

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—S. African resistance
Rumblings in the UAW
Big Brother is watching
Industrial commentary

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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PROFITS OF DESTRUCTION

BRITISH CAPITALISM could not afford to scrap Concord. The aircraft industry must find new markets. During the postwar years it was exporting planes to ruined airforces and growing civil airlines abroad. Now these countries have built their own industries under government subsidy and protection. Britain's only hope in the international market for long-range airliners lies in supersonic craft—witness the flop of the subsonic VC 10. Faster air travel means lower operating costs, and so larger profits or less government subsidy.

To compete with the giant American industry, though, Britain must pool her production resources with European industries. So, with Concord, she can keep her place in a

market which has earned her £1,400 million in the last 14 years. And capitalism means "export or die", as the Labour Government has been telling us, without cease or originality, since it came to office.

Thus Minister of Aviation Roy Jenkins (previously distinguished as economic adviser to the phoney "profit sharing" John Lewis Partnership) has promised British bosses a "healthy and stable industry". There are other sound capitalist reasons for this. First, the need for "stability and health" in the industries contributing materials or parts to aircraft assembly. Second, the improvement of technology in British industry as a whole, due to "spin-off". This term means the penetration of both inventions and skills evolved for the high requirements of aviation into the production of more earth-bound goods. Strength, lightness, and precision are primary requirements of aircraft construction.

Civil aviation, however, is only the hindpart. Military is paramount, and the States does the real pioneer research. Which brings us to TSR2. TFX, its American rival, is identical in neither function nor performance. It has not the reconnaissance ability needed in a successor to the obsolete Canberra bomber, nor can it fly so low, so far, or with so many bombs as TSR2. There is thus good military reason for not scrapping TSR2 entirely, despite its much higher cost.

And immediate cost is not the only economic consideration. Scrapping TSR2 and building nothing in its place means abandoning much research, and many economies of scale without which Concord would be priced right out of the market.

Who dares to say, in the light of these considerations, that the desire to save the jobs of aircraft workers in this country is important in the decision on TSR2 or Concord?

And what, after all, does a policy to "save" or "make" jobs mean? Jobs mean wage labour, and wage labour produces

cont. on page 2, col. 1

Engineering workers strike in Madrid

A THREE-DAY lock-out of 5,000 workers at Madrid's Pegaso lorry and bus plant, in which Leyland Motors has a large interest, ended a strike by 3,500 of their number on January 19. A government official announced that 39 workers had been fired. Before the strike, over a new wages agreement, leaflets had been distributed among Madrid's 12,000 engineering workers by the underground Sidero-Metallurgical Workers' Federation (ASO), calling for a guaranteed minimum daily wage of 175 pesetas (about 22s.), 25 days' paid annual holiday and better social security benefits.

On January 26, a demonstration of 2,000 engineering workers, demanding free unions before the HQ of the fascist TUs in Madrid was broken up by armed police.

Appeal by GNT militants

THE APPEAL of three CNT-ASO militants, comrades Calle, Cases and Pascual, against sentences for advocating the Spanish workers' right to strike and organise freely was heard by Madrid's Supreme Court on January 7. The hearing lasted only three-quarters of an hour and no findings were announced. Only one defending lawyer was allowed to appear, as legal practice in Madrid is a pre-requisite of being heard by the Supreme Court. The public part of the court was packed with Madrid lawyers.

A MAN OF VISION!

"The Labour Party have inherited a tough proposition. We cannot stop these strikes. They will be better at it than we were." Winston Churchill on Labour's landslide victory in the 1945 General Election, quoted by Robin Maugham, Daily Telegraph, 26.1.65.

And to check how the Labour Government's strikebreakers carried out Churchill's prophesy, read the SWF pamphlet, How Labour Governed, 6d.

Workers', NOT bosses' control for the docks

OVER the last few months more people than enough have put forward solutions for solving the problem in the docks.

The latest, from *Tribune*, is a pip. On their industrial page they discuss the dock situation in general and wind up, "Here is an obvious opportunity for a *British Socialist Government* (my italics) to lead the way, and show how ports ought to be managed. The evident need for a radical overhaul, and the existence of a united labour force with positive demands are sufficient conditions for drastic, ambitious change, based on the concepts of *public ownership and workers' control*" (my italics).

