INDUSTRIAL NOTEBOOK

The lesson of Ford's

OVER the past few weeks there have been quite a few Trade Union conferences and one is struck by the constant demand for the Government to do this and do that—and for the Labour Party to take action on this or that.

One wonders how long this argey-bargey can go on. The waste paper baskets of Government offices and trade union head offices must be crammed full of "Demands" and "Resolutions". When are we going to wake up to the fact that if we **demand** a thing, the only way to back it up is to take action ourselves.

Thelessoncanbe learnt from Ford's at Dagenham. Leaders were sought for and relied upon. The consequence, 17 men on the stones, with the reigning shop stewards place in a position of looking over their shoulder to see which one of their number is the next to get chopped. The situation is critical for Ford workers. Who is going to be a genuine shop steward (not a company stooge) now he knows that the first time he steps out of line, he can be sacked—and expect no support from any quarter.

SHOP STEWARDS TO BE CALLED TO ORDER

DISTRICT Committees of the Confed. of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, who have been acting independently against employers, are to be called to order at the Confed's annual conference. This is a result of district committee actions in tackling unemployment problems. One particular district committee restricted overtime and compelled employers to engage additional workers from the ranks of those sacked by other firms. One would have thought that here was a district committee doing its job—but on second thoughts, of course, it smells like power from the bottom, which scares the living daylights out of the trade union hierachy.

WHAT YEAR?

TWO hundred men were sacked from a foundry in Staffordshire for striking. Their demands: recognition of the Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers at the plant, a cost of living bonus, a canteen and trained first aid staff.

This did not take place in the 1920's, but on June 14, 1963. I suppose it is possible to progress backwards.

ASTRIDE THE FENCE

MR. HARRY ADEY, Chairman of the Jaguar Cars (Coventry) shop stewards committee, has been appointed industrial relations manager. We wish him well in his job of serving two masters.

DISCIPLINE

UNION officials have been ordered to tighten discipline at Nottingham's Raleigh Cycle Factory. Over the past year, about 50 strikes have occurred. The Nottingham committee of the Confed. of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions said "shop stewards were in a better position to recommend action than men on the factory floor." Union members—they said—should stay at work until routine negotiations had failed and strike only if ordered to by their union.

Fifty strikes in a year must mean the lads on the job are not very happy about working conditions, etc. Also, of course, it seems that the unions concerned haven't done much to help, so the rank and file have attempted to do the job themselves. Which is the only way they will get anything done.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PLANNING

P.E.P. has just issued a new broadsheet, "Trade Unions in a Changing Society". Unions are criticised for failing to reflect the changed needs of their members and society. Employers are urged to do more to help establish strong unionism. It expresses the view that unions cannot be expected to solve the "Shop steward problem" without the support of the employer. It also suggests that employers should make wider use of the system of deducting union dues from wages. According to P.E.P., the class struggle has largely disappeared and it is in the interests of employers to help create strong unions. These points of view are startling, to say the least, and in essence advocate "company unions". Ford workers should ask their management to assist in strengthening their shop steward committee, because there is no longer a class struggle.

ONE UNION

"THE Platform", June issue, which is the rank and file paper of bus workers, really goes to town on its front page in an editorial entitled "An Oscar for Hypocrites". It has a crack at the two railway unions who opted out when the NUR called a three-day protest strike. The editorial also bashes the unions at Fords, for leaving 17 men on the stones. And winds up in its last paragraph: "Let every bus branch flood the GEC and the TUC with protests about this humiliating and disgusting debacle at Fords. There are far too many "Knights" and far too few "Fighters" on our General Council today".

I couldn't agree more with the theme of the editorial and on the issue of CLOSER WORKING BETWEEN KINDRED UNIONS. Would it be possible for "Platform" to call a conference for **all passenger workers**, to discuss their common problems and future concerted action? And may I be so presumptious as to remark that in the past members of the "passenger unions" have cut each other's throats? At the risk of using a cliche, UNITY is STILL strength.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

Resistance Shall Grow 6d

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Libertarian Youth camp

THIS YEAR'S International Libertarian Youth Summer Camp will be held at Beynac and Cazenac, in the heart of France's Dordogne Valley, a short distance from the river and in very pleasant surroundings. Return fare from London is under £15 (hitch-hikers will find no difficulty in getting lifts) and the total cost, which depends on your food, personal expenses and duration of stay, is very small.

As the camp is held under canvas, you are advised to take your own camping equipment, if possible. Some tents are provided and an emergency big marquee can accommodate 50 or more persons.

The camp is largely recreational, with facilities for swimming, sunbathing, games and other holiday attractions. There will be talks and discussions in English, French and Spanish; cinema sessions, theatre, folk music and dancing—and plenty of opportunity for activities of your own choice.

The site is 320 miles from Paris and 90 from Bordeaux. For full details, write to the Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth (Great Britain Committee), 159 Ledbury Road, London, W.11.

Literature

"Direct Action" pamphlets:—

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE UNIONS?	by Tom Brown	5d.
NATIONALISATION AND THE NEW BOSS CLASS	by Tom Brown	6d.
WORKERS' CONTROL		6d.
HOW LABOUR GOVERNED, 1945-1951		8d.
THE BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE	by Tom Brown	5d.
•	•	•
THE LABOUR PARTY ILLUSION	by Sam Weiner	8d
ETHICS AND AMERICAN UNIONISM	by Sam Weiner	8d.
THE SOCIAL GENERAL STRIKE	by Tom Brown	4d.
BULGARIA—A NEW SPAIN		8d.
THE LONDON YEARS (autobiography)	by Rudolf Rocker	7s. 6d
THE IWW'S LITTLE RED SONG BOOK		1s. 9d.
STRIKE STRATEGY (National Rank & File Movement)		4d.
INDUSTRIAL WORKER	(fortnightly organ of the IWW)	4d.
VIEWS AND COMMENTS	(organ of the Libertarian League, U.S.)	8d.

All prices include postage

from: Bill Christopher, 34 Cumberland Road, London, E.17

Printed and published by the S.W.F., 34, Cumberland Road, London, E.17.

Direct Action

WORLD LABOUR NEWS

Inside—Zengakuren and the anti-war struggle: : Report on Spain: : Industrial news

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

Vol.4 No. 7 (25) July, 1963 Fourpence

BRITAIN'S BLACKLEG ARMY

In Swaziland . . .

"LAW and Order must be restored". What multitude of sins have been committed under this obnoxious, hypocritical excuse for military oppression. It is now being used in Swaziland as an excuse for strike breaking.

A month ago, African workers in the British-owned asbestos mines at Havelock struck work to support their demand for a £1 a day minimum. A few days later, 14 alleged strike leaders were arrested. This sparked off a protest demonstration by about 2,000 Africans, who were dispersed by police using tear gas. On June 12 workers on the sugar plantations at Big Bend near the Mozambique border struck in support.

On June 13, a battalion of the Gordon Highlanders were flown in from Nairobi, plus 35 police reinforcements from Bechuanaland. Strikes are illegal in Swaziland, unless 21 days' notice is first given the Government, to let them carry out a policy of intimidation, so that a strike can be "killed" before it starts.

