

# Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Ford's crack whip  
Call to Young Socialists  
Spain & the Labour Party  
Bulgaria : Cyprus

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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## POSTMEN STILL GET PEANUTS

● WITH THE THREAT OF A GENERAL POSTAL STOPPAGE, THE GOVERNMENT CAME TO TERMS QUICKLY WITH THE UNION, BUT 6½% STILL LEAVES THE POSTMEN LAGGING—AND MORE ACTION COULD HAVE WON THE 10%. HERE IS THE BACKGROUND.

IN the May edition of DA, we reported that Ron Smith had obtained his committee of enquiry, thus stalling off a postal dispute. The committee of enquiry was to interpret a paragraph of "fair comparisons".

The whole set-up smelled fishy then, now it positively

stinks and postmen dislike the stench so much that they have taken direct action at rank-and-file level. It's a proud boast of the Post Office that the last strike was eighteen hundred and something. Surprise! surprise!—the centenary has come round.

An indication of rank-and-file feeling is given by the editorial, "Wages", in *Padd Notes* (July), journal of Padd'ngton No. 1 Branch, UPOW. The article—written before the Government's niggardly repetition of the 4 per cent offer sparked action—ends:

"Finally, has it ever occurred to the members that it has taken ten years for our Union to ask for an inquiry into the interpretation of the Royal Commission's Report? Has it ever occurred to the members why we have lagged behind outside industry for years, even though we the Postmen are the majority grade of our Union? No doubt the members will accuse the General Secretary, but it must be pointed out that we are the Union and not the General Secretary, or the paid Officers of our Union. We elect 19 members on the National Executive Council each year to look after our interests. These 19 members are the majority at any meeting of the National Executive Council and they come from branches of the Union, and should be fully aware of the feelings of the ordinary membership. This brings it to a point where we should ask ourselves, are we being repre-

*continued on page 2, column 1*

## New York dustmen do some muckraking

A HIGH RATE for refuse clearance was negotiated with union workers at the recent New York World Fair. Everyone agreed to pay—except the people running the pavilion of Franco Spain, who demanded a lower rate. So their garbage bins remained full—and the stink around the Franco pavilion soon rivalled that of Spain's fascist regime. After several days, in desperation, the manager of the Spanish exhibit went to the workers, members of the Teamsters' Union, and threatened to dump the rubbish in the Fair's ornamental lake, if it was not removed by them. "OK," came the reply, "you do that, then we'll clean out the lake and smear all the muck right across the front of your pavilion." The threat of direct action paid off—and the representatives of Spanish fascism paid the full rate.

## Campaign to save old miner

AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGN against the execution of 62-year-old retired miner William Joseph Dobbing, of Castleford, Yorkshire, due in Armley Jail, Leeds on August 5, following rejection of his appeal, has been mounted by Yorkshire opponents of capital punishment. Dobbing was sentenced for shooting the woman with whom he had lived for 10 years, when she threatened to marry another man. More than 11,000 signatures have been put to a petition in the Leeds area alone and an all-night vigil outside the jail was held on Friday, July 17, following a march from the Town Hall.

## LONDON SYNDICALIST JAILED FOR ANTI-FRANCO ACTION

FOR SMASHING a plate-glass window at the London offices of the Spanish State Airlines, "Iberia," Adam Nicholson was sentenced to two months' imprisonment at Bow Street magistrates court on July 20—one day after the 28th anniversary of the Spanish workers' revolution against Franco's attempted seizure of power in 1936.

SWF member Nicholson said in evidence that he was concerned at the continued atrocities of the Franco regime and his act was one of solidarity with a people struggling against fascism, particularly with the Asturian miners. Magistrate Barraclough passing sentence, said he was making an example of our comrade, to deter others from similar acts related to events in other countries, "which were becoming far too common." The Spanish Embassy was represented in court.

# THE SCABS CRAWL IN

**MARTELL** and his scabs have started operating a parcel delivery service. They claim that centres will open in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle, Manchester, etc., etc. In *New Daily* July 14, Martell castigates the Government for not bringing in the troops, claiming this is "the negation of government".

In some people's eyes this man is an old-fashioned reactionary who doesn't amount to much. **But no other strike-breaking outfit has so much potential power, both in finance and organisation.** If you ignore him, be sure he won't go away, Goldwater hasn't.

Martell's favourite whipping boy is the print unions, who are to **BALLOT** their membership on a pay offer of a 10 per cent agreement to last for 3½ years. According to Brutus, *New Daily* (1.7.64) this 10 per cent is on top of an already *grossly excessive wage for the work done.* The face-saving

waffle for the employers' *defection*, he claims, would be the setting up "of a high level joint board to consider matters of major importance to the future of the national newspaper industry".

Martell's employees might obey their Master's Voice and stand the three-card trick. Print workers in Fleet St. might not. 3½ per cent stabilisation makes 10 per cent look sick.

## FORD'S CRACK THE WHIP

**T**HE Ford plant at Halewood is on the speed up, so much so that on Monday, July 6, 800 night shift workers refused to stand the pace and were sent home at 2 o'clock in the morning. Some had to stay in the canteen because there was no transport.

