tours, the Intourist guides spoke constantly of Russia, hardly mentioning the "Revolution", only once was Lenin mentioned, Stalin not at all except at the Mausoleum, but Peter the Great and Ivan the Great were ever with us. This is but one of many manifestations of the deliberate cherishing of the Imperial Russian tradition.

And now, leisure for shopping, but shops are few by Western standards, and the goods are scarce and very poor by the same measure. Nowhere in Moscow is there a shopping street comparable to London's Oxford Street or Regent Street, or even Kilburn High Road. Nowhere does one see the stacks of bright merchandise openly displayed in the West. Here Marks and Spencer's would seem like paradise. The renowned GUM State Universal Store was just like an old covered market, with small booths poorly stocked. Walking its aisles, I suddenly recalled Nina, the Russian discus thrower, who caused an international storm by pinching a few hats from C. & A. Modes in Oxford Street—and I understood.

Goods are of very poor quality and extremely dear. Five pounds for a pair of women's stockings of something like rayon; £5 for a very poor shirt. This might explain the black market, whose operators lurk near stations and hotels, and even in main streets, asking foreigners to sell their shirts, pullovers, suits and raincoats. Five pounds for a modest quality English shirt—secondhand.

There is a black market in roubles, too. The official rate is 11.2 roubles to £1, a rate the Russian Government maintains is a true and honest valuation, but tourists are given a special rate of 26.3,

a sure sign of a ramshackle currency. The "man under the bridge", however, at once offers you 100 roubles for a £1 note. One hundred is the starting price; some of our party said they had bumped it up to 150, though one said that, in his case, the Russian would accept not less than £10 at that rate.

The Communists in our hotel were the first to discover the black market, as though they had been briefed, and most eager operators. Love of Holy Mother Russia wasn't going to stop them getting a bargain. As with most bargain-hunters, however, I believe a great deal of their transactions were of little value, for there was little of value to buy. The currency racket does help pay fares and buy theatre tickets, but there is little point in collecting bundles of trashy currency, which has paper for a valuation of 24d.

The dull clothing of Russian women (there seem to be only four sizes of women's dresses—tall slim, tall fat, short slim, short fat—and just one style) and almost complete absence of make-up for most women was explained away. "Russian women don't want such things. If they did, they could have them, but what's the use of making things people don't want?" Such statements were received with enthusiasm by the Western Communists and, it seemed, the more glamorous the high heels, nylons, make-up and hair-do, the louder the murmur of approval.

Maybe my parents showed prophetic insight in naming me after St. Thomas the Doubter, for unless I see it proved by experiment, I cannot believe that women anywhere are antagonistic to good make-up, pretty clothes, smart shoes and saucy underwear—not for long, anyhow.

Even the sight of gangs of women, poorly dressed and sometimes barefooted, working on road-making, demolition and street sweeping, evoked little cries of rapture from the painted-fingernailed fellow travellers: "These wonderful Soviet women, so much more sensible in their dress than our women with their stiletto heels". Stiletto heels may not be sensible, but the ladies seem to like them—and they can always refuse.

Of course, not all Muscovites are shabby, though few are smartly dressed. One cannot but be conscious of the class nature of Russian society; even among workers there is the apparent existence of a caste system.

One thing most Muscovites seem to have in common, so far as their public appearances are concerned, is a picture of a grim, dour, rude and bad-tempered people. This surprised me, for I had met many Russians in England and abroad, sailors, emigrés and others, Soviet and exile, and I had thought them a cheerful, friendly people much given to party making (of the happier sort, of course). I was disappointed to meet such massive surliness. Perhaps it would be better in Leningrad.

TOM BROWN

U.S.A.

McCarthy rides again

THAT MCCARTHYISM is far from dead in the United States is shown by a pamphlet "Behind the Bars for the First Amendment" (Committee of First Amendment Defendants, Box 564, Radio City Station, New York 19, N.Y.) that reached us recently.

This is the story of 36 Americans, four of them already in jail and the rest facing the possibility of imprisonment, because they believe the First Amendment to the American Constitution means what it says: that Congress shall pass no law abridging freedom of speech, press, assembly or petition.

The imprisoned quartet are Lloyd Barenblatt, a New York teacher of psychology; H. Chandler Davis, a Rhode Island mathematician; Paul Rosenkrantz, Massachusetts student; and Willard Uphaus, 69-year-old Methodist lay preacher and Christian pacifist. Dr. Uphaus was sentenced to a year's imprisonment on December 14, 1959, for refusing to divulge the names of people who had attended a 1953 summer camp in New Hampshire of the World Fellowship of Faiths.