On June 17, Gordon Highlanders surrounded African quarters in the mining area and detained African workers. Police also arrested workers from the nearby plantation, who had also struck. The following day Gordon Highlanders surrounded the sugar workers' compounds. Several hundred workers were screened and about 100 were arrested. They were described as "hard core strikers". A plantation spokesman (the man with the whip) is reported as saying the police were sorting out intimidators, troublemakers, and won't-works.

Some African forestry workers also struck and marched in protest. They were all arrested. Colonel Charles Napier of the Gordon Highlanders held a Press conference and stated that the questioning of Africans would have three aims: (1) To find workers willing to return to work and to give them maximum protection; (2) To give protection to those who have not worked because of intimidation; (3) Police, who will be responsible for the questioning will arrest all those who declare that they wish to continue with the illegal strike.

The aim he forgot to mention was the intention to break the strike by military force. The War Office should be renamed "STRIKE BREAKERS INC."

Even the "Guardian" (June 20) had a twinge of conscience about military strike-breakers. In the report headed "Breaking strikes in Swaziland", it describes the actions of the Gordon Highlanders and then, in the last paragraph, adds how four British soldiers saved the life of a Swazi girl by giving their blood. All credit to the soldiers for giving their blood—but the inclusion of the paragraph was just too obvious.

. . . in British Guiana

BRITISH GUIANA, now "British" in little more than name, a small country of 400,000 population, with exports of rice, sugar, timber and minerals, has just witnessed its sternest strike battle, lasting nine weeks. The issue, the workers' claim to remain in their own unions, against the intention of the Government, expressed in a Bill before parliament, to institute State unions o the familiar totalitaria National Labour Front model. Another important issue—the Government's open intention to reduce wages of State employees.

Dr. Jagan, leader of the Stalinist-style ruling party, faced by a solid strike of workers organised in unions affiliated to the Trade Union Council, called on the British Tory Government to send troops to help put down the dispute. Although Jagan is an avowed opponent of the British association, he acted as on a previous occasion, by at once calling for their help. There is a general tendancy for rulers to support one another against any revolt of the subjects and the London Government responded at once, by sending a warship, Royal Marines and the Coldstream Guards.

Undaunted by bayonets and machine guns, the strikers stepped up the struggle. In the manner of the London Committee of 100, they squatted in front of Georgetown's Legislative Assembly. In this, a really big sit-down, workers also sat before Government offices.

Jagan's police used tear gas bombs to break the sit-down (compare the actions of "left wing" politicians with those of Tories in such situations). The strikers picked up many of the bombs and hurled them back at the police.

On Wednesday, June 12, during another sit-down, Premier Jagan drove from the Parliament building through the crowd, on whom his bodyguard fired. Six persons, including a girl of 17 were shot—in a "progressive" manner, of course—and elsewhere police again used tear gas to disperse crowds.

Five days later, Jagan asked the Governor to prorogue Parliament, and this was done—meaning the Bill at issue had been dropped.

FRANCO THREATENS THREE FRENCH ANARCHISTS WITH LONG SENTENCES

FOR THEIR active support to the underground struggle against Franco fascism, three young French libertarians are threatened with long jail sentences by Spanish military "justice". They are ALAIN PECUNIA, aged 17; BERNARD FERRI, 21, and GUY BATTOUX, 20. Sentences of 12 (two terms), 31 and 15 years' imprisonment respectively are being demanded by the State Prosecutor.

Under Franco procedure, the only defence counsel permitted these three comrades will be army officers, nominated by the court, which is a mere rubber-stamp for decisions already taken by the authorities.

Only swift and effective international protests can save these young anti-fascist revolutionaries, who have been tortured by Franco's police since their arrest earlier this year. As we go to Press, a report from Spain indicates that the trial has been postponed until October.

WATCH THAT STOPWATCH

"CLASS war theories are old fashioned," we are told daily. "One's recognition of the class nature of society is due to one's psychopathology, probably caused by being bottle-fed, or something, in infancy" is a favourite theory of underdone amateur trick-cyclists. We would be quite content on low wages and the push-around at work, if only we hadn't been jealous of the pater when we were kids.

Yet in every place of work, large or small, the social and personal conflicts arising from present property relations are soon

apparent, even to the newcomer. The daily crop of "unofficial" strikes, only a few of which hit the newspapers, are one visible sign, among many, of the conflicting pressures.

True, we do not see the sort of lock-out by employers recorded elsewhere in this issue (Pages of Labour History), when a million or more men would be shut out from work for three or six months. But exactly the same property relations as in pre-war days are the foundation of society, in "affluence" and inflation, as they were in deflation and slump. Yet because of a superficial change in circumstances, we are told the leopard has changed his spots and the tiger become a vegetarian.

The comparative boom of post-war years has forced a change of conduct, not of nature, on the employing class. It is not, at present, expedient, or even possible, to lock out a million men. That does not mean an offensive against the wage workers cannot be mounted, simply that the mass bludgeon must temporarily be put aside and another (though not new) weapon used, not on a broad, obvious front, but firm by firm, factory by factory.

The employing class are doing exactly that. The weapon increasingly used is the old stopwatch technique. A man is openly observed, or spied on, by rubber-shoe watchers with paper, pencil and a stopwatch. The time of the quickest man at his quickest moment is noted, altered and written down, the minutes taken are divided into the hours of his working day, and that or even worse is the future task of all. If a man runs a mile in four minutes, he should run 15 miles in an hour.

Figures are rarely produced. Ofter the sheets are covered in meaningless ciphers, the conclusion reached before the stooges softly tread the workshop floor.

This rotten notion of reducing a human being to the condition of a machine has, the boss will tell you, "the support of the trade unions", by which he means the union bureaucracy. This useful endorsement and such simple lies as "It's not going to hurt anyone; nobody will get the sack", breaks down the guard of some foolish men.

It should be obvious that the men who run the stopwatch department must justify their salaries and heavy expenses. Such justification comes only when they have "proved", as they are destined to do, that a third or more of the productive wage workers ought to be on the dole queue.

There is only one answer to this attack. Do not co-operate, no matter what trade union officials, large or small, say. If these creatures come in, we shall go out. Syndicalism alone is putting this forward as a general policy, but happily some workers are quick to see through the trick.

At the end of May, steelworkers at Dorman Long's Britannia Works, Middlesbrough, were puzzled by the creation of a 40ft. high hut on a nearby building. Then they found it was an observation post for "time and motion study" spies. "It's like having Big Brother watching us," said one man. "There are enough people on the ground watching us, without this," said another.

An ultimatum went to the management: "When your men walk into that hut, we march out."

Of course, the trade union bosses stepped in. Jimmy Drinkwater, organiser of the British Iron, Steel and Kindred Trades Association said, "I think we can smooth things over" and talks between management and union officials were held—without benefit of stopwatch.

One feature of this system not generally known, or overlooked, is that once having made a survey and sacked, say, a third of the men, the matter does not end there. After some time, maybe a year, maybe six months, the enemy returns, another survey, another batch of sackings and this is likely to be repeated until the works break down or the men revolt. According to the theory of most of these "systems," this is the infallible method of finding out just how dry a human being can be squeezed of labour power.

So you are going to fight, now or later. Is it better to fight when you are beaten to your knees, or while you are still standing up?