The Ford set-up is vicious. Production targets for Ford's, Dagenham, are set in the Ford's factory at Cologne, where union organisation is negligible. The workers come from France, Italy, Spain and Germany on a contract basis and thereby are securely fettered, so one can assume that "the belt" really flies along. Dagenham is expected to do the same and, in turn, Halewood. But now Ford workers at Halewood have demanded revision of production rates.

If machines govern men, then all is lost. This is what has happened in the States; you are too old for the production line at 35 over there, and in some plants in this country 40 is the extreme outside. Mechanisation and automation must be to ease men's burdens, not tear their guts out.

## RAILWAYS BOARD DISAPPOINTED

**T**HE NUR and ASLEF have submitted a wage claim for 10.74 per cent rise, to bring them in line with the Guillebaud report. They claim that since November the railwaymen are £2.2.6d. a week lower than the parity the report recommended. Railway workers are consistently struggling to maintain "parity" and each wage claim they submit is reduced, making the struggle impossible.

The tragedy of the whole business is that transport workers cut each other's throats; each fights its own battles and gets battered to death. To this simple soul, fighting together could achieve far better results—or perhaps each union's negotiators want to win medals, although I must point out medals don't pay bills.

## CONVENOR STILL OUT

**CALUM MACKAY**, sacked convenor of Remington Rand, is still on the stones. The AEU executive will give full support to union members on strike, according to the union's local district secretary. This kind of struggle must be won once and for all.

## ETU WITCH HUNT

**T**HE ETU executive want to implement the "black circular", which bars certain people from holding office in the union. The ETU's EC state that many similar resolutions, calling for a change of rules, have been submitted to head office; they complain of a deliberate plot to dictate policy by the Communist Party.

Cutting through all the chicanery, the EC want to keep out the Communists. The CP members of the ETU want a change of rules, making the annual conference the supreme authority of the union. On the face of it, this looks fair enough, but the reason for this change is to give the CP more influence at Annual Conference and, in that way, control of the union. All this bleating about democracy is bull. It's purely a struggle between right-wing plus ex-CP versus CP—and the non-aligned militants go to the wall. Politics are a messy business and the democratic charade being played by the ETU is worse still.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

## PEANUTS FOR POSTMEN (cont.)

sented, and if so why are we lagging behind in the wages field?

"Perhaps now that we have given the Executive Council the authority to call Industrial Action we may become a more Militant Union, but why did the Executive Council in 1961 oppose the motion to give them the authority to call industrial action? Perhaps they never wanted the responsibility, but after all good leaders must accept the responsibility that goes with the job."

From Wolverhampton, one of the early centres of action, a Syndicalist postman reports:

"The walk-out on Saturday morning (July 11) was a spontaneous one, against the advice of the union branch secretary and at the meeting afterwards the branch officials were in fear of the whole thing getting out of hand and had to declare the stoppage official as far as the branch were concerned, a classic case of leading from behind. The officials called for a strong, disciplined body of men, without any individual or unofficial militant action and a strict adherence to orders from the national union.

"On Sunday, July 12 the postmaster informed the UPOW secretary that he was ordered to display the 'sick pay' notice and so the secretary advised us all to stay out until we had brought about the withdrawal of the notice and the demand for us to sign a paper committing ourselves to compulsory overtime of unlimited duration and alteration of duties. This was achieved and we returned on July 14, with a ban on overtime, which, up to now, has been successful. The official one-day strike on July 9 was 100 per cent. Albert Williams (branch secretary) and others went to the Birmingham demonstration, where all Midlands branch secretaries sat on the platform and were introduced to the audience. Williams was the only one to receive a standing ovation."

The spontaneity of direct rank-and-file action shook everyone rigid, including the UPOW leadership. At the moment of writing, the spirit of compromise is not in the air. The rank-and-file have it in their hands—10½ per cent or nothing. 10½ per cent will raise the basic wage to the princely sum of £14.9.6d. (top grade). Outside London where OT is unobtainable, take-home pay will be about £13.

If a further committee of enquiry is needed, it should be for the sole purpose of explaining to postmen's wives how to bring up a family on £13 per week. Security of employment is one thing; security in comparative poverty is another.

# Young Socialists: Resist call-up threat!

THE YOUNG SOCIALIST movement, currently proving so embarrassing to the Labour Party, was launched in 1959. From the very start its organisation was based on two contradictory aims. First, the Labour Party wanted a youth group interested in and prepared to work for the party's aims; second, elaborate precautions were taken in case the interest of the YS in the Labour Party was ever to become such that they would demand a greater say in the running of the party.

The YS official paper, "New Advance", was never at any time under the control of the Young Socialists themselves; instead, it was answerable to the Party executive. Regional YS conferences were forbidden to discuss Party policy. Unauthorised visits of one YS group to another were forbidden.

As can be imagined, as time passed the discontent with bureaucratic stifling of discussion grew. This was by no means the only reason for unrest. In 1959, the Labour Party lost the third election running. In 1960, the Party leadership demonstrated its complete contempt for democratic processes by its disregard of the unilateralist vote at the party conference. 1963 was to see Labour's climb-down on the Immigration Act and the surrender of the traditional Labour left to Wilson.