Workers' Control, Workers' Management are words that have been played around with by every shade of political opinion. Not one of their ideas means *workers' control of every stage including management*. And when one hears social democrats talking in terms of workers' control, they mean only one thing—trade union representation on nationalised boards.

Regrettably the docks at the moment—in many ports anyway—are riddled with inter-union rivalry, which divides the dockers straight away. Plus the intervention of political intriguers, attempting to use the dockers to push their various political lines.

Organisation in the docks in terms of road access and congestion (due to bad planning) is archaic. The employers' record in the docks is bad and in some cases worse than anywhere in British industry.

One can expect the Devlin Report to highlight the excesses on both sides, i.e. the dockers' objection to further mechanisation on the one hand, and the unnecessary multiplicity of employers on the other. Both are understandable. Mechanisation should mean an easement of labour, but if in consequence the labour force is drastically cut, then any alleviation is nullified. Employers on the docks do very well, so as

PROFITS OF DESTRUCTION (cont.)

capital. Every government that "saves" jobs, "promotes" full employment, is only doing what it was designed for—making capitalism run. And capitalism runs on profit. Were the full-employment policies of Hitler and Mussolini designed for the workers' benefit? Has Roosevelt's memory not come to be blessed by the capitalists, who once cursed him for lifting them on to their feet again by the scruff of the neck?

Yet the dreary reformist dirge of the careerists and lie pedlars will go on. Labour politicians have saved the workers once again! The Communist Party, with others of the "left", continues to give Labour its futile and unwanted "critical support".

Anyone who maintains that politicians can disregard the interests of the capitalist class for the sake of the workers is either a dupe or a fraud.

"The rapid growth of capital is the most favourable condition for wage labour." Here genius and common sense are at one. The fakirs have not a leg to stand on between them.

But the workers must end the economic system that brings them on to the streets in their thousands to demand the continued production of the instruments of war—a permanent feature of that system. As the last weeks have shown, the evils of capitalism go hand in hand.

MARK HENDY

many as possible get into the act.

What the Devlin Report will in fact show, but will certainly not state, is that the case is made for Workers' Control, and, therefore, steps should be taken by the dockers in this direction—rank and file control of employment of labour, control of overtime (if necessary). The politicians call for nationalisation, but rank and file dockers will have more sense.

WE'LL SPEAK FOR YOU

VAUXHALL management have done a wonderful piece of duck-shoving. The ETU claim the same negotiating rights as the AEU and NUVB. Vauxhall management say, "Sure you can, providing the other two unions agree", knowing full well at this stage that they won't, hence passing the buck No. 1.

Passing the buck No. 2 is that the management have said the recent pay award of 4½ per cent may not be paid, unless the ETU lift their overtime ban, which has been on since before Christmas. Thus the ETU can be accused of preventing a wage increase. The workers in this instance have played right into the employers' hands, exposing craft unionism for what it's worth—nothing!

WORDS NOT ENOUGH

THE Yorkshire Federation of Trades Councils came out in full support of 115 men and women fighting for trade union recognition. These 115 workers have been locked out of the William Denby dyeworks for over a year. The TUC have thrown in the towel on this dispute and virtually said: "Call it a day, we're beat". The strikers say different—the pickets are still on and have been for a year. William Denby should be 'blacked'. No raw materials, no power . . . what about it *craft unions*?

WHERE MY CARAVAN HAS RESTED

SINCE November 20, more than 100 workers have been on strike at the Fairview Caravan Co., in support of dismissed trade union militants. Railmen and dockers in many ports are blocking the export of Fairview Caravans. The union, the NUVB, is to present its case at the Industrial Court on February 2. It claims the terms and conditions of employment at the factory are in breach of the fair wages clause. Brother, those conditions must be really rough. If the dockers and railwaymen's action is 100 per cent, Fairview will have to give in or go broke.

A GOOD MEMORY IS ESSENTIAL

REMEMBER Ted Hill at the Labour Party Conference—his militant speech against a wage pause? Now he suggests three rules of behaviour:—

(1) If the members must have a meeting, hold it after working hours; (2) If there is likely to be a demarcation dispute, submit the matter to arbitration in accordance with rule; (3) If there is likely to be a strike, take the matter through procedure before taking strike action.

Mr. Hill comments: "We now have a Government in power that will be sympathetic to the working people of this country, but having regard to the serious economic difficulties now confronting us, it may be some time before that sympathy can be fully expressed".