In these times, comparatively favourable to the worker, there is no excuse for not resisting. The last big attempt at "work measurement" was during the depression of the hungry thirties. Yet then, in most unfavourable circumstances, workers resisted. During one such struggle, in 1932, the mill and factory employers of Leicester introduced the Bedaux system, a variety of stopwatch spying. The women workers of Leicester struck work and carried on a successful and gallant struggle against this newer slavery.

The attitude of the union, largely a local union, was different then. It responded to the upsurge of the indignant workers and the strike was an item of discussion at that year's Trades Union Congress, following the General Council's report.

"The effort made by the union is notable for the solidarity displayed by the employees, the majority of whom were girls. The General Council considers that the wonderful loyalty displayed is a tribute to the union and employees concerned." (**TUC Report, 1932,** page 84).

If you can't be a man, have the courage to be a girl.

T. B.

Postbag

I LIKE TO READ Direct Action, even though, of course, I have differences with all papers I've seen. However, I have especial affinities to "Direct Action", Thoreau, Tolstoy, Lao Tze and Gandhi and oppose **every** State, as based on class exploitation and on violence to perpetrate and perpetuate it. I consider that USSR, USA and the States in China and Cuba, though having official traditions of revolutionary beginnings, still and all have the cloven hoof.

Perhaps the greatest contribution to the general struggle of the working class in USA in the past decade or two has been the DIRECT ACTION taken by thousands of persons of part-African heritage in sit-ins, freedom rides, wade-ins, boycots, pickets, etc., to demonstrate their human dignity and, **partly** consciously, to close ranks with their white brothers and sisters for a united working-class struggle for freedom, justice, peace.

In a million ways I believe, the direct action of the Afro-Americans (so-called "Negroes") contributes now and for the future, to working-class strength—even where seemingly just a bourgeois reform.

Fraternally yours,

Stoughton, Mass. **C.H.W.**

* * *

ENCLOSED £1 to your funds, wishing it could be more, but am retired out here with my daughter on my little bit of pension, coming up to 68 years of age now. I joined up in 1921 with the Hammersmith Freedom Group, P. Meacham, B. Kent, G. White and others, had great meeting in the Grove, Hammersmith, with Sylvia Pankhurst as a speaker. I did the selling of "Workers' Dreadnought" and "Freedom" those days, then the Unemployment Movement, when 2,000 people from Fulham and Hammersmith went to Shepherds Bush workhouse for 2s, or all go inside. They could only take six families, so we got the 2s. Not so lucky at Poplar in the great George Lansbury days. Then the great CNT meeting with Emma Goldman, when Tom Brown, Eethel Mannin, R. West spoke and I was in the background as literature seller and steward. I ran a three-room place at Shepherds Bush, where Capt. White and quite a lot of Spanish comrades came, then the IWW with Peter Rollings, Gilbert, Tucker, Stormy Jones and others. What days—only wish I was young again. Anyway, will do what I can in finance and give out news of the revolutionary workers' movement.

Long live the revolutionary workers,

Aveley, Essex. **S.J.L.**

* * *

WE ENJOY reading your militant, fighting paper, Direct Action, and wish you every success and hope there will be more and greater co-operation between the IWMA and the IWW. Here in Seattle we have a damn good IWW hall, centrally located at 315 Yesler Way (the Yesler Way bus going uphill stops in front of the hall and the "Industrial Worker" is on display in the large window facing Yesler Way. Seattle has a population of 575,000.

Seattle, Washington. **GUY B. ASKEW.**

* * *

WE HAVE JUST succeeded in establishing a new branch of the IWW here in San Francisco and intend to concentrate on developing a programme of syndicalist education. Please send listing of publications.

Yours for Industrial Solidarity,

San Francisco, Calif. **Y.J.S.**

* * *

A FEW LINES to show you I am still alive, togther with money order. The article about the workers' fight for free speech by Tom Brown was very good; that is the kind of historical literature which has to be printed and given to young people and it has to be pointed out that whatever little they have gotten today is through hard struggle by the workers and that it is their duty to line up with workers and fight the bureaucrats.

Gothenburg, Sweden. **M.C.**

NEW GENERATION

THE PAPER WITH A PROGRESSIVE OUTLOOK

Obtainable (5½d postfree):
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Leeds 12, Yorks.

TWO SWF COMRADES REPORT FROM SPAIN

International capitalism prepares to pounce

OUR VEHICLE sped South, through the landscape wilderness of white villas belonging to the better-off, smothered in the seclusion of their generous gardens. Here and there the roadside beyond Barcelona provides lush pastures for the growth of hotels, cafes and petrol stations, which were flowering like blossom at the first hint of the tourist floods. This canker of commercialism puts up a frantic fight with agriculture before the route is cleared and the fertile acres take command. Before us the roadway resembles the bone-dry river beds one often encounters in Spain and the descent of dusk betrays the equally inadequate highway lighting.

Under such conditions we concluded our journey at Denia (Costa Blanca), a fishing port 60 miles south of Valencia. The town itself is typical of many resorts having handled the golden egg of tourism. Holiday bungalows and chalets have bitten deep into the countryside, making it all the less accessible. Residences of the rich adorn the mountain slopes, their only visible link with civilisation being the overhead electric supplies, which swing like skipping ropes to their detached abodes. In Spain, both public and domestic electric supplies bear all the ingredients of an electrician's nightmare. The tangled mass of wires and joint boxes, exposed to wind and weather, suspended from treetops, across streets and shabbily decorating the walls of houses, both inside and out, tell a tragic tale. In installing electricity, the cheapest methods have been used and the question of safety ignored. Handling electrical appliances is a hazardous business; shocks are easy to come by and power failures frequent.

Apart from these domestic difficulties, provided you dress correctly for Church and wear suitable beach attire, life in Spain is not uncomfortable—for the visitor. But for the natives, who have to scratch a living and make ends meet, life is tough. Food prices alone have risen 50 per cent since 1956, compared with a 7 per cent increase for the same period in Britain. Meals are strongly supplemented with rice, potatoes and bread, meat being expensive, even by British standards. Pork steak in the local market sets one back 5s. 7d. a lb., beefsteak 5s. 4d. lb., leg of lamb 4s. 7d. and chicken 3s. 4d.

In what amounts to a hand-to-mouth society, the Spanish "trade unions", though legally under the Government's thumb, are the centres of vigorous activity throughout the working week—overshadowed only at weekends by the pubs and churches. Union business is usually performed in a distinguished building on the main street, not as we know it in the back room of a pub. This exalted importance of the "sindicatos" seems to stem, ironically enough, from the days when the Socialist and Anarcho-Syndicalist unions organise dtheir members for the battles which followed the invasion of Spain by the forces of the present Government. Nevertheless, the Anarcho-syndicalists apparently still have influence at branch level and the climate is favouring progress, as shown with the recent setting up of a united front by the clandestine Socialist, Catholic and Anarcho-Syndicalist shadow unions here.

Even the Government had to get its finger out and increase minimum daily wages from 4s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. this year. The prisons are crammed with political offenders and most attempts to improve the workers' lot are labelled "communist" or "anti-Spanish" by the Government Press. Despite this, although the Government can have no sympathy for the sentiments expressed on May 1, it has cannily made May Day (Fiesta de Trabajo) an official holiday.