It was against this background that the Trotskyists became prominent in the YS. To those bored by routine party work, disillusioned by the futility of traditional left politics, or gagged by party regulations, the Trots offered the Young Socialists a new and dramatic series of aims and perspectives. Capitalism was in its death agony. The brunt of the crisis of capitalism fell on the young workers. The task of the Young Socialists was to seize the leadership of the youth and deal capitalism its death blow.

The Labour leadership was not long in replying. The expulsions began, branches of the YS were closed down (not invariably for Trotskyism; one South London YS was closed because it displayed its banner on the Aldermaston March) and "Keep Left", the Trot YS paper was proscribed.

As 1964 opened, the conflict within the YS was coming more and more into the open. In February, the YS held a youth unemployment lobby of Parliament. Terrified that

this might damage the party image in election year, the leadership gave it as little publicity as possible. On the day of the lobby, the Young Socialists trooped into the Central Hall, listened to some stupefyingly boring speeches by Labour MP's, failed to get any answer to questions on nationalisation, etc., and at about 7 o'clock emptied the hall and loped off to the nearby "Keep Left" meeting, leaving the MP's to fulminate alone.

The next month came the YS conference. Considerable publicity was given in the national press to calls for wide-spread nationalisation and the booing of Bessie Braddock. Reg Underhill, the party's youth officer, sent a special confidential report to the party executive, suggesting organisational changes to put the party hacks more firmly in the saddle of the YS. Somehow the Trots got hold of the report and splashed it for all to see across the May "Keep Left".

Shortly afterwards the present crisis broke. Following the Whitsun seaside disturbances, the Trots decided that the bosses, afraid of the revolutionary youth, had fomented the whole "mods and rockers" troubles to divide the workers ("Keep Left", June 1964). Streatham YS (who e territory lay close to Gerry Healy's Clapham HQ) distributed leaflets protesting against the sentences at Margate, only to have them confiscated by the local police, who conveyed them to the local Labour Party, who thereupon closed down the local YS.

At the same time, YS national chairman John Robertson (chiefly notable for his advice to defend the Soviet Union at the YS Conference) was expelled by the party executive, fearful that the YS could wreck the "responsible" Wilson image.

In brief that is the YS story. Genuine frustration and grievances in the YS exploited by yet another pseudo-revolutionary sect. For this is, of course, all the Trots amount to. For all their bold phrases about "Not a man for the bosses' army", the Trot solution ("Keep Left", May 1964) to the call-up is to "go in the Army in order to wreck it" (and while doing so, presumably to shoot the "woes" whenever ordered?). Not surprising, really. If they decided on a real campaign to resist conscription, they would get themselves mixed up with some of those terrible people who are against conscription in Russia as well. Could give the youth some funny ideas . . .

Finally, it might be as well to close by reminding all Young Socialists that if conscription returns, the Libertarian movement will not be content with merely passing resolutions against it. We shall resist. And, if you see through the Trots' slogans and join in, this resistance will be that much bigger.

It might also be as well to remind all libertarians that the Trot influence in the YS grew because the Trots put over *their* answer to bureaucratic sell-outs and gaggings. What are we doing? Can we really say we are doing our best to put over our ideas to all Young Socialists and others?

ROGER SANDELL.

## *Irish itinerants stand firm behind barricades*

HERE on the home front, the itinerants are gathered together in stronger force than ever before. The two adjoining fields (outside Dublin) we're occupying look well filled with the forty-odd caravans and tents. One entrance has been blocked with a solid barricade, allowing only prams and bicycles through, while the others can be filled at short notice from our stocks of scrap metal and general junk. I don't think a bulldozer could shift the barricade we've built. Some families are now erecting shacks again.

Everybody is feeling good about the amount of backing we're getting and I show round and read out the letters coming in from France, Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Canada and several other countries, besides England and Scotland . . . It's the amount of protest abroad which will most impress the authorities.

GRATTAN PUXON

## **The last and deadliest cut**

A TIME AND MOTION EXPERT, one who shows employers how to cut the labour force, died suddenly. At the funeral, attended by remarkably few mourners, the coffin was carried by four professional bearers. Suddenly the lid flew off, the corpse sat up, looked at the bearers with a frown, then turned to the undertaker and shouted, "If you put this thing on wheels you could fire three of these men!"

# Direct Action

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## SPAIN AND THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

**T**HE reaction of the Labour leadership to the news of the frigates deal with Franco provides yet another instance of the double game that Transport House has been playing for decades.

While denouncing military aid to a Fascist regime, Wilson, Gordon Walker and others have been careful to point out at the same time that Franco has never renounced his claim to Gibraltar. In this way they are sure of satisfying the principled elements within the Party and thus maintaining the myth that democratic socialism is Labour's policy. And at the same time they reassure the British capitalist class, together with the chauvinistic sections of the electorate, that the Labour Party presents a respectable and responsible alternative to the Tories for running British capitalism.

The nearest to wholehearted opposition to Spanish Fascism that the Labour leadership has ever come was on the outbreak of the military uprising in July 1936 when Morrison declared, "To stand aside is treason." At the Party conference in October that year Morrison said not a word during the debate on Spain and the phoney legalism of non-intervention advocated by Attlee and Bevin, won the day. By July, 1937, the Party was denouncing non-intervention as "a policy foredoomed to failure," but it never rendered anything more than piecemeal relief to the anti-Fascists. As one delegate told the conference in 1936, "You are beggared of a policy, with nothing to offer but bandages and cigarettes."

