

but they responded at once to the call of freedom. Love of liberty can be taught, but it is also inherent.

Here, finally, is a note of hope. The last to strike were the boys of the secondary school in Heinrich von Kleist Strasse. Most were conscript members of the Young Communist League, but they held a meeting in the school on July 3, demanding the deletion of political instruction and Russian grammar from the syllabus. The masters fled the classrooms, locking themselves in their common-rooms, while the head phoned the police. Six truckloads of armed police surrounded the school and an officer appealed, class by class, to the boys, saying: "After all, your parents returned to work several days ago".

T. B.

Life in the effluent society

THE SEWERS in our London borough are, on the average, 3 ft. 9 in. high, some slightly higher (4 ft. 6 in.), while quite a few are only 3 ft. high (no scope for a "Third Man" here). Roughly speaking, the sewer plan of a London borough follows the street plan of that borough. To a large extent, these sewers run themselves and always have done. However, when there does occur a blockage or fault of some kind, there are men who have to "walk" or crawl along these stinking, rat-infested tunnels in order to perform the required jobs.

It might be reasonable to assume that this unpleasant and dangerous work (sewermen are particularly exposed to a disease called leptospiral jaundice) would command a fairly high wage. Well, it doesn't—it follows the usual rule of this society: the worse the job, the lower the pay (another way of putting it might be: the more socially useful the job, the lower the pay) and a sewerman will take home on a Friday, after the State has stolen the customary amount from him, about £9.10s.

This is one of the main reasons why men leave the sewer-gang. They don't particularly object to the dirty nature of the work, it's just that they can't afford it. The size of a sewer-gang varies and, in this particular borough it has, at times, been as large as 16 men, while at other times it has also jogged along quite competently with two men. At present the gang is four in number, including the ganger.

The methods and equipment used today are, by and large, the same used at the time when the sewers were first built (about 100 years ago by convict labour) and the other main reason why men leave the sewer-gang is the appalling inefficiency of the whole set-up and the resulting futility of much of the work that one finds oneself doing. People with weak stomachs or special phobias about rats don't generally apply for the job, so only a minority of the men who leave do so for these reasons.

It is quite obvious to the sewermen themselves how the jobs could be re-organised to remove most of the extreme unpleasantness (e.g. fibre-glass lined sewers, like that recently installed for about 100 yards under Sloane Square) and reduce the necessary work to a mere few hours per week, performed by three or four men.

In a free society, that is one where industrial production and "services" were governed by human needs and where the workers themselves controlled every aspect of their work, sewermen would have the will and the means (they already have the knowledge) to transform their jobs almost beyond recognition.

We won't claim that in a free society sewage will be transformed into vanilla ice cream, but at least it will be disposed of in a sensible and efficient manner and certainly not in a way that is inevitably detrimental to the sewermen themselves. Certainly our present form of society can make no such claims. I know, because what is shit to you is "bread and butter" to me.

B.L.H.

FORD'S—the 17, IN or OUT?

FORD'S are adamant in their decision not to reinstate the 17 so-called trouble makers. Their agreement to participate in the court of enquiry presents them in a favourable light to the public in general and, in particular, strengthens the hand of the TU leadership, who want to smash Ford's shop steward organisation.

The findings of the court are not binding on either side, but one can smell a "deal" coming off.

Who, at Ford's, names the militants to be axed? The *Sunday Times* (17.2.63) is revealing on this point: "What is a trouble maker? According to Ford, there are only 'unsatisfactory workers'. 'We have never used the word trouble maker in the current dispute', says a company spokesman. 'After the October strike, we simply asked the superintendents and supervisors to tell us which men were unsatisfactory'."

Les Kealey, national engineering officer of the T&GWU, has issued a pamphlet to his union members at Ford's, firmly criticising the shop stewards organisation and calling for more discipline. It goes on to state that both sides are to blame for labour relations

going from bad to worse. He compliments the stewards in the motor industry, but criticises Ford stewards for trying to solve problems on their own.

Who else can solve the workers' problems but the workers themselves? When dealing with Ford's, as with most managements, immediate action is necessary. Chatting over lunches over a period of weeks is worse than useless—in any case, "he who does the graft has the say".

Behind all the recent attacks on the shop stewards movement is the fear of rank and file control, because it could lead to workers' control and management! Trade union bureaucrats and employers are united to smash any steps in that direction.

In the *Financial Times* 18.3.63, under the heading "The Real Issue at Dagenham", the question of "Labour Courts" and permanent legislation is discussed. Sweden is quoted, with the idea of taking some issues out of the industrial field and bringing them under the law. It is also interesting that certain Labour Party leaders are looking longingly at Sweden in their efforts to crush the industrial rank and file. The next Labour Government (when elected) will not tolerate unofficial action.

The attack on the Ford's shop stewards organisation must not be treated as an isolated incident, but as a general pattern of things to come. Any action that is taken must be viewed in the same way.

TRADE UNIONS IN JAPAN

The Japanese labour movement is divided between four main trade union groupings—SOHYO, ZENRO, CHURITSU-ROREN and SHIN-SANBETSU. The following report, from *The Echo*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (English-language bulletin of the Japanese Anarchist Federation), explains their scope and differences.

1. **SOHYO (General Council of Japanese Labour Unions, organised in 1950, 4,200,000 members).** The organisation of SOHYO can be divided in two. Firstly, there is the Council of the Public Corporation Labour Unions, embracing workers in nationalised industries and public services. These are the nationalised railway workers, teachers, local and municipal government workers, communications, monopoly corporation workers, telecommunication workers, agriculture and forestry ministry workers, municipal transport workers, customs workers, those in the judiciary, and so on.

Secondly there are Industrial Labour Unions: iron and steel, coal miners, private railway workers, synthetic chemicals, metal workers, metal miners, paper pulp workers, portworkers, Free Workers' Union, printing and publishing, busworkers' federation, National Medical Organisation workers and others.

SOHYO President K. Ota and Chairman A. Iwai have headed the dominant faction for several years. They and the executive members of each local industrial union are members of the Japanese Socialist Party. SOHYO, following the Socialist Party policy of "positive neutrality", has not joined either the World Federation of Trade Unions or the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Recently, however, its leaders visited the USA, in response to an invitation from that country. SOHYO no longer stresses political questions, as it did in the past (it fought tenaciously against the Japan-US Security Pact, the reactionary educational policy and the construction of military bases). Now SOHYO is under heavy fire, both from its own members and from people outside, for putting too much emphasis on purely economic struggles.

2. **ZENRO (Congress of All-Japanese Labour Unions, organised in 1954), 1,500,000 members.** ZENRO's main local unions are the Japanese Federation of Labour Unions (consisting of part of the metal and chemical industries, some shipbuilding unions and others), textile workers, seamen, automobile workers and so on.