Spanish industry often takes the form of scattered small-scale factories. Transporting workers to the job, therefore, is no problem, as most of them live on the doorstep. In view of the sad state of the roads, this arrangement is satisfactory. Some houses even have light industrial apparatus and small power machines fitted into a spare room. So great is the decentralisation that home and workplace become one. Women, in particular, busy themselves doing sewing, dressmaking, etc., for their neighbours in the comfort of their own homes. Where we stayed, the women did bookbinding and tailoring—as well as jobs of more direct social content, such as cleaning candlesticks for the Church's religious processions and cutting sanitary towels for the nearby hospital. Should a piece of household equipment break down or require maintenance, there is always some friend who can do the job. Unlike the North European, whose cushy apartment is plunged into darkness because he can't fix a faulty fuse, the Spaniard can usually tackle the shortcomings of his domestic domain.

Among those who work on the soil, are five million peasants without land (landworkers total 5,271,037). The farms are owned by a ruling class which doesn't present itself in person.

The Banks, having captured heavy industry and such industry as doesn't depend on the home market, control the economy. Paper mills, zinc production, cement concerns and much of the metallurgical industry are virtually monopolised at the fingertips of six banks. They also dabble effectively in electric companies, mining, construction, armaments industry, textiles, etc. It might be thought that in Spain, at least, the bank robber serves the public good better than the politician, so great is the division of wealth.

Luxuries have so far failed to make headway in Spain. This is demonstrated by recent figures compiled by the Association of European Finance Houses (Eurofinas). These financiers, in search of promising markets to exploit, depicted Spain as on the rocks as regards the possession of passenger cars, television and radio, etc. According to their statistics, almost twice as many British households have televiion (61 per cent) as those Spanish ones with a radio (34 per cent)—thus reflecting Spain as rock bottom of the West European league of novelties and elaborate appliances, which have become indispensable to citizens of wealthier nations.

How do the people pass the time? Women use up their leisure hours by pursuing handicrafts and habitual church-going, while the men take to the pubs. Although Spain to the outsider has all the appearances of a nation of Holy Joes, only the women are sincerely entranced by the charm of the Church. Such a situation is ripe for homosexuality, lesbianism and prostitution and their growth is further fostered by the sexually segregated schools of the Catholic Church.

Likewise, the Spanish clergy's opposition to contraceptives does nothing to reduce the queues at maternity clinics, but it doesn't prevent shops specialising in such tackle doing a roaring trade with the clients of the pro's. In regions where the pro's line up, local police patrol like umpires, ensuring that the customers cough up. No doubt the brothels pay eagerly towards the rates.

Will improvements in living standards and relaxation of sexual restraints pave the way to the cheap thrills of the gadgets craze and the passionate whims and fads which are the lifeblood of the pop arts and the fortunes of the personalities who ascend and descend therein? Is Spain in danger of becoming a mere extension of the French Riviera? This may depend on whether the agricultural way of life can survive the onslaught of financial investment which is in the offing. International capitalism is only awaiting the word "go" and the World Bank has had designs on Spain for a long time. Food production generally goes against the grain when Big Business is out to make profits and the land is likely to suffer. Foreign investors will shortly be allowed to invest freely and control companies in Spain, according to a bulletin just published by the Government.

Thanks, mates!

THE RESPONSE to our appeal earlier this year, for cash to help cover costs of removing our printing press, etc. from the old Paddington address to new premises at King's Cross, was heartening. Many comrades, listed below and in the May issue of Direct Action, have sent donations and the total received to date is a very welcome £100.16.3d. In addition, we must thank fellow workers of the IWW, for re-publishing extracts from the appeal in the "Industrial Worker".

Heartening though the response has been, however, we are still far from covering expenses, which have totalled almost £200. May we make this final appeal, to those who have not yet replied to our letter, for the balance we urgently need to get out of the red.

Another way to help—use our number, 0856, at the London Co-op.

SWF PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

PRESS FUND, April 18—June 18, 1963

London N.16, E.M. £5; London, "Freie Arbeiter Stimme Group" £5; Cambridge, T.O. 1s 6d; Birmingham, P.McG. 4s; Glendarnel, Argylls, H.D. 9s 9d; London N.W.1, M.L. 8s 6d; Chorley, J.L. 10s; London W.14, E.R. £2; Wollongong, NSW, A.S. £5; Hull, J.W. £2 4s; Anon, £1; Chalfont St. Peter, S.A.L. 8s; Rochdale, L.M. 10s; Edmonton, Alb., W.G. £1 15s; Stockton-on-Tees, L.F. £2; Hyderabad, India, G.O. 10s; Ilford, A.S. 3s; London S.W.14, P.C.O. 10s 6d; Newcastle-on-Tyne, R.R. 5s; Wolverhampton, J.L., J.W., T.H., C.H., F.H. £3; Sandvika, Norway, P.G. £10; Toronto, P.P. £3; London N.22, D.P. ££5; New York, R.G. ££1 1s; New York, R.S.C., P.C. £3 10s; Newcastle-on-Tyne, T.R. 6s; Redhill, R.F. 3s; Knutsford, Chesh., R.G. 4s; Bondi, NSW, R.T. 6s 6d; London W.6, T.P. 4s; Chicago Heights, R.B. 1s; London N.W.10, J.M. £1; Vancouver, J.B.McA. £1 12 10d; Upton, Wyoming, E.F. 7s; Miami, Florida, P.W. 16s; Monterey Park, Calif., E.L. 14s; Rockport, Mass, C.H.W. 7s; Southampton, L.S. £1 10s; Tadworth, Surrey, D.W. 8s 6d; Plymouth, J.M. 4s; Montreal, J.G. £1; Gothenburg, Sweden, M.C. £1; U.S.A., Libertarian League, £3 10 11d; New Zealand, Anon 2s 6d; London W.3, M.S. 5s; Berkeley, Calif., A.G. 7s; Evanston, Ill., J.W. 1s; Montreal, J.G. £1; London W.9, A.R. 10s; London N.W.2, L.T. 10s; London N.16, E.M. 2s 6d; London N.W.6, C.F. 2s 6d; Lomita, Calif., L.L.D. 7s; Poole, D.M. 10s. Total—£71 2 6d.

Community clinics beat medical monopoly

LAST year the medical profession failed to force Saskatchewan government to withdraw its medical care plan. At that time I wrote of community clinics that were being established, to provide services in communities where the doctors refused to practice. In less than a year these Community Health Clinics have increased from five clinics, with 3,000 families in membership, to ten clinics, with 15,000 families. There are now 27 doctors working in these clinics and 27 more clinics are in various stages of development.

Saskatchewan College of Physicians and Surgeons, whose members rightly fear that these patient-owned clinics will break their profitable monopoly in medical care, has been fighting with all the means in its power to destroy them. It has sole legal right to license doctors to practise in the province and has used this to attack the clinics, by refusing to register doctors coming into the province to work in them.

Another means of harassing the clinics is to have doctors who work in them refused local hospital privileges. This means the clinic doctors cannot enter local hospitals to attend their patients; hence the patient has the choice of going to a hospital, often many miles away, that will grant privileges to his doctor, or going to the local anti-medicare doctor who does have privileges at the local hospital.