When Labour came to power, payment for even the bandages and cigarettes was exacted many times over. As participants in the wartime Coalition the Labour leaders were parties to the internment of 226 Spanish anti-Fascists at Hall o' the Hill, Chorley, Lancashire. These men had been brought from France where they had been conscripted by the Nazis into a forced-labour organisation. Despite the suicide of one man and the insanity of others the post-war Labour Government again took refuge in legality, claiming that the men were prisoners-of-war. They were not all released until late 1946, and only then after a prolonged public campaign.

In 1949 the Labour Government deported back to Spain, and to imprisonment, torture, and death at the hands of Franco's thugs, 136 Spanish anti-Fascists who had escaped by boat to this country. Three years later, in the same month as there took place in Spain massive demonstrations and strikes against the Franco regime, the Labour Government welcomed to the Court of St. James's Franco's first ambassador to Britain.

By welcoming Portugal into NATO in 1949 the Labour

Government put the seal of respectability on a Fascist regime even older than that of Spain and one of Franco's principal supports. Today the Labour Party is as firmly committed as ever to the Portuguese alliance. It is suggested that Franco himself intends to apply to enter NATO with an up-to-date Navy, his army being too heavily occupied with internal repression. Whether he is admitted or not he is already the beneficiary of many millions of dollars' rent for American airbases and the Polaris base at Rota, a situation with which the Labour Party is completely acquiescent.

Labour's record over Spanish Fascism illustrates the betrayal of principle and class collaboration that are the inevitable outcome of all attempts to take parliamentary road to socialism. The role of Parliament is to patch up social injustices or to disperse them into hot air, instead of resolving them through positive action. Parliament, like all the other political institutions of the ruling class, has been forged on the anvil of centuries of class struggle and will survive for centuries more unless the workers realise this. Direct action, and direct action alone, is their only weapon, but it lies, as always, already in their hands.

When the workers of Britain decide to help their Spanish brothers in the same way that their Spanish brothers are helping themselves, they will have struck a great blow, not only against Franco, but for international working-class solidarity and therefore for their own cause.

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## GROUP NOTICES

**LONDON SWF GROUP:** Open meetings every Friday, except the first one in each month, at the Lucas Arms, 245 Grays Inn Road, WC1 (5 min Kings Cross Station) at 8 pm.

**OPEN-AIR—SUNDAYS, HYDE PARK. 3 PM**

**BRISTOL:** Enquiries c/o Martin Howells, 7 Richmond Dale, Clifton, Bristol 8.

**DUNDEE:** Contact Roddy Cameron, c/o Stevenson, 44 Peddie St., Dundee.

**GLASGOW:** Contact Ron Alexander, c/o Kennedy, 112 Glenkirk Drive, Glasgow W.5.

**LIVERPOOL:** Contact Vincent Johnson, 43 Milbank, Liverpool 13.

**EDINBURGH ANARCHIST GROUP:** Contact Douglas Truman, 13 Northumberland St, Edinburgh 3.

**WITNEY—Meetings 1st Friday of each month. Contact LAURENS OTTER, 5 New Yatt Rd, North Leigh, near Witney, Oxon.**

**CAMBRIDGE ANARCHIST GROUP.** Meets Tuesdays (in terms), 95 Queens. Details, town and gown, Adrian Cunningham, 3, North Cottages, Trumpington Road, Cambridge.

**TUNBRIDGE WELLS ANARCHIST GROUP** meets on 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month at 8 p.m. at 4, Mount Zion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

**TYNESIDE ANARCHIST FEDERATION:** Contact Dave Wallace, 64 Belford Ave., Horsly Hill, S. Shields, Co. Durham.

**BIRMINGHAM AND W. MIDLANDS.** Contact Peter Neville, 12 South Grove, Erdington, Birmingham 23.

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

**NOTING HILL ANARCHIST GROUP:** Contact the Secretary, 5 Colville Houses, W11. Open meeting 1st Friday each month, 8 pm, British Oak, Westbourne Park Rd, W2.

**NEW FOREST ANARCHIST GROUP:** Contact Ken Parkin, Old Tea House, Brockenhurst, Hants.

**ROMFORD AND HORNCHURCH ANARCHIST GROUP:** Contact Chris Rose, 34 Newbury Gardens, Upminster, or John Chamberlain, 19 Chestnut Glen, Hornchurch.

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Cheques and p.o.'s payable to Mark Hendy.

# SCHOOL FOR SYNDICALISM

ONE'S FIRST DAY at work is an important day. In my case it was also a very long day. Hurrying along the damp, dark streets at 5.30 on a winter's morning, with a tin tea can and a parcel of bread (there were few canteens at that time), I felt like a workman, though a very small one. The first world war was still raging and my first inside view of the factory was of rows of 60-pounder and 18-pounder field guns, anti-aircraft and mountain guns, tanks and anti-sub artillery, then lines of machines turning gun barrels or milling breech blocks.

It was noisy, bewildering and rather threatening, but youth is buoyant and I soon adapted myself to my new environment. I soon learned that some persons were jolly, some indifferent and some aggressive. Many of the latter wore bowler hats and thick watch chains, one was known as Simon Legree. The jolly men taught me that when you are pushed, you push back. I was an apt pupil. I was too small to do any actual heaving, but, like most of the lads, developed a form of public relations which appeared to be based on ju-jitsu.