ZENRO, organised in opposition to SOHYO, is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Many of its leaders are members of the Social Democratic Party and their basic position is anti-Russian. They support a tie-up with the expansion of production being carried out by Japanese monopoly capitalists. ZENRO's struggle, therefore, is solely economic, aiming at promotion of workers' welfare. Its tie-up with capitalism, however, makes it impotent as a working-class organisation. In April, 1962, ZENRO, the Japanese Federation of Labour Unions and the Japanese Council of National and Local Government Workers' Unions formed DOMEI-KAIGI (Conference of the Japanese Labour Unions' Federation), but this is simply a liaison body, handling common problems.

3. **CHURITSU-ROREN (Liaison Conference of Neutral Trade Unions), 800,000 members.** Main local unions cover electric equipment, shipbuilding, department stores, insurance, petroleum industry, bank employees and others. These unions often make a united front with SOHYO to equalise basic wages.

4. **SHIN-SANBETSU (National Federation of Industrial Organisations), 40,000 members.** Reckoned among the four labour organisations, but with few union members and no influence. Is reported to be joining SOHYO.

YO TAKASHIMA.

Direct Action

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

Vol 4 No 3 (21)

March, 1963

Fourpence

Building workers demand MORE MONEY AND LESS HOURS

SINCE January 16, when negotiations started between the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives and the employers for a 1s 6d per hour pay rise, the claim has been passed on to a committee. At time of writing, the committee has not reported.

This claim is one of the largest the unions have made in the building trade. A few years ago, they put in for a 1s an hour rise and finally gained 3d. This pay claim is long overdue, for year after year we have been getting a 1d or ½d on our basic wage, while

employers have been making huge profits.

In 1961, Wimpys made over £5 million and Taylor Woodrow over £2 million, but even so the employers have attacked this claim, saying that if it is granted it will add £180 to the capital cost of a house. However, a blind eye is turned when interest rates go up, despite the fact that an increase of a half of 1 per cent adds £500 to the capital cost of a local authority house. In fact, over the years, interest rates have risen so much that there has been an increase of £2,950 on the total interest on a £2,000 house.

During the last few years, land prices have also risen out of all proportion and consequently this has increased the costs of houses even more. These land speculators make money hand over fist, probably even without leaving their warm comfortable offices.

The employers (and these are often one and the same as the land speculators), say that 1s 6d per hour is an "absurd demand", when in a lot of cases they already pay this in plus rates, which don't include piece rate bonus schemes. Where firms have difficulty in obtaining labour, they are quite willing to pay as much as 10s an hour, yet they are now up in arms over this claim.

There is a large percentage of workers in the building industry who have to live on the basic wages, i.e. 5s 10½d per hour for

continued on page 2

Labour Party's anti-Colour line-up against MP

BEHIND the decision by the local management committee of Wolverhampton North-East Labour Party not to re-adopt their present MP, 56-year-old John Baird, lies an unsavoury coalition of anti-Colour Labourites, with Catholic Action and right-wing AEU officials.

In the constituency is a high concentration of coloured workers from the West Indies, India and Pakistan. Prejudice has been exploited locally by fascist groupings and white supremacists. These Baird has consistently opposed and he has been outspoken against colour discrimination.

The letter telling Baird of the local party's decision was signed by Ald. Mrs. Ruby Ilsley, chairman of the North-East constituency party. At the last General Election, he had a majority of 3,797 in a straight fight with a Tory.

The anti-Baird coalition is based on differing, but complementary motives. The anti-colour group is divided between those who themselves believe in white superiority and a frankly opportunist section, who fear Baird's policy may lose them votes in a period of rising unemployment. Catholic Action and the AEU local bosses are against Baird, because his general views are too far to the "left".

Apparently North-East Wolverhampton Labour Party lacks people of sufficient guts to fight an election on a policy of racial integration and the unity of all workers, white and coloured.

Baird himself has indicated that he will fight the decision and appeal to Labour's national executive. Ironically, he admits that before the decision to axe him, he had received little support from Transport House: "I had become a little cynical about the House of Commons with all the place-seekers and careerists we have got now on both sides. I was really toying with the idea of resigning, anyhow. I am certainly not going to resign now".

BILL GREENWOOD.

craftsmen and 5s 3d for labourers. No wonder employers don't mind paying overtime rates. However, not all workers have this to supplement their wages. This is the main reason that this wage claim has to be won. The basic wage has to be higher, so that men do not have to work long hours in order to get a living wage.

When one looks around London at the moment, one can see a large number of office buildings being sold, some of which have been up for scores of years. Each time these change ownership, which in a lot of cases is very often, up goes the price. When most of these properties were built, men were receiving only a few pence an hour, yet now, thousands of pounds are made at the signing of a name. Property and land deals have become one of the biggest swindles today.

Only a few weeks ago, the Church Commissioners sold property in London worth millions of pounds. For a spiritual body, they are certainly well up on the temporal side of things. A good illustration of their behaviour can be found in Hampstead, where in the 30's a church hall, which had been built with money collected by local people, was later sold by the Church to a local newspaper for use as a printing shop, making a very nice profit for the Church.

To hear the employers talking, it would appear that we are asking for the whole cake with this claim. Anyway if it is granted, it will be post-dated in order to give the employers plenty of time to adjust their future estimates to cover the increase in the wage bill. This is the usual pattern. At the moment, building workers in Scotland are having to wait until November for their 40-hour week, which was agreed on late last year. This does not include plumbers in Scotland, who have been working it for some time now.

A shorter working week must be won in the rest of the country. With high unemployment now and with factory built buildings being introduced here, a cut in hours is urgently needed.

BUILDING WORKER.

INDUSTRIAL NOTEBOOK

PRINTWORKERS WANT GUARANTEES

THE Newspaper Proprietors' Association (NPA) want to implement some of the suggestions of the Royal Commission on the Press, in its report last year.

In a letter to the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, the NPA urges a smaller and higher-paid labour force; any savings resulting from increased efficiency to be shared by management and labour; reduced staffing more by natural wastage than redundancy. The NPA proposals arose from PKTF demands in October for improved pension and sickness schemes.

Average earnings of most printworkers in the newspaper game are fair in comparison with other industries and we aim to at least maintain these earnings. Having said that, we should do all in our power to assist lower-paid workers in other industries in their struggles for higher pay and shorter hours.

Printworkers need a lot of guarantees from the NPA before their proposals are considered. Mergers and closures are happening too quickly. Hundreds signing the unemployment book is not our idea of progress.

EDWARDS HIGH VACUUM

FOR 22 weeks workers in the Edwards High Vacuum factory in Crawley have been on strike against sackings. The AEU executive council have instructed the workers to go back and, to enforce this decision, have instructed all district offices to remove Edwards' products from the black list.

This betrayal has put 92 workers "on the stones". What price leadership?

As will be appreciated, financial help is still urgently needed. It should be sent to J. Barker, 15 Lancing Close, Ifield, Crawley.

SHOP STEWARDS AT SEA

THE Council of the Mercantile Marine Service Association claim that no valid case has been made by the National Union of Seamen to justify introducing sea-going shop stewards on British ships.