Normally a doctor has only to prove membership in the College of Physicians and Surgeons to be granted hospital privileges, but doctors working for the clinics have been denied privileges by such devices as requiring them to be sponsored by a doctor who already has hospital privileges. These doctors, of course, refuse to sponsor the clinic doctor so he is barred from the local hospital.

That these attempts to sabotage the Community Clinics by anti-medicare doctors are failing is illustrated by figures given by William M. Harding, vice-president of the Saskatchewan Community Health Services Association. He said that 15,000 families in 36 provincial areas have joined the CHSA community clinic movement. Twenty-seven doctors are working in 10 clinics, 20 others have agreed to join clinic staffs and another 50 are negotiating with the association.

* * *

AS a boy I used to read stories of Mounties who "always got their man". This might still be true today, but sometimes they get the wrong man. Take, for instance, Gordon Harry Knott, now 18, who was discharged from the navy on January 30, 1962 as a security risk. After over a year of effort by Colin Cameron, NDP member of parliament, the government has finally admitted that the RCMP made a mistake.

It appears that an Ernest Leon Knott was a Communist candidate in the 1953 election. The security branch of the RCMP (Canada's secret police) were informed by two "reliable sources" that Gordon Harry Knott was a nephew of Ernest Leon Knott and passed this information on to the navy, who discharged Gordon Harry as a security risk. It now appears that another "reliable" source has informed them that the two are not related and the navy has graciously offered to reinstate Gordon Harry.

The most alarming part of this whole incident is not that the RCMP made a mistake (even the "best" of secret police occasionally make mistakes!) but that nobody questioned the right of the navy to discharge, as a security risk, the nephew of a communist. Is guilt by association to become part of Canadian life, or has it already done so?

* * *

THE power of the forces of reaction was demonstrated recently when Maclean's Magazine (one of Canada's most popular magazines) announced that it was dismissing star columnist Pierre Berton. Mr. Berton wrote an article entitled "Let's stop Hoaxing the Kids about Sex" in the May 18 issue. His theme was that as adult society exploits sex in every way possible—books, films, TV, advertising, etc.—it is not surprising that teenagers make love outside of marriage. Adult society should, therefore, recognise this fact and stop preaching a sexual morality for teenagers that they do not practise themselves. Further adult society should provide young people with birth control advice so that, should they decide to make love, they could avoid unwanted pregnancies.

This article was attacked by churches and women's groups across the country, who urged their members to write letters of protest to the publishers of the magazine. These letters, together with pressure from advertisers, resulted in the dismissal of Pierre Berton. "Fran opinions aren't always welcome in every quarter", he commented—"Maclean's hired me to write pieces in which I expressed opinions on various subjects and when they didn't like the opinions they cut me off".

BILL GREENWOOD.

Direct Action

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

We still say: STAY OUT OF SPAIN!

ARTICLES in our last two issues, supporting the call of the Iberian Council of Liberation for an effective boycott of tourism to fascist Spain and Portugal, have brought the following letter:

> Though it pains me to have to be the cause of dissension, I must write in argument with your article, "Tourists stay out of Spain." If the intention of the CNT is to break the peseta, thus bringing down the government by reducing the Spanish workers to even more poverty than they already have, this is immoral and also a waste of time, for they won't succeed and will only alienate the people that they wish to help. I would like to remind them that empty bellies do not and never will make anarchism, anarchism can only come from a conscious wish for freedom.

In reaffirming our complete support for the tourist boycott, we would make the following points:

1. The appeal has come from a genuine movement of the Spanish and Portuguese working class, fighting the Franco and Salazar regimes inside Spain and Portugal. The boycott is a method of direct action long propagated and practised by revolutionary anarchists and syndicalists.

2. To suggest that the campaign, by undermining Franco's capitalist economy, might cause suffering to the workers does not bear examination. If carried to its logical conclusion, this would preclude direct action against any regime of exploitation anywhere—even an ordinary industrial strike. The workers are on—or near—the breadline anyway and will remain so as long as Franco's fascist regime continues, bolstered by American dollars and the flourishing tourist trade, whose cash supports the parasites, not the workers.

3. To state that the campaign "won't succeed" is fallacious, too. The example of Sweden, where the campaign initiated by our comrades of the SAC, was taken up by the reformist trade unions and Socialist Party, and effectively slashed the number of tourists to a tiny fraction of previous levels, can be followed here. Already one big printing union, by a unanimous vote at its London delegate conference, has decided to support the campaign.

4. Those wishing to spend their holidays in the company of Spaniards can do so at the International Libertarian Youth Camp, which is being held in the Dordogne Valley of France, throughout the month of August. Hundreds of young Spanish libertarians will be among the campers—and the cost will be only a fraction of that involved in going to Spain, even with the lure of a favourable exchange rate that Franco offers to tourists.

EDITORS.

* * *

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.

GLASGOW FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS meet every Thursday evening at 7.30 p.m., 4 Ross Street, Glasgow S.E. (off the Gallowgate).

ROMFORD AND HORNCHURCH ANARCHIST GROUP—for details please contact Chris Rose, 34 Newbury Gardens, Upminster, Essex, or John Chamberlain, 74 Upper Rainham Road, Hornchurch, Essex.

OXFORD ANARCHIST GROUP—For details please contact Gabrielle Charing, Somerville College, Oxford.

BRISTOL FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS—For details please contact the convenor, Ian Vine, 3 Freelands Place, Hotwells, Bristol 8.

LIVERPOOL—Those interested in forming a libertarian discussion group on Merseyside, please contact Vincent Johnson, 43 Millbank, Liverpool 13.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT—Contact Jim Pinkerton, 12 Alt Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

ZENGAKUREN—AND THE ANTI-WAR STRUGGLE

ZENGAKUREN (all Japan Federation of Student Autonomies) has been waging the struggle against war since the resumption of nuclear tests by the USSR in the autumn of 1961. Just before that, Gensuikyo (Japan Council Against A and H Bombs) had passed a resolution at its seventh congress saying: "The first country to begin nuclear tests again should be accused as the enemy of peace, enemy of mankind".

But, faced with the serious situation caused by the Russian tests and the American ones that followed, the leaders of Gensuikyo, dominated by the Socialist Party and Communist Party, fell into utter silence and complete inactivity. The only thing they did was to expel us, Zengakuren—who proposed to organise a protest movement against the nuclear tests of USSR, as well as those of USA—from membership of Gensuikyo.

Thus our struggle against the nuclear tests has had to be carried on independent of, and against the existing leadership of the Japanese peace movement. The Communist Party, especially, accused us most shamelessly, saying, "They are trying to attack the socialist country in criticising USSR nuclear tests", "They are divisionists", "They are the agents of American imperialism". Etc, etc.

Since the autumn of 1961, we have demonstrated repeatedly in front of the embassies of USA and USSR, with more than 10,000 students in Tokyo and about 100,000 throughout the country, under the heavy and fierce police suppression.

Last autumn, when the Russian Government exploded a 50-megaton nuclear bomb, we protested strongly with many demonstrations and assemblies, co-operating with our delegates to the meeting of the International Union of Students in the USSR, who demonstrated on the Red Square in Moscow against the Russian tests.