But it wasn't always like that. There was one foreman who claimed he remembered the days when his like were allowed to strike apprentices. One day he found six of his boys warming themselves in the smithy. Taking a hazel rod from a pickle tank, the proverbial "rod in pickle," he crept up behind the boys and lashed out at them. Though taken by surprise, they quickly recovered and four of them held him down while two lashed him with the hazels, to the sound of his yells and the laughter of the smiths.

I soon realised that the new life I had entered was a kind of social war, the scene suitably furnished by the ever-present artillery. On the one side were the overseers, the lowest agents of the invisible but powerful enemy, the informers, the anti-unionists, the few who hankered after being scabs and who whispered, "Don't trust unions and such like, keep your nose clean and you'll get on," and the management. Facing them, bold and contemptuous, were our people. I was learning sociology without books.

I soon went on to learn that there were issues in this conflict that a man or a small group could not win by themselves and men turned to "the Union." This I thought I understood. I had seen the pictorial banners of Northumberland and Durham miners, the favourite picture showing a boy trying in vain to break a bundle of about a score of sticks and an old man breaking his sticks one at a time. The slogan beneath proclaimed, "United we stand, divided we fall," or "Unity is Strength."

But while we had one enemy, the employer, backed by "the authorities," and we were one in circumstance and purpose, "the Union" was really many unions. The craftsmen had their own unions, each craft at least one separate union, the engineers several unions for one craft, and the "semi-skilled" machinists their union. The "unskilled," after generations of being shut out, were now in several general unions. But women, now nearly 50 per cent of the labour

force, were not allowed to join any union and had to form one for themselves. Only some of the draughtsmen were members of a union and the clerks disdained to be organised, accepting a lower wage in return for an intangible "dignity."

Even worse, the machinery of the trade unions, like the Labour Party, had become part of the war machine, giving away all hard-won rights. My school-bred and newspaper-fed patriotism was cracking at the edges, for the class enemy had not suspended his predation. What had happened to the banner and slogans of unity?

But "Union" was more than officers and organisation, it was an idea. Almost within living memory, men and women had died on the scaffold for that idea and still men knew that Union meant bread, human dignity and the hope of liberty. War or no war, the social struggle went on. I learnt two new terms, Syndicalism and Revolutionary Industrial Unionism. Soon they seemed to mean the same thing, though I was some time in understanding them. The first had a 1789 sound, I thought, like the Committee of Public Safety, but the latter seemed apt to engineering.

Later, when I became involved, I found that the new ideas stemmed from European Syndicalism and the IWW, the latter having small groups in Britain and support from Wobbly seamen from the US and Australia. The Socialist Labour Party also advocated Industrial Unionism, having been affiliated to the IWW, which they left after disagreeing with the "without affiliation to a political party" clause. The Syndicalist, like the IWW groups, were small, but the influence of all these groupings was enormously greater than their numbers would seem to justify. Little wonder that the Government and the employers imagined a vast and wealthy organisation, plotting against the powers that be. But a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

I recently read in *Anarchy* the pontifical statement, "it seems to me that Malatesta's main contentions still hold good that those anarchists who are prepared to act in the industrial sphere should work within the existing unions rather than propagate the idea of a new union movement." (*Anarchy* 40, p. 173). Unfortunately, while many of us knew of Tom Mann, James Connolly and Larkin, no one knew about Malatesta and his alleged advice. A man without a pope is apt to be a pragmatist, so these grimy workers just did the best they knew—and very effective it was.

Firstly, the trade unions, through their officials, had gone over completely to the side of the State at war, and were as much a part of the war machine as were the Brigade of Guards or the Royal Navy. With a stroke of the pen, all the rights won by a century of hard fighting were signed away. While rents and prices soared, there was to be no wage increase. Safety measures were swept away, a working week of more than 66½ hours was compulsory, industrial conscription was agreed to by the unions, with penal measures against the rebellious or weary. Military conscription reinforced this dictatorship. Even the Webbs had to admit, "the individual workman realised that the penalty for any failure of implicit obedience to the foreman might be instant relegation to the trenches." (*History of Trade Unionism*, p. 639).

In return, the employers' war profits were to be limited (to a certain highly-inflated standard), but this "Munitions Levy" was never enforced and within a year was formally abolished.

On the Clyde, factory committees of Syndicalist and IWW form were created and, because their ideas suited the needs of the hour, spread with rapidity to Tyneside, the Mersey, the Midlands and throughout the land. Life would not wait

## How Labour Governed, 1945-1951

Forgotten? Too young to remember? This pamphlet is essential reading in election year, for voters and anti-voters. It describes how, in six years, and despite an overwhelming Parliamentary majority for nearly five of them, the post-war Labour Governments betrayed every socialist principle.

Price 6d. a copy, plus postage.

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until the paralytic unions resumed business, "after the war."

The "new union movement" overcame at one bound the hundredfold divisions of the workers. All crafts, the semi-skilled and unskilled, the boys and the women, were drawn together in frequent mass meetings. They elected and withdrew their delegates, now known as shop stewards, whenever necessary. They acted as one force. In the factory in which I worked were a number of Belgian workers; they, too, joined in, as did a body of soldiers who, because of their skill, had been drafted to the works.