Among those facing possible jail terms in the near future are Carl Braden, a subscriber to "World Labour News" and joint editor of the Southern Conference Educational Fund's paper "Southern Patriot", which has courageously campaigned for racial integration in the Southern States. Others include three steel workers, four journalists, two union officials, three ministers and folk-singer Pete Seeger. They represent a widely-differing range of political and social ideas. Their ages are from 29 to 69, three are women, five Negroes.

"Why," asks the pamphlet, "in a period when there seems to be a relaxation from the virulent McCarthyism of the past years, should these 36 Americans face prison sentences, or at least lengthy and expensive court fights? Today, three years after McCarthy died, discredited and rebuked by his own Senatorial colleagues, McCarthyism has become institutionalised."

BRITAIN

A.A. girls strike

THE EIGHT girl clerks who walked out of the Birmingham office of the Automobile Association on August 15 in protest at overwork, understaffing and underpay certainly started something. Their dismissal brought out 17 more clerks in solidarity. They were in turn dismissed, and the affair provoked a storm of protests at the AA's paternalistic attitude to its employees.

Birmingham Trades Council recommended the formation by the trade unions of a rival motoring organization and Coventry City Council withdrew from membership of the AA. So did the Tetbury, Gloucestershire, branch of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers and the Opposition Chief Whip, while members of the Coventry branch of the National and Local Government Officers' Association were asked by its executive not to renew their subscriptions. Shop stewards at the Solihull works of the Rover Company, which makes and services AA Land Rovers, declared work on them black.

Evidently these moves and threats had the desired effect, for, after many weeks of refusing even to negotiate, the AA finally reached a settlement with the Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union on September 21. This granted the union the limited recognition in the Midlands offices that it had been demanding for fifteen months. On its part the union undertook not to seek improvements in national conditions of service while it only represented a minority of the staff.

The great majority of the 3,200-odd AA employees do not belong to any union, and as a result of the dispute with the CAWU a movement to form a staff association was begun among them. "Our feeling is that the trade union approach is not the one which will work with us here," said Mr. F. L. Maclaren-Humphrey, head of the Birmingham legal department. "We do not want to belong to organizations in which there is any question of taking this militant strike action."

There is nothing more pathetic than the servile attitude of those poorly paid "white-collar" workers who imagine their personal dignity is enhanced by refusal to have anything to do with vulgar trade unions. If it weren't for those fellow workers who quite undeservedly suffer from their stupidity, one would be tempted to dismiss them with contempt.

But the growing army of clerical, technical, professional, and scientific workers is another reason for concern at this all-too-common boss-identification. Nearly two-thirds of Britain's 23 million workers are not members of a trade union, and a high percentage of these are non-manual workers. W. N. Bernard (National Union of Bank Employees) gave this warning to the Trades Union Congress: "Do not run away with the idea that because on your shop floors and in your factories you have 100 per cent organization that the movement is all right and will continue to thrive and prosper, because production techniques are such that in a few years' time you may find yourselves with 100 per cent support on the production side but with an army of non-unionists in the offices. If this happens, what will happen to your strength on the shop floor?"

IRELAND

Labour's 'left' turn

DUBLIN.—The Irish Labour Party has just ended its conference, in which there was a move to the left. They reaffirmed their belief in nationalisation (of course, they do not say whether they want workers' control—and they don't, anyway). They also passed a resolution stating that Labour would not take part in another coalition with Fine Gael (the ultra-right wing semi-Fascist party). Another resolution said the Labour Party should seek support among the various small groups of the Left, which they admitted had been formed due to the vacuum in Labour's ideas. This was passed against bitter opposition from the old guard like Norton and Co., who have always pursued a policy of coalition with Fine Gael. This opportunist policy brought discredit on the Labour Party and the trade union movement as a whole. The new move is aimed primarily at the National Progressive Democrats, Dr. Noel Browne's party.

A new author, James McKenna, recently had his first play, "The Scatterin'", produced in Dublin for the Theatre Festival. It portrays the life of Dublin "Teddy Boys"—lads with no past or future, just the present—and their comments on the humbug and hypocrisy of post-independence Ireland. Wonderful stuff!

D. P.

WORLD LABOUR NEWS

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SYNDICALIST CONGRESSES

IMPORTANT DECISIONS for the future of the National Confederation of Labour (CNT) of Spain were taken at that organisation's first Inter-Continental Congress in exile, held at Limoges, France, during the second half of August. More than 200 local federations of the CNT were represented.