These struggles of Zengakuren, against USA and USSR nuclear tests, were supported by the people, especially the young workers, who could not find the way to do so within the anti-nuclear test movement, under the influence and domination of the labour bureaucrats and Communist and Socialist Parties. As a result, on October 5 last year, we succeeded in holding "The Anti-War Assembly of Workers and Students" in Tokyo, through co-operation with the young workers, who are acting for the anti-nuclear test movement in the factories. In this meeting 3,000 workers and students assembled and discussed the struggle against N-tests, exchanging their experiences in the workshops and universities. This assembly was prepared independently of the Communist Party, Socialist Party and TU leaders and during the discussion many students and workers mentioned the reactionary role of these people in the anti-N test movement.

It was the first time Japanese students and workers had held an independent meeting with so many participants, for the Japanese peace movement, as well as the labour movement, had long been under the strong influence of the Socialist Party, Communist Party and the conciliatory leaders of the trade unions.

Co-operation with the workers before, during and after this assembly, doubtless made a certain contribution towards changing this situation.

In the protest struggle against American agression on the Cuban people last autumn, we once again confirmed our fundamental principle of anti-war struggle—that is, the only and decisive power to prevent and get rid of war lies neither in counter-attack by nuclear weapons from the other side, nor in diplomatic negotiations in the United Nations, Disarmament Conference, etc., but in the direct action of the people's own power against the existing ruling power, especially in strong combination with industrial actions in international solidarity.

After the struggle against the amendment of the University Control Act by the Government, (that would have meant suppression of the student movement in the universities), in which 5,000 students in Tokyo and 30,000 all over Japan rose up on November 30 and defeated the attempt of the government, we are now fighting against the anchorage of US atomic submarines in Japan and, at the same time, against the "Japan-Korean Talks" between the governments of the two countries, who intend to strengthen their domination over the Japanese and Korean people through military and economic co-operation.

In these two struggles we have had to expose the reactionary and chauvinistic character of the "Anti-America Movement" intended by the Communist Party, from our own viewpoint of the anti-war struggle—international solidarity of the workers and the people.

* * *

Zengakuren is a mass-student organisation, composed of the autonomies of the universities—self-governing bodies of the students. The central committee is elected by the general congress of delegates from each university autonomy across the country. In practice, every action is carried on through discussion, not only in the national organisations, but also in the local organisations and in the autonomies at each university.

Only through these repeated discussions can we organise our struggle. Discussion in the classroom, especially, has had an important part in our movement. Here we can discuss very deeply, with every student participating. Thus our movement is based on the voluntary will of the individual student, after repeated discussions.

As an autonomous student body, we have no particular political line, other than defending the interests of students from every kind of oppression, but through our struggle for nearly 15 years (Zengakuren was first established after World War II), we have reached a fundamental principle. It is that we fight not only the capitalist oppression against us, but also the Stalinist oppression, with the *direct action of the students themselves, seeking solidarity with the working class.

Through the mass student struggle, based on this viewpoint, Zengakuren has been playing an important role in the revolutionary movement of Japan, as a sharp and powerful opponent of the Communist Party, Socialist Party and the existing labour movement leaders.

This is, however, a result of the severe and difficult struggle in these recent years. Formerly, Zengakuren had been under the strong influence of the Communist Party since its establishment, and represented a militant wing within the CP in its anti-imperialist struggle (even forming a critical part of the CP, from the viewpoint of its militancy).

But the period which began after the revolt of the Hungarian proletariat against Stalinist domination in 1956 and continued till the defeat of the "Ampo Struggle" (against the amendment of the Japan-USA Mutual Security Act in 1960) shook the Japanese student movement fundamentally.

The split between Zengakuren's movement and Communist Party policy became sharper and broader year by year, through every struggle. Zengakuren criticism of the Communist Party developed from tactics to strategy. Finally this split became open and clear in the midst of the said "Ampo Struggle", during which the CP insisted on the chauvinistic anti-American nationalist movement and, together with the Socialist Party, dissolved industrial action into petitions and peaceful marches as individual citizens, opposing and attacking the militant demonstrations of Zengakuren.

Picket lines were formed by the CP between demonstrating students and marching workers and between student demonstrations and policemen, facing the students in order to "prevent the provocation of Zengakuren".

All through the "Ampo Struggle", the fundamental break of the militant students (as well as workers) from Stalinism was consistently and perseveringly promoted by the revolutionary workers and students of the National Committee of Japan's Revolutionary Communist League (JRCL-NC), which had been started in 1956, inspired by the Hungarian Revolution, and through theoretical and practical criticism of Stalinism and Trotskyism had attained its basic position on the revolutionary succession and development of Marxism in order to establish the workers' own revolutionary organisation in the factories.

As a result of this struggle, many militant students and workers stopped merely criticising CP tactics and strategy and began to find their way to self-emancipation by overthrowing the existing domination of Stalinists, as well as capitalists, over the working class of the world. Zengakuren, in its general congress during the spring of 1961, discussed the experience of the "Ampo Struggle" and, at the same time, its own Stalinist-dominated history and made a first step towards revolutionary development. Only through these struggles has the anti-war struggle been possible against both the "Socialist" bombs and those of the imperialists.

The significance of the anti-war struggle lies, in our opinion, in the fact that through it we can expose the anti-proletarian character of the USSR today, and the Communist Parties as well, to the students and workers and, most important, that the workers and people should come to be conscious of their own power, which is frozen under the domination of the labour bureaucrats and existing political organisations, to eliminate the cause of war and every kind of suppression over themselves—that is, by overthrowing class society itself.

We, Zengakuren, have been trying to get contact with the workers and, at the same time are emphasising the importance of international solidarity, through the anti-war struggle, for these reasons.

TORU KUROKAWA.

* Note that we in Japan have no exact equivalent for these words, but we often use the words "the struggle directly aimed at the ruling power." It means in the student movement, a strike in the university and militant demonstrations on the streets).

PAGES OF LABOUR HISTORY

INTO BATTLE WITH THE BAZOOKA BANDS

ONE WAY of writing history is to take a social group, in one place and at one time, leaving the broad drama of great events, and treating the subject as a microcosm, letting the minutiae of humble lives interpret the greater story. In thus taking one corner of the Durham coalfield as my subject, I might as well be writing of the coalminers of Scotland, South Wales, Yorkshire or almost anywhere.

When the General Strike of 1926 ended, I lost my job in Coventry. Four weeks after the Strike I decided to go North, but at Coventry station I was told: "We can issue a ticket to Derby only. The railways are so disorganised we cannot guarantee any travel beyond that distance." So, with three tickets and four trains, I reached Newcastle (about 185 miles) in 18 hours. The Government had boasted of their skeleton blackleg service and this was the result, even four weeks later.

From Newcastle I went to live in the small mining town of Birtley, part of the urban district of Chester-le-street in Durham, and found and made a home in Elizabethville (though not in the Congo). Here in 1914 about 600 temporary houses, a school church and hospital had been built for Belgian refugees, hence the title. In 1919 the refugees went home and the government locked the empty buildings and—the village was surrounded by high spiked iron railings—the heavy iron gates, and refused to allow homeless people to occupy the huts. Then, in the course of three days the place was taken over, mostly by ex-soldiers and the gates removed and dropped in a brook. The police were ordered to expel the squatters, who promptly formed a defence force and posted round-the-clock sentries. After a few months, authority decided it was better to accept the fait accompli and charge their unwelcome tenants rent—7s. 9d. a week.