We were now powerful. We struck work, we demonstrated, we hoisted our wages and curbed the overseers. State and employers consulted our delegates, after threats of prison had failed. The impetus of this movement has lasted until this day. Now every worker knows the value of a workshop organisation to his daily bread. It remains for us to broaden the ideas of this valuable experience. Our factory movement may not have been pure enough for coffee-bar revolutionaries, but we answered the plain man's question: "Does it work?"

TOM BROWN

## HUNGARY '56

HUNGARY '56. By Andy Anderson, 3s. 6d. (Solidarity, 197 King's Cross Road, London WC1).

THIS is a valuable pamphlet, perhaps one should say book, of 48 double-column pages of small type. Andy Anderson has taken a great deal of care in collecting valuable information on the Hungarian uprising against the Communist quisling government and the fight against the Russian Army, which moved in to restore the defeated native Communists. There is good solid reading here.

I was so pleased to have so many known facts gathered together in such a volume that I have hesitated to express discontent at other parts of this work, but this one must do. The valuable history of the uprising is interlarded, liberally sprinkled throughout, by quotations from Marx, Engels and Lenin in heavy type. A stranger to the subject might think that this trio were the heroes or inspirers of the Hungarian Revolution, which was, surely, a revolt against the corporeal existence of Marxism and Leninism. In any case, it is all irrelevant.

I might have thought it sarcasm or irony, had I not read the introduction, with a strange thesis on East-West relations before and during the 1939-45 war, and such statements as "Prior to 1939 all the powerful capitalist nations, including Hitler's Germany, were agreed that the USSR was the real villain on the stage." Is that why Britain and France went to war against Germany, instead of Russia? This was regular Stalinist propaganda of pre-1941 years. The British and American capitalist camp at that time certainly believed that Germany was the chief menace.

Speaking of the alliance of Russia and the West, the writer refers to it as "coloured by the fond hope that Russia and Germany would mutually annihilate one another . . . They had reckoned without the heroic resistance of the Russian people against German fascism."

This is typical Stalinist propaganda of the post-1945 period. A pity to spoil the book by such irrelevance.

T.B.

## A.I.T.

Monthly paper of the IWMA, in French and Spanish.

July issue includes articles on the Spanish Revolution, Latin America, Direct Action in France, Nehru, etc.

9d. from SWF, 34 Cumberland Rd., London, E.17.

## Rachmanism in Tunbridge Wells

THE title of this article is also that of the leading article in *Tenants' Voice*, a newspaper produced by the Tunbridge Wells Tenants' Association, the first issue of which appeared recently. The Association was formed by members of the TW Committee of 100 earlier this year, shortly after a successful anti-eviction demonstration held by the Committee in January (see DIRECT ACTION, February).

Our Association aims to encourage tenants to fight landlordism, whether the landlord is the local council or a private person, if they are being victimised. We hope it will develop to the point where the town can be split into areas, each with its autonomous tenants' cell, federated into the Association as a whole.

The newspaper exists to encourage people to join the struggle and to publish relevant truths about racketeers; our first issue has drawn blood and we are threatened with a libel suit. Templar, Thompson and Passmore, a firm of local solicitors, say we have libelled their clients, DVD Development Company. The solicitors wouldn't speak about the Company, whose address is 52 Woodbury Park Road—a nursing home, where at first knowledge of the firm was denied, though later acknowledged.

Briefly, here is what the firm has done. An old woman, her son and his wife, were persuaded to move—by the promise of £100, free removals, and a guarantee of their previous rent of £1 a week being continued—from their old house to another which they were told would be new. They were persuaded by two men, Messrs. Hughes and Benton, who got them to acquiesce by constantly badgering the old lady, who held the lease. The men wanted the old house to sell it; they promised the family would not have to move from the new one.

The new house, far from new, has a cellar full of water, gaps between the walls and floors, and smells like a sewer, as the water should have gone down the drain. It has been sold, contrary to the promises of Hughes and Benton, to the DVD company, who wish to demolish it and have secured a writ for the eviction of the family.

The rent was not maintained at £1, but raised to £3 as soon as the family moved in; they have not had the £100—they have no promise in writing—and their furniture was moved in a handcart and heavily damaged. Messrs. Hughes and Benton, whose addresses we have, are not available when we call. We have not been able even to find who the DVD Company consists of.

That is a summary of the first story in *Tenants' Voice*; we believe that if there is any error in it, we have probably understated the facts.

Other articles describe more fully the aims of our organisation and the methods we intend to employ, which are simply those which the tenants themselves wish to use: the housing record of the Town Council, an important landlord, listing the Council evictions and orders of distraint, etc., throughout 1963, the result of work undertaken by our research group, and the research group's findings on the national housing situation, which should be of interest to all readers of *Direct Action*.

*Tenants' Voice* costs 6d., available either from me at 4 Mount Zion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, or the TW Tenants' Association, 1 Greenway, Tunbridge Wells.

JES D. GILBERT-ROLFE.