One result that will be welcomed by Syndicalists throughout the world is that the split in the CNT, which dates from 1945, when a minority broke away from the Spanish movement on the question of participation in the Republican Government in exile—a tactic rejected by the majority—now seems within sight of being healed. The minority having re-affirmed their adherence to the traditional anti-State policy of the CNT, steps have been taken to restore unity. Already this has been achieved in a number of localities in France, where the great majority of the Spanish exiles live.

Other decisions of the IWMA's Spanish section concerned the possibility of an alliance with the Socialist General Workers' Union of Spain (UGT), the country's other union organisation, and with other bodies of the democratic anti-Fascist forces, on strictly limited objectives in the struggle against the Franco tyranny.

A month earlier, in Stockholm, the Swedish Workers' Central Organisation (SAC) celebrated its 50th anniversary at its 16th Congress. The report of the IWMA's delegate states: "A hundred delegates took part and I had the pleasure of noting that the great majority showed strong sympathies for our International and believe that the regrettable separation of the SAC from the IWMA will be only temporary. The work of the congress took place in an atmosphere of calm and mutual respect for differing viewpoints and showed deep attachment to the ideas of Syndicalism and to the organisation, in complete conformity with that of other IWMA sections. An important discussion took place following a report presented by Folke Fridell on 'The workers' movement and democracy in a robot society.'"

APPRENTICES' 'PROGRESS'

FROM ROCHDALE, Lancashire, comes a militant rank and file apprentice publication called "Progress", which is rapidly extending its circulation among engineering apprentices in other parts of the country. In its October editorial, the paper comments: "The apprentices of this committee have accepted to carry out certain tasks, they have been completely free from orders from above (since there is no one 'above' among us) and responsibilities have been shouldered by all the apprentices concerned. We realise, of course, that the ruling class will not voluntarily get off our backs, but we do modestly request that they release their grip on our throat." Copies of the paper, which is 1d. per copy, can be obtained from B. Bamford, 39, Alder Road, Rochdale, Lancs.

CALLING SCOTLAND...

SCOTTISH readers prepared to take part in the work of a grouping aimed at helping form an unofficial rank and file industrial movement alongside—but completely independent of—the reformist trade unions are asked to contact: R. Lynn, 22, Ross Street, Glasgow, S.E.

FRANCE—Following the 12-hour strike of flying control staffs at the Paris airports of Orly and Le Bourget in support of a claim for improved wages and conditions, the Minister of Transport issued an order taking away the right to strike from senior civil aviation officials and imposing 5-day notice of intention to strike on other officials employed on work classified as indispensable. Requisition orders can be served on officials not covered by the new rules.

A 24-hour strike of 12,000 workers in support of wage claims brought production to a halt in all the potash mines of Alsace on October 10.

Italian workers crush fascist threat

The events in Genoa, Italy, from June 23 to July 2, sparked off by widespread protests against the proposed Congress in that city of the Italian Social Movement (MSI), a neo-fascist organisation, were of deep significance. They revealed the revolutionary morale of a new anti-fascist generation, who realise the value of direct action and oppose negative parliamentary legality; the militant role of youth in demonstrations at Genoa, Rome, Reggio-Emilia and throughout Italy, and they represented a crushing blow to all symbols of the State and parliamentary parties. The following account is from an Anarcho-Syndicalist militant of Genoa, who himself took part in the struggle.

*

GENOA. Italy's most important port, has a long revolutionary history. An industrial town of some 800,000 population, it was the first town in Northern Italy to free itself from the fascists, when the uprising of April 24, 1945, forced the Nazi General Meinhold to surrender unconditionally.

News that the MSI was to hold its annual congress in Genoa during July was known when the anti-fascist organisations of the wartime Resistance contacted each other during the second half of June, to formulate protests to the Rome Government. A series of protest meetings achieved no result. The Government did not reply and the MSI continued its preparations unmolested.

The Genoese fascists, realising there would be opposition to their Congress, thought it would be limited to a few thousand demonstrators. Some 600 delegates were expected to attend, among them 20 Falangists from Spain, and a dozen English followers of Mosley. They were to be guarded by 5,000 men armed with coshes and metal-studded straps, with 8,000 more masquerading as ordinary citizens, ready to infiltrate the working class districts and port. To recognise each other, the neo-fascists wore a black button on their lapels—a device which later boomeranged.