When, on May 21, 1926, the national lock-out of coal-miners took place, Durham had already been out for two weeks on a county issue. That and a long series of single pit strikes had left the strike fund broken (at that time each mining county in England had a separate union, linked in the Miners' Federation of Great Britain). But Durham went, with the rest, solidly into the battle.

How, then, did the miners' families live? There was a national miners' relief fund, which was big, though not nearly as big as the distress it was to relieve. Durham received its share, but there were 120,000 men, plus wives and children to feed, clothe and shelter and most of that had to be found at home. The Guardians gave relief to the strikers, but soon that was drastically curtailed. The Boards were under the control of the Minister of Health, who ordered all relief to single or married able-bodied men to cease. Rlieef, and not very much at that, was to be given only to the wives and children.

The County Council, with a majority of miners, gave free breakfasts to schoolchildren over five years of age. The same body had formed clinics for children under three. Here a fortnightly medical check of the babies was made and a weekly allowance of one pound of full-cream dried milk and a bottle of codliver oil given for each baby. Children's clothes were sold at cost price. The garments were almost half the price the mothers would have paid in the shops and the goods were certainly superior. Most of the work of these clinics was organised locally and done by volunteers.

Then someone discovered that an Education Act allowed the Council to institute primary schools for children between three and five, but without supplying the money for such a venture. So it was put to the Council that they could pass a resolution to establish primary schools for the under-fives, without fixing a date, then give school meals to the primary scholars. This legal hocus-pocus was carried out and the kids got their free meal quite legally.

The local co-operative, with some backing from the CWS, was able to give some credit to the miners' lodges—as always. And always such credit was repaid weekly from the second week of the return to work, until the whole of the debt was paid. There is a strong traditional streak of puritanism in Durham and the repayment of such debts of honour was considered not only just, but sound business—there is always a next time.

The local co-op was small, nothing like the city giants, but like many small co-ops was efficient. It owned the only large store in town and the only cinema, it had meeting rooms and a hall, a barber's shop, a billiards saloon, allotments, a farm producing fresh meat, milk and eggs, with cottages for its labourers.

Rent did not trouble the majority as long as the strike lasted. Many lived in coal companies' houses and a rent strike was automatic. Any attempt at eviction would have been met by a thousand-strong picket. Coal was got by searching the waste heaps which, like young mountains, adorn the coalfield scene.

There was recreation, too. There were village fiestas, without the feasting. A procession led by at least one excellent brass band, a meeting, a sports day with athletic events for children and adults (first prize, a bar of chocolate) and, in the evening, an open-air dance or a concert. There were ladies' football matches and comic football matches between teams of boisterous clowns and comic boxing shows—at times everything comic. But frequent meetings were important, too, for they served the part of a Press.

Rival to the silver bands, some well known, were the bazooka bands, the "bazooka" being a sixpenny instrument one hummed into. About 40 of these, with drums made quite a noise. All the bands—there must have been a few hundred of them in the country, including children's bands—were in costume, a condition being that the costume should not cost a great deal. Sometimes 20 bands would take part in a local carnival, tramping miles to the site. I recall one fat man who, dressed as a sultan in the remains of a bedspread, marched at the head of his "harem" of 40 women, a very proud sultan he looked, and "The Tramps", each wearing a battered bowler and spats, who played their tune, then sang, "We're on the road to anywhere" like a choir. There were bands of Zulu warriors, Red Indians, knights in tincan armour, battalions of Fred Karno's Army, bands of mermaids (the most difficult of the lot) and of pirates (the easiest).

But as that long, warm summer began to fade into autumn, the struggle became grimmer. The first serious blow was made against the Chester-le-street Board of Guardians, who had refused to obey the Government's order to cease relief to single men. The Tory Government deposed th elected Guardians, whos work was unpaid, and put in their place three highly-paid commissioners. The new regime stopped all relief to men, single or married, who might be able to work. The only relief was to wives, 8s. a week, and children, 1s. a week. Thus a family of six received 12s. a week in the form of a food voucher, no money, compared to the dole of 29s. a week. This measure of economic terrorism was applied not only to strikers, but to all unemployed "on relief", miners and other workers, and was continued after the strike for a few years. Following the strike, these people without money were dunned for rent. The only ways to get money were to sell part of their meagre rations, or pick coal from the waste heaps and try to sell it, 4-5s. for a week's hard work, less to the unlucky.

The police acted against the strikers picking coal from the heaps; the men went in larger groups, the police were reinforced. The miners began prospecting for coal in the fields like gold diggers, but this meant spreading out. Pressure increased with the coming of cold weather. A nearby wood of commercial fir, belonging to Lord Lambton, was completely felled and sawn up. A coalowner magistrate, whose large house on the North Road had three tall gateposts of 18in. square oak, found, one morning, that they had been sawn off six inches from the ground.

Then the Notts Miners' Association, led by Labour MP G. A. Spencer, broke away from the Federation and returned to work. Heavy police reinforcements appeared in Durham, the biggest, heaviest constables from distant counties, and attempts were made to re-open strikebound pits. Scarcely a miner, with the exception of a few in South Shields, could be found. The blackleg gangs were token forces of bankrupt shopkeepers and of professional lay-abouts from the town.

The pits were usually closed after three days, sometimes after the first day, and the owners resorted to surprise, but there was always a strong picket awaiting the scabs at the end of their morning shift. Scouts took to following on bicycles the truckloads of police; this in turn led to the police making dummy concentrations, to lure the men to the wrong pits, but there were always enough pickets to go round.

News travels fast in a mining area and even the sound of running feet and a shout would bring out men, boys and women in a mass picket—yes, women pickets, and punching ones, too! It was hard, bitter fighting: usually, before the scabs could be reached, the charge of six-foot-plus, 15-stone policemen swinging batons in arm-breaking, skull-cracking blows had to be met and broken.

The pattern was for the picket to gather early, to prevent a surprise getaway. The police would try to disperse them, but would soon gather about the pit yard, the scabs would wait at the pithead for 2, 3 or 4 hours, then the police would make their big charge and the main battle was on. A prisoner always went to jail for 6-12 months. The wounded were, if possible, carried off by their comrades.

I recall one such episode on the old North Road near Gateshead, where a colliery had "reopened". The Birtley men gathered there. Two tramcars came to pick up the scabs, the police were pushed back, the trolleys pulled off, all windows broken, starting and steering handles removed, one tram derailed and the tramwaymen sent home, all in a few minutes. We hung about for three hours, then half-a-dozen scabs dashed from the back of the yard, down the hilly fields, towards the new North Road.

From the hedges sprang small, slim, youthful figures, who ran like hares after them and did nothing but trip them up, then pounding behind came heavier figures and in two minutes the scabs were unfit for work for a week or two. On the main road the fighting broke out again. At night some of the scabs who lived in Gateshead were visited in their homes; they did not return to the pit, which, in any case, closed after three days.