This is not really surprising. It has taken years for rank and file seamen to force the NUS to accept the principle of ships' delegates and then only very reluctantly.

The Council goes on to state the potential value of improved liaison between the union's executive and the members, and would therefore not hinder a pilot scheme on selected ships, but the stewards must be experienced members efficiently trained and selected and appointed by the NUS executive.

Somehow I do not think seamen want "company shop stewards". Stewards elected by rank and file seamen, with right of recall, is their demand.

ABOUT TURN

IN the *Daily Worker* (1.2.63), George Sinfield criticises the EC of the ETU for banning what it calls the "unofficial national

shop stewards movement" in the supply industry. There were no screams from the "Worker" when Frank Foulkes did the same to George Wakefield a year or so back.

Let's face facts: the Communist Party will not support any rank and file movement it cannot control—and will clamp down as hard as any right wing bureaucracy.

WAGE RESTRAINT

ASKED on BBC television if it would be possible for the Government to do a deal on wage restraint with the unions, George Woodcock, General Secretary TUC said he believed the Government had the ability to do it, but did not know if it had the will. Labour Party supporters—you have been warned.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

All change!

BUSMEN have very nearly arrived at the end of their run. The last set of wage proposals by the LTB had so many strings it just wasn't true. The offer was so diabolical that the London bus negotiators decided not to report to a delegate conference, but straight to Frank Cousins. If it had gone to a delegate conference, the demand would have been for strike action.

The offer to the busmen represents 4.2 per cent on basic wages for 1963 and 2.7 per cent for '64 and '65—in other words, little more than the Government-stipulated increase of 2½ per cent over three years. Tied to the strings were the one-man bus, the larger-capacity bus and the 40 mph speed limit. Also thrown in as make-weight was 4s offered to drivers (over three years) as scarcity payment. Under these terms no further wage application could be made until February 1966.

The elusive 40-hour week got lost in the "tangle of strings". London Transport were prepared to attempt to reduce actual time worked from 80½ hours to 80 per fortnight. A 40-hour week resolution was moved in 1955, so at the present rate of progress the busmen should have a 40-hour week in 56 years' time.

On receipt of the busmen's decision, Cousins stepped smartly to the right in an attempt to pass the ball back to the negotiating committee, by telling them to resume negotiations with London Transport. London bus committee passed the ball smartly back, telling Cousins he should have a go personally. They had had enough.

At the time of writing, Frank is "in play", I wonder how long busmen will continue to watch this "great game" without stepping in and playing it their way.

If rank and file busmen decide to take over where the professionals left off, they cannot hope to win on their own; they must have the active support of all sections of transport. One section out and the others in means that the section on strike can stay out for ever so far as London Transport is concerned. They proved that in the last major bus strike.

CUBAN REALITY

Havana, February 2, Dr. Ernesto ("Che") Guevara, Cuba's Minister of Industries, said yesterday that because the trade union movement did not correspond to the needs of the Socialist revolution, its destiny was to disappear. The unions had to learn a new role, "that of an ally of the management in production and spokesman for the working masses". The prime thing, he added was production.—"Observer", February 3, 1963.

FOR THOSE blindfolded lovers of Cuba's Castro-Communist regime who, like American columnist I. F. Stone writing recently in *Tribune*, claim it is "libertarian" in its forms of social organisation, the above report, with its undertones of Bolshevik jargon, should be an eye-opener. It won't, of course.

Nor, probably, will the following extract from the last issue to reach us of the "Bulletin of Libertarian Information" issued by the General Delegation of the Cuban Libertarian Movement in Exile (Vol. 1, No. 7):

"A young libertarian peasant comrade, AUGUSTO SANCHEZ ESPINOSA, was shot with several others in the Province of Pinar del Rio. VENTURA SUAREZ DIAZ, libertarian comrade of the catering industry, also fell before a firing squad, in the Communist prison of 'La Cabana'. The State Prosecutor, Panchito Suarez, demanded a death sentence for ISIDRO MOSCU, who was sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment. We have further details of men and women comrades recently detained, but are withholding their names, to avert heavier reprisals against them".

Magistrate Neil McElligott said at Old Street (London) Court: "The police are sometimes criticised for using their truncheons. It is refreshing to hear of officers hitting people with them when the occasion demands it". (reported in *The People*). Refreshing?

COMMITTEE OF 100

More gain than loss

THE Committee of 100 is in the doldrums. As a result, many of its founders and more prominent personalities are rushing into print, criticising its basis and laying the blame on others for its failure. There is, consequently, a strong danger of the good being lost with the bad and so it falls to those direct actionists who were critical during the Committee's apparent time of triumph to set the record straight now, as they did then (see *World Labour News*, Vol. 2, No. 6, November-December, 1961).

For those who believed the Committee of 100 was "the most significant revolutionary movement in England since the Chartists", the events must certainly be a major disappointment. Even for those who thought the Committee could fulfil its aims of building a mass movement, it must be a disappointment, but for those who believed the Committee's prime function was purely educational, it has been an unqualified success, far beyond the wildest hopes of this writer.

In the last three years, which have seen the conception, birth, rise and decline of the Committee, the number of people who think in terms of direct action as the answer to the evil of the Bomb and other ills of society has enormously increased. The numbers aware of the potential of non-violent resistance and the limitations of its particular forms have grown in even greater proportions. What is more, Civil Disobedience is no longer the exclusive preserve of a small coterie and even among those who have never practised it, the belief that Parliament is the be-all and end-all of political activity has been undermined. These are positive gains of immense importance—and not the only ones.

It is worth recalling exactly how the Committee of 100 came about. Looking back to 1957, when Harold Stock, Ian Dixon and David Graham first tried to get into the Pacific testing area, and when Canon Collins, J. B. Priestley, Ritchie Calder, A. J. P. Taylor and others started to form CND, in order to build the Labour Party "Left", we find there was then virtually no appreciable body advocating revolutionary action.

The first Aldermaston March changed the nature of the CND soon after its inception. It was no longer a cosy little movement for polite discussion of the advantages of a bombless Britain.

However, the new radicals who came on the first March, and perhaps joined a picket or two, were not ready to follow the logic of their actions so far as turning to the Direct Action Committee demonstrations. As a result, by the end of 1959 there was a sizeable section of CND opposed to its leadership's identification with Left social reformists, but with no set alternative policy, though they were severally influenced by Voters' Veto, the Socialist Labour League and other Trotskyists, the Direct Action Committee and other pacifist groups.

As the DAC was clearly the most radical of these, when in time the new radicals became anxious to do something more positive than march, they looked for some way that they could believe themselves to be revolutionary, without having to risk frequent spells in prison, or any other definite sacrifices. It was in answer to this demand that the Committee of 100 was formed. As with the old DAC, the Committee was divided on whether Direct Action meant the negation of political action, or was merely a temporary substitute for it. But with the Committee emerged a new element: the bulk of the new Committee's supporters thought of civil disobedience as a mere occasional subsidiary to forms of political action in which they were already engaged.