Learning of these plans, the unions mobilised their members. Sabotage started. The weekly *L'Espresso* reported: "At the Columbia Hotel, where MSI leaders were gathered, waiters put anti-fascist stickers on plates and glasses. Taxi-drivers lost their way with fascist fares, garage mechanics deflated tyres, telephone workers delayed calls to Rome."

On June 25, a meeting organised by teachers, youth and students was held. A procession marched on the partisans' memorial through 20th September Street, one of the main roads in the city centre. Police attacks on the march caused the first serious clashes, but the police gained the upper hand and the anti-fascist associations, parties and the Bourse du Travail continued to act legally. On the 26th, representatives of the province's Committees of National Liberation met with those from Cuneo, Turin, Bologna and others. On the 27th it was learned that Emanuele Basile who, on behalf of the Nazis and fascists, had sent thousands of Genoese to the German labour and extermination camps, was to preside at the Congress. That was the final straw. Tempers reached boiling point, but the political parties calmed down their members and continued to respect legality.

A big meeting on June 28 was addressed by socialist MP Portini, gold medallist of the Resistance. The police were hardly to be seen and there was no disturbance. People began to realise that these methods were ineffective. The Government and MSI were gaining time and Genoa would be forced to suffer the indignity of the fascist parade.

The revolutionary minority, the Anarchists, the youth met, discussed, took decisions. There was a feeling that something was being organised which would not come under the orders of the party bosses. June 30 was dedicated to anti-fascism and a general protest strike was called throughout the region. The youth of the smaller political parties deserted the headquarters of their organisations, contacted the young Anarchists and groups organised in the port and factories; decisions taken and a massing of Anarchists, the revolutionary youth of Genoa and the partisans of Liguria and Tuscany was planned for July 2, if the fascist Congress were held.

The strike was complete. Meetings, with Anarchist speakers, were held in all the region's working class centres. At 2 p.m. the workers of Genoa gathered to form a procession. The port-worker members of the Syndicalist group "Rinnovamento Sindacale", belonging to the CGIL, distributed a special number of their paper, carrying Durruti's words: "One does not discuss with fascism; one wipes it out." The workers read and understood. The procession moved off, 100,000 strong... then the police attacked with tear gas bombs and jeeps, swinging truncheons indiscriminately. The crowd reacted swiftly, bombs were kicked back in the faces of the police, road signs, stones from a half-built subway were turned into weapons, from the narrow passages leading from the centre to the thickly-populated working-class quarters came fresh forces. The battle, which lasted two hours, found the police, in desperate straits, repeatedly calling

for reinforcements. But the demonstrators decided to let up only when the Chairman of the Partisans' Association, on the frantic appeal of the Prefect of Police, called on them to do so.

On the eve of July 2 many workers felt it was pointless to resume work, as a general strike was called from 6 a.m. on the following day. The only meeting on July 1 was a huge one of railwaymen, addressed by a Socialist, the first mayor after the Liberation, and myself. All was ready. Even arms were not lacking. During the night of July 1, 4,000 policemen, 2,000 carabinieri and 2,000 "Finance Guards" encircled the city and patrolled its main streets. Two columns of armoured cars from Lombardy awaited orders. Miles of barbed wire had been laid between De Ferrari Place and the Margherita Theatre, where the Congress was to take place, along 20th September Street. A police helicopter was to discharge tear gas bombs, police would fire on demonstrators. Such were the Prefect's orders. The situation was extremely tense. These plans were known or suspected and the workers' own preparations were speeded up to meet them. The general strike would mobilise all those prepared for action and more than 100,000 anti-fascists were to mass in the centre of the city. Barricades would be thrown up in the alleys leading to the port. Partisan formations were reformed; machine guns seized from the police were in the hands of the people, a host of anti-fascists from other regions were converging on Genoa, and many had already arrived. The city was ready for anything. Meanwhile, "official" anti-fascism, that of the parties and trade union organisations, seemed blissfully unaware of what was to happen, though the issue could no longer be in doubt: the crowd would attack the fascists, the Genoese would accept nobody's orders, would listen to no party or union appealing for calm. Battles with the police were inevitable; blood would flow. Something was happening in Genoa that had not been seen since 1945.

The fascists foresaw the worst. Entire MSI delegations failed to arrive or, on doing so, went into hiding. Others, reading in the trains of what was happening, stayed on board when they arrived at Genoa. Their activist groups had been put to flight by skirmishes on the previous night. Soon after midnight, after advising the Prefect that their Congress would not take place, the last neo-fascist party bosses packed their bags and quit Genoa.