At another pit, which lasted only one day, a sergeant lifted his baton high to give the signal for a charge and was at once felled by a stone. At another a sergeant (the supers, like the Duke of Plazo Toro, led their armies from the rear) appeared to give an order to charge and rushed into the crowd, while his men stood still. I never found out where he went to.

One surprise nearly succeeded, but a few young fellows, very early in the morning, went to the "reopened" pit, to be charged by treble their number of police and sought refuge on the waste heap. These heaps of loose stone are tricky and one runs up them zigzag fashion. The police tried to run straight up and every man started his own avalanche. The men on top helped these, too, and pelted the constables, but they were marooned in a sea of blue serge. Then, after several hungry hours, they saw columns marching from every village for miles around. Luck now was relieved.

All this time hunger was growing. Over a nearby hill a miner's wife was picking late blackberries. She was hungry, ate some without washing them and died of poisoning a few days later. Said the coroner: "There is no doubt that the poor woman was very hungry."

In December, a national ballot of the miners favoured a return to work, except in Durham, which voted by a big majority to stay out. In the face of a national return, however, the E.C. had to disregard the vote. Out from mid-April to December, the miners went back, the strike was over, but not the fight. Their union was intact, their spirit unbroken.

Yet, apart from the social war, it was a peaceful community, more peaceful and ethical than London W.1, though the police were regarded as an occupying army. A woman or a child could walk alone in the dark, doors were left unlocked. A sociologist, speaking of this and the following period in Durham, said that the absence of crime was the most remarkable feature of the depression and attributed this to "steady living and the steadying influence of the Union." (Muir, **Justice in a Depressed Area**, pp. 32-33). Later, the Pilgrim Report said that there was here little self-pity, but a determination to fight the effects of poverty and unemployment. Yet, it said, 71 per cent had been out of work for 5 years or longer, compared to Liverpool's 23 per cent and Deptford's 3 per cent. (**Men Without Work**, 1938).

It was a consciously working-class community, self-reliant and ready for spontaneous action, best when its leaders were in London. There was, of course, a deal of petty gossip and such in a "Coronation Street" way, but in struggle they were loyal to one another and in some local pit disasters—even unto death.

TOM BROWN

Apprentice training: some suggestions

DUE TO ECONOMIC DEPRESSION in some areas, business at the Government Training Centres (GTC), who re-train unskilled and unemployed workers, is booming. Redundant railwaymen, affluent dole queues and the amount of school-leavers left on the shelf all add up to a glorious future for the training centres. Today the chances are that, under their threat to reform the apprenticeship, these Government establishments will take command in training apprentices for part of their trade education. This scheme of taking lads and schooling them under one roof will be welcomed by employers, who find apprentices a financial burden in the early stages of their instruction. The unions will also be suitably pleased, for the methods adopted by some bosses of acquiring a cheap labour force under cover of the apprenticeship does nothing to maintain the saintly supremacy of the craftsman—and this, after all, is the bread and butter of trade unionism.

The old system of learning a trade on the shop floor has fallen out of favour, because piecework makes it difficult for tradesmen to devote time to teaching the lads. Also many skilled employees are nowadays engaged on repetition work, rehearsing identical operations daily. Under such conditions, if the lads don't move on to fresh jobs at regular intervals, they rapidly fall into a rut. In any event, adequate industrial training by journeymen on the job would tend to hamper the production line and profits would consequently suffer. Most large firms overcome this by creating their own training schools, so that the lads will help, rather than hinder, output when they are let loose in the workshops.

In this respect, the GTC would allow apprentices to find their feet, under the supervision of a Government-designed syllabus. It would be stupid to claim school-leavers don't need preparation before embarking on industrial careers. But if the Government has its way, as a recent White Paper suggests, appretice training, which in its present form may well be on its last legs, is about to be commandeered under a management closely resembling in authoritarian zeal that of the workhouse.

At the Liverpool GTC, an intense effort is made to inflict factory discipline; a team of officials, managers, deputy managers, chief instructors and ordinary instructors are constantly throwing their weight about to enforce the centre rules. Most trainees, being unemployed or no longer physically fit to do their old jobs, think they are getting the chance of a lifetime when first offered a course. They have second thoughts when they see the bars on the windows and the locked gates, to deter those inclined to play hookey. The system of clocking in and out is applied and a late book compiled, offenders being lined up daily, sometimes waiting half-an-hour to be carpeted for being five minutes late. The institutes excel in the production of rules. Dominant decorations of far-fetched rules cover the walls and even the toilet paper is stamped "Government property". In this air of legality, the urge to learn is lost and instructors, for the most part, slide into apathy.

Training is confined to copying another bloke's drawings, or duplicating model jobs of previous trainees on lathe and workbench. Classes and departments are kept isolated from each other, either deliberately, or from lack of imagination on the part of the management. For trainees the only chance of social contact is at meal times or in the urinals. None of the essential co-operation found in industry is applied, the natural course of working from the drawing board and planning assembles and detail diagrams for the fitter or machinist, or wiring schematics for the radio and television engineers has not been attempted.

Canteen dinners are notably poor and usually cold, yet trainees are compelled to pay for them, as it is automatically deducted from their allowance. Despite protests and visits from inspectors, no improvements are made. The management came down like a ton of bricks on a petition organised by draughtsmen trainees—and claimed the draughtsmen were out to make trouble, because none of the other trainees had complained about the food. The matter was not pressed because of fear of termination (sack).

Insofar as the GTC represents a breaking down of the trade-union barriers, they are a good sign. However, there are indications that the trade apprenticeship as we now know it, may be evolving into a form of industrial apprenticeship. With the creation of new building fabrics, it has been suggested that they will render brickies, plasterers and joiners obsolete as trades, to be superceded by the broader occupation of building technician. Anything that relaxes the rigid divisions between trades, so that an apprentice hasn't necessarily shot his lot when he chooses a career at 16, is welcome. But the idea of a State apprenticeship, run by a pack of civil servants, is too much to stomach.

Union chiefs of late have been denouncing the bosses and attaching to them blame for the poorly-trained apprentice. Sir "Bill" Carron called it "criminal" that anyone should employ a boy, then fail to train him. Ted Hill announced that unions should have more control in training apprentices. If the bosses find that schooling apprentices interferes with their profits, why don't the unions offer to do the job? In union ranks are many workmen capable of instructing lads in the practical skills of the trade. It should be within the scope of the TUC to compose industrial courses of the best possible quality.

Bosses could pay their whack, by giving the lads a wage in the normal way. In view of the huge sums the unions have been handing out to the Labour Party election funds, they should be able to afford to finance the teachers. A building to house the scheme could surely be found out of the usual services provided by local authorities for technical education, or even a deserted mill done up would be sufficient. The teachers could be elected at the local branches of the respective unions, after nominations have come from the shop floor. No academic qualifications would be necessary and the blokes on the bench know who is competent with the tools. The lads themselves know who is best suited to train them practically and their theoretical tuition may come from its normal source, the Technical Colleges. It might have been thought that this issue was more vital to the trade unions than lecturing shop stewards on industrial procedures, or how to play fair with the bosses.

BRIAN BAMFORD.

THE BOMB, *Direct Action* and THE STATE

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