Because no deep conception of civil disobedience could be accepted, the Committee was never able to make up its mind what form of action it advocated and why. Most of its demonstrations, consequently, were a compromise, as were the Committee's leaflets. As it never put the logic of its own case as a political philosophy, there was no crystallisation of revolutionary thought. The movement's present difficulties stem from the fact that these people are giving up Committee work, rather than from the departure of a few highly-publicised individuals.

This brings us to the last advance achieved by the Committee. Although many of the former demonstrators will now be sloughed off into pseudo-revolutionary Marxist or old guard Pacifist groups, producing all sorts of high-sounding reasons for attacking civil disobedience, they are unlikely to descend to the ill-informed levels of marking opposition which the old DAC met. These are, perhaps,

PRESS FUND—December 24, 1952 — February 20, 1963

Vista, Calif., A. S. 4s 6d; Berkeley, Calif., E. A. B. 7s 6d; New York, R. S. C. 2s; M. R. 5s; Belfast, H. C. 4s; Gothenburg, M. C. 3s 6d; London N.W., M. B. 4s; Tadworth, D. W. 6d; Manchester, R. B. 10s; Freeport, Florida, H. T. H. 2s; London N.W., K. H. £1; Edmonton, Alb., W. G. 3s; Southampton, L. S. 5s; Cleveland, Ohio, T. H. 2s; Newton Centre, Mass., N. T. di G. 8s; Vancouver, B.C., J. B. McA. 6d; Reading, Penna, W. C. P. 1s. Total: £4 7. 6d.

necessary teething troubles in a mood of developing disillusion with constitutional procedure.

At the very worst there will be, outside the Committee, a section of Leftist thought not in principle opposed to Direct Action. When these find Marxism and old guard Pacifism to be other dead ends, they will be liable to turn back to non-violent resistance on a more intelligent level.

Inside the Committees are left a hard core of direct actionists, more numerous than were the DAC activists and ready to use non-violent resistance on issues other than the Bomb—and more ready to discuss the social implications of direct action.

LAURENS OTTER

OPEN LETTER TO LABOUR'S NEW LEADER

Dear Harold,

My warmest congratulations on your ascendancy to the leadership of our Party. We were all jubilant last night, the nine regulars at our local ward meeting, I mean, including Brother Blott, who always represents our local MP. The latter, of course, seldom attends, as he doesn't live in the constituency and is anyway far too busy with his parliamentary duties.

However, there's always the trouble-maker and when we adjourned to the saloon bar downstairs to celebrate your victory, there was nearly a punch-up, when one member quoted the list of your favourite Prime Ministers—Pitt the Younger, Peel, Lord Palmerston, Earl Attlee and Campbell-Bannerman.

This trouble-maker, who fancies himself as a bit of an intellectual, comes in then with something Macaulay said—that Pitt was a "driveller" and that Peel had "a smile like a brass plate on a coffin". But I soon silenced him by reminding him how fortunate we were in having a person of your intellectual brilliance to lead us and at the same time pointing out that you very nearly joined the Liberal Party. Unanimity was restored when Brother Blott expressed the general relief of us all that you had defeated that sincere, but coarse fellow Brown. You, he averred, would never affront Krushchev by crude table thumping, polished diplomat that you always are. Your equally distinguished predecessor never made his trip to Moscow and I am gratified that you are giving this matter top priority—especially in view of Krushchev's generosity in sending the Red Army to sing and play "Auld Lang Syne" at the Albert Hall.

There's no doubt, Harold, that the new Leader of Labour had to project your kind of image, if we are to be regarded not merely as a class organisation, but as a mighty national movement, worthy of the support of everyone with faith in Great Britain.

The amazing and awe-inspiring fact is that you knew it all along, ever so long ago realising that you wanted to be the Prime Minister. That picture of you at the age of eight outside No. 10 Downing Street, when you were just a tiddler that is, was quite prophetic. How you must feel in this fulfilment of your destiny. And it began, I've read, when you were taken as a child to Stirling to gaze up at Campbell-Bannerman's statue, while your Dad retailed for two hours the story of the Liberal victory of 1906.

Yes, Harold, it is indeed surprising that the Liberals didn't get hold of you. They almost did, however, when you went on to pursue your brilliant career at Oxford. They did elect you to the committee of the Liberal Club and Lord Beveridge gave you a salaried job doing research for two years and even at that you excelled.

But what we like most of all these days is that you are so classless and, as Dick Crossman says, you and the Missus have escaped from the back streets without acquiring the tastes of high society. Now that you're in charge, you might have a discreet word about this with Woodrow Wyatt and his Lady Moorea. Those pictures in *The Tatler*, you know, with that mauve sheath dress of hers and the diamond pendant in her hair. And old Syd Silverman should know better, too. No, Harold, that the boys and sell them the Non-conformist, simple singing-around-the-house, pipe-smoking Maigret line. All good classless symbols and that's what will bring to full realisation your childhood dreams of being one day the Prime Minister.

As your political future unfolds I shall be writing to you as I used to write to Hugh. I never expected a reply and never got one, but I felt that this communication between us was vital and that he appreciated being kept in touch with Party life at Constituency level.

With fraternal congratulations,
JIMMY WIGGINS.

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French threat to Spanish anti-fascist refugees

FOLLOWING the recent round of trials in Franco Spain, as a result of which 25 Syndicalists were sentenced to prison terms totalling 310 years, comes a new threat to the members of the CNT (Spanish National Confederation of Labour), this time to the thousands exiled in France.

Visits to Madrid by M. Frey, French Minister of the Interior, and by General Ailleret, French Chief of Staff, were followed by the arrest in Spain of eight OAS leaders, among them Col. Jean Gardes, a leader of the April, 1961 fascist coup in Algeria. So far as Franco is concerned, there is no quid without quo—and it is semi-officially admitted that the bargain struck by Frey was for the De Gaulle Government to take steps against Spanish anti-fascists living in France, in return for the arrest of these French fascists leaders living in Spain.

Most of the Spanish refugees poured over the Pyrenees in a long, straggling column during the bitter days of March, 1939, when their three-year-long revolutionary fight against the armed might of European fascism ended in defeat. Herded into concentration camps by the Daladier Government, these men were later to provide the backbone of the French Resistance movement, teaching the Maquis the lessons of guerrilla struggle they had brought with them from Spain. Thousands were killed, thousands more perished in the concentration camps of Hitler Germany, notably that at Mauthausen.

After the "war against fascism", which ended with fascist Franco and his Portuguese neighbour Salazar still in power to provide refuge for Nazi leaders on the run, the Spanish CNT in France, which had maintained a loose form of organisation throughout the war years, re-organised and began to pour a stream of aid back across the frontier to its brothers who were continuing the underground struggle against Franco.