Genoa's battle had been won and, drawing the lessons from it, the great mass of workers throughout Italy, at Reggio-Emilia, Catania, Palermo, Rome, with youth in the vanguard, showed by the events that followed that they were united and intransigent in rejecting fascism.

The Anarchist movement is far from unknown among the workers of Liguria, particularly Genoa. It enjoys a working-class tradition, in that it has always supported the workers' struggles, which have often assumed revolutionary proportions, and its militants have carried out constant activity. Following its formation, in 1912, the Italian Syndicalist Union, USI (IWMA section) gained a large membership in Liguria, particularly Genoa, and the workers of the most densely inhabited industrial centre, Sestri-Ponente, all belonged to it. The 1914-18 war did not change this situation and, up to the advent of fascism, the USI militants, notably the Anarchists, gave many proofs of their revolutionary courage by resisting to the end.

During the fascist period, the Ligurian Anarchists fought on underground and, after the Liberation, resumed the struggle in the unions and elsewhere. The participation of the Ligurian Anarchist Federation in the social struggles of the last 15 years, such as the port-workers' strike of 1955, and the bombing of the Spanish Consulate at Genoa in 1949, earned them the respect of the workers. During the recent events, *L'Espresso* commented: "The 400 Anarchists of Genoa succeeded in escaping the preventive control of the police." That the police did not know where to find us is no cause for complaint. But the workers, the minority revolutionary groupings, knew where we were—among them, in their groups, among the youth, who showed themselves the most combative, most conscious, most clear-sighted and always alive to our warnings that they should not be side-tracked by legalist leaders who wanted to contain the struggle.

To examine all these events, in Genoa and elsewhere, the Ligurian Anarchist Federation organised during September an inter-regional conference of Upper Italy (Liguria, Lombardy, Piedmont, Emilia, Tuscany, Venetia). During September, too, a series of discussion meetings were held, to which representatives of the parties, associations and the student and working class youth were invited. Finally, a mass public meeting gave Anarchist speakers the chance to express their viewpoint on these events and their consequences.

Popular action has now suffered a setback. The Tambroni Government, which was directly responsible for the fascist provocation by tolerating and allowing it, has fallen, and been replaced by the Fanfani Government, which offers no real anti-fascist guarantees.

There is a strong impression that the ruling capitalist class and Church hierarchy have regained the reigns of power; that the political parties—with the Communist Party in the vanguard—have once more mocked the people, by switching popular action to Parliament. A police State will again appear at the first opportunity—of that we are certain.

But one positive fact is that the youth are with us. They agree with our methods of struggle, even if they still lack clear understanding of our ideas. Our opportunity is obvious. Other groups approached our movement during the days of action, to help towards a revolutionary solution, and there is an attempt to set up an anti-fascist movement, comprising those who no longer believe in the negative, destructive and apathetic policies of official anti-fascism. This movement would conduct an energetic struggle in the factories, schools and public administration. At Genoa it is called "The Movement of June 30."

One fundamental fact has been unanimously noted by commentators on the events at Genoa. If the primary cause of the events was the MSI provocation in trying to hold its Congress there, this was immediately forgotten when the police intervened to repress, baton and impose its will on the people. The primary cause then gave way to a secondary and broader one, more consistent with the workers' day-to-day struggle, which leads logically to the fight against constituted power, against governmental authority, against the State. The identification of fascism as an instrument of power, not as a force by itself, leads inevitably to an Anarchist conclusion against the State and authority. And that is a good omen for the near future.

UMBERTO MARZOCCHI

SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM

MODERATE Jewish opinion, hitherto inclined to turn a half-blind eye to Soviet anti-Semitism, is now attempting an international protest against this evil. This same body of Jewish opinion has always been shy of calling Soviet anti-Semitism by that name, seeking despairingly for euphemisms. When we were children playing in the woods, we carefully avoided an evil-smelling wild plant we called "stinking onion". In later life I learned that the plant was wild garlic—a much nicer name, but it still stank.

During September, a conference to call attention to the plight of Jewry in Russia was held in Paris and it is hoped that its work will be continued by some more permanent organisation. The sponsors decided against inviting anyone known to strongly oppose Soviet methods and principles, but to seek the support of known sympathisers of Russia, neutralists and others.