Arise, Sir Ted!

INDUSTRIAL STRUGGLE IN LOUNGE SUITS

ALFRED BROOKS, general secretary of the National Union of Bank Employees, said an incomes policy would be "one at the behest of the employer". NUBE is also making a claim for equal pay for equal work; it claims that at present a woman on a bank counter may be earning about £550, while a man alongside her gets £800. NUBE is 69,000 strong and has varying degrees of recognition. Affluent workers note—please deposit your savings at a union-organised bank.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

South Africa: A new phase in the struggle

THE STRUGGLE in South Africa has reached an interesting, perhaps critical stage: the opposition whites have had their say and failed. This opposition, mainly from the intelligentsia and students, has centred round the South African Communist Party, which follows the Moscow line. This involves the capture of emerging nationalist movements and their perversion to whatever ends Moscow directs; this was the fate of the African National Congress.

During the last 12 months it had become obvious that, for whites, there was only one organ of resistance, the CP, and for many courageous young people it had also become plain that South Africa is not a place where an honourable man can sit on the fence. They were easy prey. Many were approached and asked to join a cell on showing the slightest sympathetic interest in the situation. Each CP cell has a leader who receives and passes on directives—if the leader is caught and talks, the rest of the cell are finished, too.

The pattern then is that the people who have newly joined get tried, with the cell-leader as State evidence against them; he, of course, goes free. A tragic example was a prominent figure in the Capetown students' union, who was involved in many of the rather ineffectual acts of sabotage against pylons and transformers. He split on his mates and is now free. After seeing this rabble-rouser cowering in the witness box, everybody is wondering whether he'll commit suicide or be bumped off first.

A brief further word about Moscow and the SACP leaders. Moscow is interested only in getting a regular supply of martyrs, nothing else. Hence the betrayals! We are equally sick of the local leaders, but for different reasons. Make no mistake, they are against Verwoerd, but only because they know that in the long run his methods are bad for big business. These men are lawyers, so they are prepared to fight him on condition the struggle can be directed to their ends.

How has this opposition come to an end? Some people have been put away for long stretches. Some have had too many 90-day sentences and understandably packed it in. The State-evidencers are either examining their consciences, or waiting for further orders from the party. And finally, a lot of people have probably done the best thing in the circumstances and cleared out. One such—John Smith—came home one evening to find the Special Branch waiting. "We want John Smith", the hoooves said, "Have you seen him?"

Franco consulate bombed in Naples

AT 2.40 a.m. on Saturday, January 2, a plastic bomb exploded on the steps leading to the Spanish Consulate in via San Giacomo, Naples. Many windows were smashed and considerable damage done to the front of the Consulate, but nobody was injured. The explosion, heard over a wide area, attracted a crowd and police, quickly on the scene, cordoned off the street.

They found two large "visiting cards" had been bill-posted outside the Consulate. One read, "So long as the Iberian peoples remain oppressed by fascist dictatorship, dynamite will remind the bosses that the voice of freedom cannot be strangled. Long Live Anarchy". The other, "Long live libertarian Spain—FIJL, FAI, CNT". The consul, Riccardo Ventosa y Arauzo, immediately phoned Franco's Ambassador in Rome, Alfredo Sanchez Bella, with news of the attack.

"Oh, he's putting his car away, I'll fetch him", John replied. He went down to the car and drove to Swaziland.

The cops are pretty efficient and nasty, but very, very thick. A friend of mine was searched not long ago. They took her typewriter, which she uses for work. Why? Because you can type subversive messages on a typewriter. But they forgot to look under a cushion for her revolver. Someone else had done two 90's, because they couldn't find anything to try him for, so they kept on leaving his cell door open, till he walked out. Unfortunately he fell off the outer wall and got caught; he was sentenced for that.

Why has this resistance been so useless?

The issue in South Africa is basically a class struggle, in which the workers are labelled by the colour of their skin. It is then easy to shut off and divide the workers, so the bosses no longer meet them, except perhaps during working hours. The workers thus become something distant, abstract, easily described in mass and frightening terms, thus ensuring continuing all-or-nothing support for the Government. Because of the ever more total segregation, it becomes increasingly difficult for the white opposition to meet the real, working-class opposition; one is too conspicuous. This, from what we have said earlier, can only give rise to optimism.