# CYPRUS: A HISTORY OF SERFDOM

**I**N 1500 BC we find Cyprus sweating under the lash of King Tethmosis III of Egypt, its workers yielding tribute of chariots, horses, copper and other goods for the élite of the Nile. When Cambyses of Persia took Egypt, Cyprus went with it, and her people were squeezed a bit more to give their oil, cattle and timber for the pleasure of his Court. Later, Greek, Phoenician and Macedonian miners and farmers immigrated to the island and settled there.

In 58 BC the Roman "bailiff" Porcius Cato soaked the land, in return for a loan which Ptolemy Auletes had not paid up in time! Later, bands of Arabs pillaged the island and destroyed the pleasure city of Salamis, which was then run on Libertarian lines.

Richard I of England, bent on Christianising the place, put all "those" to the sword who refused to kiss his cross, but he was not above selling Cyprus to the Knights Templars, who soon sold it again, at a profit, to Guy de Lusignan, titular King of Jerusalem.

In 1570, Selem II, a zealous Turk, landed at night with 60,000 warriors and captured the fruity isle. In 1878, Turkey leased the place to Britain—just as one would a shop or flat—in return for a protective alliance against Russia. Tribute, which fell due to the Turks, was paid by increasing the taxes of the Cypriots—a simple economic device not appreciated by Cypriot workers. The Greek Cypriots knew, however, that the Ionian Islands had recently been returned to Greece and were "egged on" to believe that they, too, would have their wish of *Enosis* fulfilled.

During World War I, Britain annexed Cyprus and offered the land, together with its half-million inhabitants, as a gift to Greece, if she would assist Serbia. The offer was made in 1915, but, as Greece did not join the Allies until two years later, was not implemented.

Between the two World Wars the people of Cyprus felt neglected. As Britain had strong bases in Egypt, there was no driving force to keep the island abreast of the times. The legislative council became restive as proposal after proposal

was turned down by the British members. In 1931, because rioters burnt down the Governor's House, the Constitution was abolished (for some thirty years) and its leaders, the elected Bishops, exiled.

Inspired by the post-war wave of successfully forceful liberation movements in neighbouring Israel, Iraq and Egypt, the Cypriots became restive. With the loss of these bases—during which time Cyprus became a military transit camp—the inhabitants watched the growth of the British military base in Cyprus. The left-wing "Cyprus Peace Committee" mounted huge demonstrations outside the Base and Turkish Cypriots were enlisted as auxiliary policemen and used to crush their Greek Cypriot brothers. In this way, the already existing gulf between the sections, religious, cultural and otherwise, was perhaps unbridgeably widened. AKEL—a Communist-aligned party, perhaps representing some 35 per cent of the Greek Cypriots—made demands for self-determination and 136 of its members were imprisoned and AKEL and its newspapers were banned.

It was the fanatically right-wing EOKA members, led by General George Grivas, who decided to meet the British with "terror" and the subsequent tragic murder of men, women and children in the streets is recent history. No doubt few of the British victims really knew what the fighting was all about.

At this time, Archbishop Makarios was serving his apprenticeship for Premiership (like Nehru, Nkrumah and Keayatta before him) in jail!

As the loss of life and suffering of this tragic period grew, Britain, Greece and Turkey—but not the Cypriots—prepared the Zurich and London Agreements, on which the Cypriot Constitution was formed. No doubt it was formulated to give the Turkish minority as many "safeguards" as possible, but from the beginning it proved unacceptable to the Greek Cypriots.

Reasons for its unpopularity are given as follows: the Turkish Vice-President, representing only 18.5 per cent of the people, could veto and stop any Cabinet decision arrived at by the majority. Allocation of jobs in the Government were felt to be out of proportion, for example 30 per cent of the Civil Servants, 30 per cent of the Police force and 40 per cent of the Armed Forces had to be Turks.

Thus, soon after the British left the Island, there were serious rifts between the communities. The Turkish Cypriots felt let down, their only protection being a paper Agreement, which was most unpopular with their Greek brothers. Once again tempers waxed hot and, not being discouraged by their religious leaders, blood began to flow. Extremists on both sides took the lead, Mosques, homes and Churches were pillaged and burnt down and hundreds of hostages murdered in cold blood.

As self-seeking politicians, with varying interests and loyalties to their respective countries, flew from capital to capital, the terrified population withdrew, as far as possible, behind the "Green line" to take pot shots at each other. While the Big Powers meddle, the Cypriot peasants and workers flee from their homes and the farms, cattle, orchards, vineyards and workshops rot in neglect.

The solution? Let the peasants and workers sit together and work out their problems, without interference from military, political, religious and foreign interests.

TED JACKSON

## LITERATURE

"Direct Action" pamphlets:—

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

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**GROUP NOTICE—SOUTHALL:** Contact Roger Sandell,  
58, Burns Ave., Southall, Midux.

# Bulgarian forced labour camps re-opened

WESTERN public opinion has for some years been subjected to clever propaganda about de-Stalinisation and so-called "liberalisation" in the Soviet Union and "Peoples' Democracies". It is easy to be deceived about these countries.

In fact, the posthumous condemnation of Stalin is important—but this event must be explained. Change has not come about as a result of the liberalism of Krushchev and the Russian rulers. The pressure of the masses—although there are no legal means for their expression and they are not at present capable of achieving a revolution—finds many outlets, through literature, among the youth, in the unions and even inside the Party itself.