From Britain came Peter Vansittart, Wolf Mankowicz and Professor Ginsberg. From Italy, Professor Pisa, neutralist ex-Mayor of Florence, who was received with honour by Krushchev on a visit to Moscow. The French section was headed by Claude Bourdet, editor "France Observateur", and Professor Jankiluvitch. From the U.S., Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt lent her weight, as did Thurgood Marshall, counsel of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People. Other famous supporting names were Professor Martin Buber and Dr. Albert Schweitzer. The main report was made by Dr. Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress.

There is certainly growing uneasiness about the treatment of Jews in Russia, the official policy of discrimination—the "silent pogrom". Discrimination is made against the person, the Jewish community and the Jewish religion.

Jews are not allowed any rabbinical organisation or contact with communities elsewhere. Yet the Orthodox Church is allowed national organisation and contacts abroad, as are the Moslems.

While Soviet writers boast of the creation of written languages for Altain and Siberian tribes, the Yakuts, the Chuchki, the Mari, with newspapers and books in the new script, the Jews are not allowed one school, theatre or newspaper.

Jews play an important part in Soviet cultural and public life (the Leninorad Orchestra, so well respected in England, is 80 per cent Jewish), but when their work is acknowledged, their race is obscured. When Major-General Lavoshkin, architect of the modern Soviet air force, died, he was lauded in obituary, but his Jewish origin was concealed.

Less famous Jews, however, are not allowed to hide their Jewishness, even should they so desire (it is surprising how many give willing witness to their faith and race). When Jews relinquish their faith, their documents still record their nationality as Jewish, and without these documents they cannot live. It must not, however, be thought that most Jews wish to lose their identity. Most seem to be proud of it. Recent census figures give the Jewish population as just over 24-million, about a million less than expected. Half a million of these openly declared their mother tongue to be Yiddish.

Attacks on Judaism are common in Russian papers, exceeding those on other religions. The world Jewish press has constantly reported measures, some great, some small but irritating, against Russian Jewry. In Kiev and other places, for example, a ban was

imposed on the baking of matzos this year. In this and other cities, application for the opening of prayer houses has been refused.

Joel Ceng, writing in the "Jewish Chronicle" (London), reports: "The Soviet provincial papers carry series of articles attacking the Jewish religion and its leaders, accusing them of organising drinking orgies and other acts, reminiscent of the anti-Chassidim campaign under the Tsar."

From the other Iron Curtain countries come similar reports, especially of attacks on Israel by those who delight in following their masters in the Kremlin. If these attacks are to be met, they must be met boldly and not by the old, discredited policy of trying to make friends of one's enemies and enemies of one's friends. This futility is demonstrated by the French Communist press, which is now attacking—after first ignoring—the Paris Conference.

BRITAIN

Slump hits car workers

EVEN TORIES wept tears for Gaitskell (as Julius Caesar—"Et tu, Harold?") and, among others, Carron (in the supporting role of Mark Anthony) when they played to an appreciative press down at the seaside follies. The tragic element was by no means predominant, and there were plenty of acrobats and rock 'n' rollers to provide the light relief. All this tended to divert attention from the more serious industrial stage.

The credit squeeze, the drop in exports to the U.S.A., and the anticipated achievements of the European Common Market were all signs of imminent crisis, notably in the motor industry. Bosses and union spokesmen alike were inclined to regard hire purchase restrictions especially as the cause of trouble brewing. On September 19, Vauxhall Motors of Luton introduced short time and hinted that some might soon lose their jobs.

Early the next month came the decision to sack 1,000 and to put production workers on a 4-day, 4-night week. The National Union of Vehicle Builders, which had not been consulted by the management, is fighting to save 600 jobs by proposing a 4-day, 3-night week. The demand has not been met.

Other areas have also been hit and strike action has been taken by Rootes Group workers. L. T. Jones, Birmingham secretary of the TGWU, called for a drive to open new markets in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. Bro. Jones subscribes to the capitalist dogma—if you haven't got a market, create one.

Employees at the Hoover factory, Merthyr Tydfil; Electrolux, Luton; and E. K. Cole (radio and television), Southend, have suffered the same fate for the same reasons. Slumps are bound to occur in a capitalist set-up when the market for consumer goods reaches saturation point.

Inevitably workers are first to feel the pinch. The bosses can always safeguard themselves by mass dismissals, after which they can search for new markets or wait for the old ones to recover. One solution would be to supersaturate the existing market, exploiting the middle-class reasoning which goes, "If I buy a car, I won't be able to drive it because the roads are overcrowded. Not to worry. I still need a prestige symbol!" Another would be to maintain demand by turning out only goods needing short-time replacement. The third, too obvious to need repeating here, was not given much prominence at the TUC conference.