And it has been in Toulouse, near the Spanish frontier, that the CNT has maintained its headquarters in exile, providing a constant link between its refugee members and those still in Spain. Up to the end of 1941, the CNT in France published two weekly papers, *CNT* (Toulouse) and *Solidaridad Obrera* (Paris). A third, the youth paper, *Ruta*, had been suppressed by the French authorities some years earlier. Following contact between the De Gaulle and Franco Governments, "Sol" and "CNT" were ordered to cease publication. Since that time, the CNT in France has enjoyed the hospitality of Spanish-language pages in papers published by French Syndicalists: *Espoir* (Toulouse) and *Le Combat Syndicaliste* (Paris), besides bringing out an internal youth paper, *Nueva Senda*.

Now our CNT comrades are threatened by De Gaulle's ambition to create a Paris-Bonn-Madrid military, economic and political axis, with himself as its Napoleonic leader. If De Gaulle is to reach agreement with Franco, and at the same time arrange for his OAS enemies to be handed over, the Spanish dictator will obviously demand the heads of refugees who continue to play an active part in the struggle against his own regime.

And so De Gaulle, "leader" of the wartime French Resistance, prepares to sacrifice those who were among its most courageous members. We hope the French workers will protect their Spanish comrades against this threat. And we must be ready to claim political asylum for these Spanish revolutionaries, should the danger of deportation from France become a reality.

OXFORD ANARCHIST GROUP holds open discussion each Wednesday evening, 5.30pm at Christ Church, Packwater Quad, 2, 6, March 6—TOM BROWN on 'The Constructive role of Syndicalism in a Free Society.'

NOTTING HILL ANARCHIST GROUP meets on the last Friday of each month at Brian and Margaret Hart's, 57 Ladbroke Road (near Notting Hill Gate Station), London, W.11 at 8 p.m.

REVIEW

Inside story

INSIDE STORY (Report published by the Prison Reform Council, Housman's, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1. 1s.)

THIS pamphlet consists of a report, drawn up by a working group of people recently imprisoned for their part in non-violent demonstrations against nuclear weapons and based on their first-hand experience of life and conditions in British jails. The report was submitted to the Home Secretary and Prison Commissioners and, in the absence of any constructive response from them, has been issued as a pamphlet by the Prison Reform Council, "so that the general public might be made aware of this social disgrace".

"It must be emphasised", say the Council, "that the reforms suggested are merely the most urgent and immediately practicable ones and are not meant to constitute a comprehensive reform policy".

"Inside Story" does, indeed, deal mainly with elementary matters. Should it be necessary, for instance, to ask that homosexuals be separated from other prisoners; that epileptics be allowed to sleep in the hospital, or at least have special facilities for calling for help? Isn't it obvious that mothers with babies should be in a special part of the prison? Must a man who is really sick be expected to stand waiting in draughty corridors to see the doctor? Many of the proposals in the report are of this nature, costing little or nothing to carry out, asking only the use of a little commonsense and some re-arrangement of existing facilities.

It is really only of the section dealing with clothes and food that I can speak with any experience. When I spent Christmas, 1961 in Holloway, it was cold, but nothing compared with this winter, in which I can hardly bear to imagine how women prisoners have suffered, wearing their short-sleeved cotton dresses and skimpy cardigans (my cardigan was four inches short of the waist and permission to change it was not granted). For outside wear the prisoners are provided with short capes, which tend to float around the body, allowing cold air under them, hideous pixie hoods and no gloves.

As to food, I had a vegetarian diet and, as the report states, jam cannot serve as a substitute for meat. Quite a number of vegetarians went inside with me and we asked that, rather than ruin vegetables by prison cooking, we should be given them raw and this was done. I don't know if this was extended to the non-political prisoners, nor if it was continued when we left.

In its way the report gives an extremely detailed and objective picture of the degradation of prison life and, if only for this, it will be of great value. It is set out in 14 sections, each dealing with various aspects of prison life—medical, clothing, food, discipline, education, etc. Under each section is a list of criticisms and, with each criticism a suggestion as to what, within the context of the system, can be done to improve it. In all there are 115 proposals.

Obviously one of the major faults of the system, apart from its very existence, is the use of old buildings and, as an anarchist, I find it hard to advocate the building of new prisons. Nor is the second, even more important fault, any easier to solve—the poor quality of prison officers. 'For how could any man enter this "service" and not be of poor character? Or, if he be entering it in the hope of reforming, how can he help but be degraded and corrupted? However, while the system exists, new buildings must be built, the old improved and better men brought in as officers, if conditions are to be improved at all.

Although my name appears in the pamphlet as one of the 23 "working group of men and women who have been in prison during the last two years for their part in Direct Action and Committee of 100 demonstrations against nuclear weapons", I do not claim to have any great experience of prison life. I spent three weeks in Holloway, this during Christmas, when the prison routine was disrupted slightly and when life there was pleasanter than usual. On this occasion nuclear disarmers were segregated and put in a separate wing.

Nor can I, as an anarchist, entirely justify myself for taking part in a discussion aimed only at reforming and not at abolishing prisons. I felt that, as the revolution is not exactly round the corner and the prison system so appalling, something should be done immediately to improve it and this could only be reform—though it is unlikely that even a few of the very reasonable suggestions put forward in the report will be carried out.

The list of proposals was sent to the Prison Commission in August, together with a lengthy explanatory letter. This letter and its reply are printed in the report. I quote from the Prison Commission's reply: "... the Prison Commissioners ... will bear in mind the points which you make". Not very promising, but who knows, if Messrs. Mulholland and Foster serve their sentences, we may yet have the support of the Popular Press!

CELIA OTTER.

RUSSIA AND CHINA

Two Empires clash

MUCH seemingly wise talk and writing is being spilled to explain the struggle between the ruling classes of China and Russia as a conflict of ideologies. In fact, wars and near wars have usually been fought for economic aims and to feed the appetite for power; rarely, if ever, for ideology. Christians and Moslems have united to fight against Christians; Protestants and Catholics have warred against Catholics and democrats have allied themselves with totalitarians "against the totals", always for other than spiritual reasons.

I have just ploughed my way through an article in the Trotskyist *4th International*, 8,500 words to "explain" the ideological character of the conflict between the two Communist giants. Here was the Materialist Conception of History turned inside out and stood on its head. As well explain usury and picking pockets as ideologies.

From 1917 onwards the Russian Communist Party has openly intended to be not the leader, but the boss of every other CP in the world. And, from 1920 at least, as the Russian State it has continued the Tsarist pattern in its foreign policy. It has claimed and in many cases reconquered all the lands subjugated to the Tsars: Lithuania, Esthonia, Latvia, Georgia, Poland and beyond. Its heroes are Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible.

The Chinese Red Empire, too, claims the territories of the Emperors: Tibet, Mongolia, part of India, Formosa, etc. Small wonder that, when the Dragon and the Bear go marauding, they should collide.