This is the final proof that the people cannot be overcome—that however brutal and skilful a dictatorship, it is powerless when faced by the resistance of the masses. But change does not always mean liberalisation. The burden of the past weighs on the present: the repressive instruments of dictatorship can always tempt Stalin's heirs to return to Stalinism, while continuing to condemn the "personality cult". This is happening in Bulgaria today.

According to our most recent information, forced labour camps have again been introduced in Bulgaria. This time they are intended particularly for Trotskyists and anarchists. It appears that the reasons why the leaders of the Bulgarian Communist Party have taken these repressive measures are

linked with the Moscow-Pekin conflict: they are afraid that the Chinese will gain influence among their members.

Ten anarchist militants have recently been arrested and interrogated about imaginary attacks on the regime. This is the last word in absurdity, to assume that the anarchists could involve themselves in family quarrels and adopt the cause of the Chinese communists.

Since the militants inside Bulgaria are unable to make a public denial of this strange charge, we are authorised to declare in the name of all Bulgarian anarchists—both inside and outside the country—that they have no preference for either of these dictatorships: they are in no way involved in this conflict between communists, which is primarily a conflict between States.

We bring this to the notice of our comrades, opponents of fascism and lovers of freedom, all over the world; we appeal to them urgently to protest to the diplomatic representatives of Bulgaria demanding an end to forced labour camps, established on the State farms, where many anarchists, Trotskyists, opponents of the regime—or considered as such—including a number of communists, are interned.

We are informed, at going to press, that a new group of 200 people have been interned.

Committee for Aid to Bulgarian Anti-Fascists.

EXTRACT REPRINTED FROM "AIT" JUNE.

## AN OPEN LETTER TO THE LABOUR LEADER

Dear Harold,

You are certainly keeping things at concert pitch—hardly a day now without you're in some top-level crisis. I just don't know how we're going to stand this excitement until October. Councillor Blott, our local chairman, looks like he'll have a stroke before long, though I myself think it will be more Bro. Grundiman's fault than yours. The way that Grundiman keeps up his carping and his derogatory remarks! And in the face of your wonderful pre-election achievements . . . ah, well . . .

Anyway, Harold, we're all very proud of you. When we get back to the lounge at the Lord Palmerston, after tramping up and down the Council flats on our canvassing, we sit and watch you performing on the television and we know it's all been worth it. It looked like a disaster when ITV went off for a week, but there—you fixed it in no time. Of course, we saw you on BBC, but you really need both channels going full whack to do yourself justice.

Just one thing, though, while we're on the point. I warned you last time I wrote to keep the Shadowy Cabinet boys off the telly and to keep on hogging it all to yourself and what happened? You let George Brown go on with Heath and Jo Grimond and it looks like we'll never hear the end of it. Everyone's still laughing about it. Grundiman has been going around, mimicking George, calling us all "Dear boy" ever since in the most irritating way, and he starts every sentence with "But-but-but-but-but". And look how George put you in about nationalisation. Now what are you going to do when you want to nationalise something quickly? You'll have to say that George was "emotionally disturbed" like that night he talked about Kennedy. You follow my suggestions, Harold, and you won't go far wrong.

I was a bit worried about that picture of you chewing sweets in the Royal Box with Princess Marina and Lady Churchill. Naturally, we're proud to see our Leader mixing with the highest in the land and in the poshest places. It just shows how obsolete the old cloth cap is and it gives you so many opportunities for this wonderful industrial mediation you've made such a success of lately (like the way you fixed the ATV strike with Mr. X during the Finals of the Women's Singles!). I do wish Grundiman wouldn't call it "strike-breaking".

He says that it's the fifth strike you've broken in the last four months and that, if you mediate industrially in the postmen's strike, they'll rough you up like they nearly did Ron Smith the other day. Anyway I think it is much better for you to handle the strikes this way. It's more dignified. The workers all go back quietly and they

don't incur public disfavour, which is always the danger. Grundiman says they don't incur any increase in their wages, either, but that's just typical of his nonsense.

What worried me about the Wimbledon picture was the sweets. I do think you should keep off them, Harold. Sir Alec has got the edge on you with that slim line of his, you know—that and his cheery smile. I know you have a lot of problems, what with Brown, Callaghan and Co., and so you always look a bit bad-tempered. You can't do much about that, but you can lay off the sugar. The image is everything, Harold, and that bit of tubbiness. . .

That business about Franco's frigates was enough to make anyone bad-tempered, I admit. After all, you didn't say much about Franco, not enough for him to get so insulted. For instance, you never mentioned the thousands of political prisoners, his tortures in his jails, his garrotting of opponents. You were only worried about who holds our base in Gibraltar, like you were about Aden and Cyprus.

I was very pleased to see that you made it in the Sunday Papers with Kenvatta, after Sir Alec had kept you away from the PM's Conference. Of course we heard you were dodging about all the week, grabbing one or other of them as they went in or out and button-holing them, but trust you to land the big fish and get snapped with him, you with the pipe and him with the whisk. No one can say you don't try, Harold.

But you can't relax your efforts now, not with your close friend Mikoyan taking over in Moscow, just as you are likely to find yourself leading us under Goldwater's nuclear umbrella. Looks like I'll be writing again very soon.

So with Thumbs Up for Victory,

Yours fraternally,

JIMMY WIGGINS.

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