In Belfast, workers in an aircraft factory have been fobbed off with a temporary 4-day week work share-out. The employers' measure was accepted at a meeting of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, despite protests by shop stewards of the ATGWU. Workers had just voted unanimously against the proposals and demanded that 50 of their number, who had been laid off, should be reinstated. A slump has also come to Belfast shipyards, rendering the overall employment situation in the city increasingly difficult.

It is hard to muster much sympathy for the 200 industrial employees of the U.K. Atomic Energy Authority from several unions, including the AEU, ETU and the NFBTO, who were recently trying to clinch a pay agreement. They would be well advised to answer appeals by the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War and find less lethal jobs. Said one, "We've done nothing unconstitutional yet. And another thing, there's not a Communist amongst us. We're all security screened." No doubt these paragons will get their increase for work of "national importance".

Mr. Button, a London Transport bus conductor, aroused the indignant support of the capitalist press when he claimed he had been victimized by his union branch for carrying too many passengers. Of course he was blacklegging (crews were sticking to "card times" at the garage for better pay and conditions) and he had just won the pools (the fine was £2 10s.), but he was nevertheless the hero, who cared only for his passengers, being pushed around by union officials.

Forecast for the next few months: more rain, higher rents, increased pay for policemen, free cars for foremen and greater unemployment for workers.

BRITAIN

Labour Party—the struggle for power

THIS anti-nuclear campaign is the only activity which is possible to a man of imagination and heart. Anybody who tells you that a victory in an H-bomb war is possible is either ignorant or extraordinarily wicked."

These were the words of one of our greatest thinkers, Bertrand Russell, to the rally in Trafalgar Square at the end of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's three weeks' march from Edinburgh to London. Whether any person alive today would be alive this time next year depended on certain statesmen, he said, and not long afterwards we learnt that, against the wishes of Canon Collins and the other more timid constitutionalist brethren of the CND executive, he and Michael Scott were appealing for a civil disobedience campaign against nuclear arms.

Meanwhile the "responsible statesmen" of the Labour Party were manoeuvring desperately to secure the defeat of resolutions calling for unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain to be moved at the party's annual conference at Scarborough.

As the whole world knows, they failed. The official Labour Party TUC line—virtually indistinguishable from that of the Tory Party except for the decision (mainly on economic grounds) to abandon Britain's personal nuclear deterrent—was rejected, while both the somewhat equivocal unilateralist resolution of the Transport and General Workers (even more equivocally presented by Frank Cousins) and the unilateralist resolution of the Amalgamated Engineering Union were passed. The AEU delegates, led by the nose by cunning commissar Carron to face both ways at once by voting for the official policy as well as the Cousins' resolution at the Trades Union Congress, had found their contortionist stance too uncomfortable to hold after suffering the jeers of Press and public and the wrath of fellow members. Tributes—in some cases unwilling—were paid to the influence of CND propaganda and its mounting effects in the country on the Scarborough decision.

First prize for dishonesty must go to Denis Healey for his specious comparison of the unilateralists' position with that of a trade union leader negotiating without the ultimate threat of strike action behind him—as if a strike were comparable with the indiscriminate annihilation of millions of human beings.

The canard that those who deny the right—or sense—of mass murder under any circumstances are the enemies of freedom (and by implication cowards) was freely exercised at Scarborough, as it had been at Douglas. Nor can it be expected that those whose idea of socialism is to reshuffle the classes so that they come out on top, should understand that national defence has always been nonsense. Socialism is a doctrine of the people, and the enemies of the people, no matter what their nationality, are those who exploit them. No matter what divides them, their common interests—peace and prosperity—are greater, and they are never the same as the interest of their bosses.

No statesman dare pretend any more that the people of his country want war; but nowhere are the people in control. If the quarrel is not between ordinary people, it can only be between statesmen.

We do not pretend, like Sir Thomas Williamson, General Secretary of the Municipal and General Workers' Union, that we know whether the policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament represents rank-and-file opinion within the Labour movement, let alone within the country. A straight question has never been put to the people and most union members do not bother to express themselves on this or any other matter, including the election of their own leaders.

But most of these leaders have used their block votes to support reactionary policies like the rearming of West Germany too often in the past to persuade us that they care about democratic principles now. Nor did their Labour Party confederates complain that block votes did not reflect rank-and-file opinion when these policies were carried by their use. But now that the "well-behaved sheep" have turned on the good shepherds, they are full of arrogant indignation.