In the early 1920's, the Kuomintang, the Nationalist "progressive" party of Sun Yat-sen, was advancing northwards from Canton against the great warlords and landowners. Moscow soon decided that there were fish to catch in these troubled waters and sent Michael Borodin and his retinue to live in Canton and advise the KMT. At the same time they were trying to establish full diplomatic and friendly relations with the imperialist government in Peking. It took them from 1921 to 1925 to do this.

Borodin's work changed the KMT from a loose movement into a party akin to the Bolsheviks. The KMT army, too, was a rather loose, federal force, expressive of the social discontents of China. Russia urged the KMT to establish a regular army, using old-type professional officers, an army in which NCO's and privates should be peons, the officers all, as Trotsky had done for the Red Army.

To this end, some KMT officers were sent to Moscow for training. One of the brightest, Chiang Kai-shek, returned to Canton to head a new school of war, the Whampoa Military Academy. Sun Yat-sen died in 1925, when the KMT was advancing towards the Yangtze, and Chiang Kai-shek took over the leadership.

The Communist Party of China had held its first National Congress on July 1, 1921 and continued growing, but Moscow, under Lenin, under the Troika and under Stalin, favoured the KMT above their own comrades. The CP was ordered to support, obey and nourish the KMT and they did so. Chiang accepted this aid—without thanks. Soon reports of Chiang's hate of the CP reached Moscow. "Carry out the Party Line" was the repeated reply.

In autumn, 1926 a KMT offensive to the north was launched. As Chiang's army neared Shanghai, the workers of that city staged a strike in his favour. The CP called for the strike to become insurrection and began an armed rising in favour of Chiang, who paused in his advance. When the rebels had suffered heavy losses, but gained control of the city, Chiang proceeded and the Communists handed Shanghai to him, but still over them hung the Party Line and the executioner's broadsword.

Then in April, 1927, Chiang Kai-shek turned against the Communists and slaughtered thousands of them, smashing their organisation in the towns. Borodin and his friends fled to Moscow. And the victims of the Party Line? "They were expendable". In any case, Stalin never wanted a strong Chinese CP.

But one Communist leader, it seemed, had never swallowed whole the Moscow line. Mao Tse-tung left the towns and reorganised the Party among the peasants. It is unlikely that he has forgotten Shanghai and the rest. With the triumph of Mao, however, Moscow seemed anxious to forget and bring the Chinese party within its control once again. But Mao was not made by Stalin and is determined to be his own man.

Since 1948, the conflict of the two States has developed in several important fields and each side seeks to rationalise its side of the quarrel with an ideology. Let us look briefly at a few of these issues, all of them national-political.

While the Chinese Red Army was driving the KMT from one province after another, Stalin still favoured Chiang, declaring his support of him to US ambassadors and to the US Foreign Minister, and scoffing at the Chinese Communists.

At the Yalta Conference of February, 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin agreed that, in return for territory and immense supplies of US war material, Russia would enter the war against Japan, two-three months after the defeat of Germany. There, also, the Soviet Government declared its wish to conclude a treaty of friendship and alliance with the KMT Government.

Nine days before Japan surrendered, Russia went to war with her on the day the second atom bomb was dropped. Despite Japan's surrender, Russia continued to advance and take the whole of Manchuria and some other territory. Manchuria, under the Japanese, had become the most modern industrialised part of the Chinese nation. Russia started to loot it.

The best machinery was rapidly dismantled and sent westward, in many cases leaving only the factory walls. When the KMT Government protested, a Soviet note to Chungking, of January 21, 1946, stated that all machinery and plant removed was "war booty"; that is, all plant that had been used by the Japanese for their purposes. The loot was enormous.

A Manchurian Communist leader, Li Li-san, arrived in Harbin from Moscow and said: "I feel that the movement of the machinery is not an important problem at all. Of course, the Soviet Union moved some machinery, but not a large amount compared with its war losses". *Daily Worker*, New York, 26.7.46.

It seemed that Stalin was afraid of allowing the Chinese Red Army to occupy Manchuria, but he had not enough troops there to hold more than the towns. Cha-Teh, C in C of the Chinese Red Army, had asked for the right to take part in the surrender of the Japanese Army on August 10, 1945. His claim had been thrown out by all the powers, including Russia.

Russia had decided to evacuate Manchuria by December 9, 1946, but Chiang was not ready and asked them to postpone their departure. The Chinese Communists were ready to march in, but the Russians responded to repeated pleas for delay and did not evacuate until six months later.

When a US journalist asked Chou En-lai about Japanese arms supplied to him by the Russians, Chou is reported as saying, "The Russians held the railway lines. We got our arms from the countryside. Also we took cities held by the Nationalists and not by the Russians". *H. R. Lieberman, New York Times*, 9.9.46.

The principal areas traditionally in conflict between China and Russia are Sinkiang and Mongolia, lying between China proper and Russia and inhabited by neither Chinese nor Russian peoples. Tsarist Russia strove to dominate Mongolia and to that end succeeded in having that vast country divided—one part, Outer Mongolia, with its "own emperor", becoming a Russian protectorate.

With the fall of Tsarism the Mongolian court tried to return to China's rule, but this the Soviet Government resisted, although on May 31, 1924 it acknowledged China's sovereignty—on paper. Since then Russia has striven to make Mongolia part of the Russian Empire. Red China does not accede.

Sinkiang, many times the size of Britain; arid, but with great deposits of lead, iron, copper, manganese, coal, perhaps uranium and certainly many other valuable minerals, is a bone of contention between the two empires. In this region, Tsarism strove for domination, one of its earlier successes being the Treaty of Petersburg, 1881. Since then, the Soviet Government has continued Imperial Russian policy, resisted by the KMT and now by the Government of Mao.

Of course there will be zig-zags and apparent contradictions in the relationship of the two giants, but the general tendency is likely to reassert itself after each variation. To understand a State's foreign policy, read its history, not the horoscopes of its Cabinet.

TOM BROWN

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A "DIRECT ACTION" PAMPHLET 6d (post 2d)

From: Bill Christopher, 34, Cumberland Road, London, E.17. (cheques and p.o.'s crossed and payable to K. Hawkes).

WAGE FREEZE BID IN IRELAND

LEMASS the Irish Premier has struck a further blow at the working class. In line with his record comes the White Paper on Incomes and Output—more simply, a wage standstill order. The White Paper (published February 8) instructs State and semi-State industries not to concede any claims for higher wages or better conditions. The policy, which flopped in Britain, has been adopted by the Lemass Government in one of his panic-stricken moments.

We recall the wage standstill Order of 1947 and the Bill of September, 1961 to sentence workers to five years' imprisonment for striking, watered down to virtually nothing on the day it was introduced, as a result of pressure for action on the Congress of Trade Unions and Labour Party by angry workers. Withdrawal of this notorious Bill did not hide the Government's real intentions, rather did it reveal them—had the working class not been ready to oppose such legislation by their industrial strength.

The present White Paper is an admission of the Government's failure to implement plans which, according to successive Fianna Fail hatchetmen over the years, were to provide unprecedented prosperity for the workers. Recall the Fianna Fail poster during the 1961 General Election: "KEEP THE WHEELS MOVING SMOOTHLY, VOTE FIANNA FAIL". No sooner had Fianna Fail been returned than the wheels began to get clogged up.

Economic reports on industrial output show that, from the end of 1961, industrial production has sunk from between 3 per cent and 5 per cent. Latest figures show a trade deficit of £100-million. Attempts by Fianna Fail spokesmen and representatives of the Federated Union of Employers to cast responsibility for this on the workers, because of the Eighth Round of Wage Increases (1961-62), betrays the hypocrisy of claiming that theirs is the party of the workers and in trying to associate working-class gains with Fianna Fail.

The White Paper, in a further attempt to paint workers as the culprits for "National Crisis", points to the gap between wage increases and rises in productivity. It claims that increases given as a result of the Eighth Round brought a demand for imported goods, which led to the huge import-export excess. This clever manipulation of statistics is typical of the hypocrisy of which Fianna Fail is becoming a master. The White Paper ignores the fact that during the 1958-61 period, when wages rose by 24 per cent, profits and dividends soared by 46 per cent—and that the latter is far more likely responsible for the import-export excess than the increase in wages.

Wage rises just kept up with rises in the Cost of Living Index. In fact, the culmination of the Eighth Round brought workers their first increase in real income since 1939—incidentally something the bulletin of the Congress of Trade Unions thought fit to be proud of.

The White Paper really reflects the failure not only of Fianna Fail policies, but of capitalism itself to solve the problems of the Irish people. Tied as we are, like string on a horse-cart, to the British economy, recessions in Britain are reflected in the Irish economy. Britain has over 878,000 unemployed, or 3.9 per cent. We have 70,000, or over 8 per cent, continuing to rise. Each year 40,000 people leave Ireland for other countries.

Four reports issued by the Government-sponsored Committee on Industrial Organisations have said that, in conditions of free trade, there will be heavy redundancy in the cotton and rayon, boot and shoe, leather, paper and paperboard industries, while the motor assembly industry will be wiped out. Factories all over the country are closing; some, like Verolme's Shipyards in Cork and Avoca Mines in Wicklow, were the beneficiaries of generous grants from Irish taxpayers, via the Government, to put them on their feet, despite their being subsidiaries of large foreign concerns. Workers are being laid off as automation puts them on the dole.

Failure over the years to provide decent social services, whether they be old age pensions, unemployment benefits, housing, schools or playground facilities for children in built-up areas; utter failure to provide an adequate educational system, both technical and academic, has produced a nation of navvies for export to the monopolies and cartels of Europe, in the event of free trade.

What a thundering record of failure on all fronts—and then Lemass has the audacity to describe as "nonsense" a UN report, which defined Ireland as an underdeveloped country. He then attempts to castigate the workers for the failure of the capitalist system, which he has sought to defend and continues to do so. This is Lemass's only cry, his only answer amid the damning evidence from CIO reports, from UN reports, from people who cannot be called cranks and cannot easily be daubed as agents of Soviet Russia—in fact, from members of his own capitalist class.

The Congress of Trade Unions reacted swiftly to the White Paper, protesting in the strongest possible terms to the Government

for not consulting them before publication. They declared they would oppose any attempts at compulsory wage restraint, or interference in free negotiations between employers and workers. The Congress statement added that "pending further consideration of the situation, the Congress of Trade Unions will suspend participation in the Employer-Labour Conference". It condemned the White Paper as negative in its approach and told the Government they must be responsible for its consequences.

The following day, Lemass said there was no intention to freeze wages or ditch conciliation machinery, but this modern Irish version of the God Janus (an old Roman deity, with two heads facing in opposite directions), stressed that the Government expected all to have regard to the important considerations clearly set out in the White Paper. This bluff can be taken as a reaction to the firm stand of the CTU, which Lemass seemingly did not expect. Nevertheless, his statement did not retract instructions to State departments and semi-State industries not to accede to claims on wages and working conditions—the very essence of the White Paper.

The CTU stand is welcome—but is it enough to force the Government to scrap this wage standstill Order? It is hardly likely to prove sufficient in a situation where the Government is forced to resort to such panic measures. The workers, at rank and file level, must organise Action Committees for a nation-wide work-to-rule. Not only the question of the Pay Pause is at stake. The Government must be called to account for their failures. Lynch, Minister for Industry and Commerce, has claimed the Government has plans to re-train and re-employ motor assembly workers knocked off by free trade. Workers must organise industrial action to demand that the Government pull these plans out of the pigeon-holes and use them to employ the present 70,000 unemployed and the innumerable uncared for who leave the country each week.

We doubt if the Government has any such plans, however. Capitalism has entered a new crisis, from which it struggles, sometimes with success, more often with failure, to extricate itself. Meanwhile the workers suffer from hunger, impatient bills and H.P. commitments and, if capitalism fails to extricate itself, possibly war with its modern mass extermination.

Of its very nature, capitalism cannot solve these problems. Let the working class organise to take over the means and instruments of production; to abolish the profit motive and replace it with production for use; to abolish the slave status of the wage system and replace it with the ruling of from each according to their capacity, to each according to their need.

In short, let us stop the Labour Leaders paying lip service and hypocritical homage every May to James Connolly and fight for what he gave his life to establish: a Socialist Workers' Republic. To attain this change in society, we must first change the structure and policy of the trade unions into that of revolutionary industrial unions. Hasten the day!

PAT KELLY

Literature

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PAGES OF LABOUR HISTORY

EAST BERLIN WORKERS REVOLT

SUMMER, 1953, and the winter of discontent still hangs over East Germany. In the Stalinallee, being built as a State show-piece, the building workers are growling. For a little while there had been hope. In March, Stalin had died in mystery and the blood-soaked maniac of the Kremlin now lay in the Red Square, stuffed like some monstrous taxidermist's joke. The people, who lived in the shadow of the hammer and sickle, had hoped that with the tyrant's death, the regime would become liberalised a little, even Party members had begun chirping with the birds in Spring. But death did not do the job of revolution—the tiger remained a tiger.

At the end of the war in 1945, the Red Army generals had favoured the German Communist Party, whose leaders had just returned from Russian exile, but the East Germans preferred the Socialists and Democrats. This led the Communists to propose a joint committee with the Socialists. Although knowing, as none but the Social Democrats could know, that such "unity" must quickly lead to a coward's suicide, the SPD agreed. Soon the KPD (Communists) wanted fusion, 80 per cent of the SPD in West Berlin turned this down, but the thick end of the wedge was driven home and the two parties fused as the Socialist Unity Party, SED, the Democrats were crushed and the well-known Social Democrat Grotewohl became Prime Minister of the Communist Government.

The Russian legal system was introduced, free trade unions and parties suppressed, the farmers harried and often driven from the land, the middle class starved, the workers driven to work harder for less, the best of the country's industrial equipment sent to Russia.