"Supposing all of us," cried Gaitskell, "like well-behaved sheep, were to follow suddenly the policies of unilateralism and neutralism, what kind of impression will this make on the British people?"

Earlier, at Douglas, Sir Vincent Tewson had defended official policy like the Pope speaking to his flock. "Your general council," he said, "the Labour Party Executive, and the Parliamentary Party, democratically elected, have the responsibility of safeguarding the conscience of this movement."

The day before the great H-bomb debate the conference discussed whether it, the national executive or the Parliamentary Labour Party should decide Labour Party policy. John Stonehouse said the movement had criticized the Conservatives for having an undemocratic structure, and asked if the Labour Party was to become like the Conservative Party, with an annual conference that counted

for nothing. A behind-the-scenes plot to quietly relegate the conference to an advisory capacity was scotched by a resolution confirming its right to determine policy, but it was so hedged about with qualifications, provisos and it-must-be-understoods (no one, it was asserted, had the power to instruct, control or dictate to the Parliamentary party in the way it carried out its responsibilities) that it is doubtful if a cacophony of constitutional lawyers could unravel its meaning in a century of conferences.

Significantly, a call for the Parliamentary party to carry out fully the decision of the party conference was opposed by the national executive and rejected. "What we want in Parliament," declared the mover of this resolution, "are men and women who have faith in the sound common sense of the rank and file, and we do not want our so-called leaders, in the guise of paternalism, to show their contempt for the very people who elected them. There will be those who say we are seeking to tie our Parliamentary members hand and foot. Yes, that is exactly what we want to do."

But it is impossible to tie down these political Houdinis. In a system of representative democracy there are too many loopholes. Like a quick-change artist the politician can appeal from a decision of his party conference to the policy of the national executive, from the policy of the national executive to that of his parliamentary party, from the parliamentary party to his loyalty to his leader, from his leader to the electorate, from the electorate to his conscience—and back again if necessary. Thus Christopher Mayhew argued that to ask him to support unilateral nuclear disarmament would be to expect him to abjure his conscience and break his election pledges. "It would be extremely questionable," he said, "if this would be regarded by the electors as compatible with the basic principles of political democracy."

For such slippery principles it is impossible to have any respect. Indeed, such a democracy is meaningless.

Syndicalism has nothing in common with this bogus democracy. Delegates elected to carry out the decisions of those who mandate them are quite another kettle of fish from the politicians of representative democracy—arrogant upstarts who represent nobody but themselves.

Anthony Greenwood gave leaders of every kind and colour something to think about when he warned them that "it would be wise for all of us in positions of responsibility to remember that the rank and file can rub along without us, but we cannot survive without the rank and file upon whose support in the country we depend." Whether their support is willing or unwilling, it is always on the rank and file that leaders—lords of industry, M.P.s, and so on—depend for their power and privileges. The people who actually do the work are, of course, the rank and file, not the generals. Not only could they rub along without the leaders, they could rub along much better.

In the H-bomb debate Gaitskell and his gang lost, although there is no chance of this making much difference, unless the opposition to Gaitskell's leadership within the Labour Party becomes overwhelming.

On Clause 4, having already withdrawn from his exposed position in demanding its revision, Gaitskell won a tactical victory by securing the adoption of his statement of aims. Whatever Clause 4 might once have meant, when it stood in solitary splendour, now that it is obliged to cohabit with the incompatible creed of shares in private industry it means nothing at all. Capitalism and the profit motive were attacked by both supporters and opponents of the Gaitskell creed; faith in nationalisation was generally reaffirmed, although in some cases only "in principle". As at Douglas, the rafters rang with the stirring cry of industrial democracy; but of course nobody bothered to say what they meant by it. We can only assume that in any new State-controlled industries that may be established in the fullness of time the workers will be served with the same skilly as is already enjoyed by, for example, the railwaymen. Here's your bowl of socialism—you lucky people!

DOV

DENMARK—The first strike in a Danish public service occurred on September 12, when 3,000 postal workers—the whole staff—walked out in support of 70 men threatened with dismissal for refusing to do overtime. They returned two days later, when the threat was withdrawn, but still refused to work overtime until higher rates had been negotiated.

PORTUGAL—Five people charged with being members of a secret organisation operating partly in Coimbra academic circles and of distributing subversive pamphlets, were sentenced to prison terms of from 14 to 18 months on October 9.