The Russian "Marxist" wage system, as in Russia, supplanted capitalist wages. A certain amount of work is demanded of the worker; if he fulfils his "norm", he gets his week's wages, if he does more he gets a little extra, then the "norm" is raised, putting him back to starting point.

Post-Stalin "liberalisation" brought, along with crushing blows against the middle class and farmers, a general attack on the industrial workers, an increase in "norms", a sweeping reduction of wages. At Stalinallee, wage cuts, some of a third, were to be made on June 30 onwards, but on June 5, when wage packets were opened, the cuts had already been made. When the men protested, Party officials told them the cuts had already been agreed by their "representatives".

A week passed, a housewives' week of grumbling, and on pay day, Friday, June 12, the storm began to brew. At Block 40, a union official called a meeting to give a vote of thanks to the Government for its "new course". An amendment, asking for a return to the old norms was carried—and later rejected by the officials.

On Tuesday, June 16 it was decided that the two men delegated to present the amended resolution to the Government should do so. But if they did, they would be imprisoned. "Then let us all go". Block 40 walked out in a body.

Down the Stalinallee march 300 builders, at their head one with a banner inscribed "In honour of May 1, Block 40 has raised its norms 40 per cent". But that is crossed out and turned round, with "We demand a reduction in the norms" substituted. Workers on "C South" site stare, down tools and fall in. At "F South" men slide down the scaffolding and, with "D North", join the column. "G South" hesitates, Communist officials threaten, but a few come forward and, with a rush, all join.

At the Alexanderplatz, 2,000 strong—and the "People's Police" keep in the background. Bystanders look on apathetically, but now the marchers are shouting their slogans. It's not an official procession. The public's faces light up. Clapping and cheers, a few join, 600 building workers from the new Government buildings near Marx-Engels Platz march up.

The column arrives at the "House of the Ministries" in Leipzigerstrasse, the police run into the main entrance and bang down the steel shutters—the "People's" Police hide from the people. The workers call for Ulbricht and Grotewohl: "Come and face us, come out of your cellar, you Communist pigs". Selbmann, Minister of Foundry Work, speaks to the vast crowd and is shouted down: "Fetch Grotewohl and Ulbricht".

A bricklayer speaks, listing the men's demands: lower prices, lower norms, no victimisation. Another speaks: "We'll wait half an hour for Grotewohl, then march through East Berlin. Then tomorrow we will call a General Strike". There are cries of "We want free elections! Down with the Government!" The strike simple was turning into revolution.

The procession reformed, eight or more abreast, a kilometre long. A police loudspeaker van, calling on the marchers to disperse, is answered by a roar of defiance and vanishes in reverse. A Party van tries to follow, but is too late. Now the workers have their own loudspeaker van to voice their slogans: "Down with the Government, release the class war prisoners, butter not guns".

The column grows, crowds cheer, men and women openly weep,

but with joy. Revolution is happy, tyranny grim. At Oberbaum Bridge, women and children help destroy the Communist barriers between East and West.

A crowd is before the women's jail in Barnimstrasse, demanding the release of the prisoners. Men and women hurry to spread the call, running, cycling, phoning, by train and tram, they spread the word: "General Strike". West Berlin radio RIAS (American) refuses to let a delegation from Stalinallee tell their story, but later announces the strike in its news bulletin. Soon all know. When cyclists reach Velten, the railway construction gangs stop.

Night—but the revolt does not sleep: 400 garment workers go from Progress Works I to Progress Works II to call out the night shift. At the Henningsdorf steelworks the night shift decide to hold a strike meeting when the day shift arrive. At Bergmann-Borsig engineering works, only half the night workers have clocked on.

Morning, June 17, the railroad men of Velten are already marching in the rain to the Henningsdorf steelworks, strikers joining them at every job site. At the steelworks the men have decided to join the strike. The heavy gates are locked and barred, guarded by armed factory police. The guards are disarmed, the gates levered apart and 15,000 steel men march the 13 miles to Central Berlin.

In the Stalin Electric Motor works at Treptow, 9,000 clock in. Half an hour passes, then the message passes down the machine lines, along the benches: "All into the yard—Strike". They strike and march. It is raining hard, but the crowds still gather. All East Berlin is on strike.

But all night long, militarised barrack police in wagons and armoured cars have been travelling towards Berlin and Russian armoured divisions have been motoring city-wards. The revolt is to be crushed by shot and shell and grinding tank.

Great columns of marchers tramp to the House of Ministries as the militarised police cordon off the entrance. Then the blue police appear to baton charge the crowd and drive it back, but the workers push back.

The Russian Army moves in, first armoured cars, then steel-helmeted infantry in trucks—then the tanks. Throughout East Berlin it is the same picture. The workers erect a rough cross on the spot where the first man to be crushed by a Russian tank had fallen. Fighting spreads.

Outside police headquarters a crowd breaks the police cordon and, seizing the rifles from the sentries, break them. The police use fire hoses, but are driven back and their hoses cut. Police trucks are fired. Then Russian infantry appear—and every rifle and tank is firing on the people.

Three youths climb the Brandenburg Gate and, in face of snipers and machine guns, haul down the Communist flag. In the streets, men and women fight back in the courage of despair. Men throw stones at tanks and try to block their guns with mud and wood. The slaves are storming the gates of hell. But the guns won.

There is no room here to tell how the fight was taken up throughout the towns and countryside of all East Germany. In Magdeburg, Brandenburg and Leipzig, in Grabow, Luebz and Dresden, everywhere the workers struck and marched to the State offices and jails, releasing political prisoners. They fought in the streets. In Jena, the workers of the Zeiss factory led the revolt, breaking down the prison gates and freeing the prisoners. In that town the first victims were two children, shot by a police officer. There the workers seized five tanks and used them to block the path of others. When the tanks sought another path, the workers pushed theirs to a new barricade in a fantastic game of chess.

But the hospitals were filled with the dying and the last workers returned to their jobs in the provinces on June 20, to go slow. The police and Communist Gestapo reappeared. The terror began. Hell had won.

The odds against the revolt were too heavy. The West would not help, the workers had no organisation before the revolt, most were inexperienced, having lived all their adult lives under dictatorship (1933-53) and time was too short to mature their new-formed organisations. Because of this, the revolt throughout East Germany went off like a powder train, rather than in one big explosion.

Other Iron Curtain countries rose later—Poland and Hungary. Had all three risen about the same time, all East Europe and possibly the Ukraine would have done so, too. During the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, the Bulgarian workers, largely under the influence of the Bulgarian section of the IWMA, were organised and armed to overthrow their Communist Government, establish workers' control and advance to help their Hungarian comrades—if only some other countries revolted to draw off some of the Russian Army from Bulgaria (see *World Labour News*, Vol. 3, No. 3).

Will the East German workers forget their brief hours of liberty? No, some were born under Fascism and lived under Bolshevism,