Another thing bad on the face of it, but probably not so in fact, is that any lawyer dubbed a Communist by the Government can no longer practise. This means any lawyer defending opponents of the regime is finished. This is a blow to the CP, because it cuts off their contact with Africans like Mandela, whom they can convert and use.

What about working-class, African opposition? Here we must mention the other big influence, again CP, this time Pekinese style. The Chinese have played a very cool racialist line: "We're coloured, too, not like those Russians. They don't understand your problems". They don't mention that China does a huge trade with S. Africa. The other thing is that they don't take over revolutions until they've been successful; it's only then the "youth leaders" arrive. In the meantime, they send in money, etc., and at the moment arms are getting through.

This could be a great thing. If the Africans are allowed to get on with the nationalist struggle, there's always a chance it will become a social struggle, with China footing the bill. Provided they kick out their feudal chiefs, who are hand in glove with the white bosses, forget about China and take their arms to the place where they belong, on the picket line inside the factory walls, instead of in the desert like Pondoland, where they've been fooling around for the last few years, they have a chance.

P.R.

DIRECT ACTION WITH DUSTBINS

WOMEN NEW TO INDUSTRY are often more likely than "disciplined" male trade unionists to take direct action, but housewives, too, sometimes try this effective method. Residents of Albert Road, Canterbury have been plagued by motorists parking their cars on the footpaths, and making noise and dirt. Appeals to the police and city council brought the usual replies of "nothing can be done". Then one morning out came the housewives with their dustbins, filled with something heavier than wastepaper, which they placed as barriers across the street. Authority decided something *could* be done. Now a park for 160 cars is to be provided for college students who are the main, but not the only offenders.

Direct Action

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Big brother is watching YOU!

LIVERPOOL police have made an innovation in their methods. They are using concealed television cameras mounted in different public places and linked to a central control panel. George Orwell's 1984 sounds very, very near.

The police pinched the idea from the Mersey Tunnel authorities, who use cameras at the tunnel entrances to help them control the flow of traffic. The police claim that the system will help them in the battle with criminals. For example, if one of the screens shows a thief at work in, say, a car park, a call will go out to a lurking plain-clothes copper with a walkie-talkie set, or to a police car and the felon will be promptly apprehended.

The police claim that the system will help them in the battle with criminals. What rubbish!

Already in the United States, firms are using hidden television cameras, microphones and secret agents, who mingle with the workers and report back on dangerous elements (that is, workers determined to fight for their rights). A British firm sent out a circular last year offering spies to employers to spy on their workers; it was only the prompt action of the more militant workers' organisations like the SWF, in publishing a copy of the letter, which helped to put an end to that little caper. But how soon will it be before these spies appear on the scene in Britain—if they are not here already? Supermarkets and large stores already use these and similar methods to keep an eye on the housewife, who might be tempted to pinch a few pounds of sausages.

It is not only workers' organisations who are shouting about this. The liberals are moaning too. What they don't realise is that under capitalism the individual has no liberty anyhow.

These and similar abuses are only to be expected in capital-

Prisoners in Castro's Cuba

THE CUBAN LIBERTARIAN MOVEMENT in Exile, which held a plenum last October, reports that the following anarcho-syndicalist comrades are serving jail terms in Castro's Cuba: Placido Mendez, 12 years; Alberto Garcia, 30 years; Luis Miguel Linsuain, whereabouts unknown; Sandalio Torres, 10 years; Jose Acena, 20 years; Prometeo Iglesias Bernal, 20 years; Juan Napoles, Avelino Vinas, Suria Linsuain, indefinite terms; Isidro Moscu, 20 years. Two other comrades, Ventura Suarez and Augusto Sanchez, aged 17, were executed by firing squad.

SWF PRESS FUND—JANUARY 1965

Thornbury, Bristol, S.G. £2; Bristol 2, J.C. 6s.; London NW3, K.H. 10s.; Sales of CNT "Spain Today" postcards 5s.; SWF London Group £3 7s. 6d. Total £6 8s. 6d.

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ist society. Syndicalists and others have been warning for years that they are the logical outcome of capitalism and the State. How long will it be before we have microphones planted in our homes to listen to "dangerous" talk? Again, this is already widespread in the US. Phones are already tapped over here. It is in vogue to criticise South Africa—and rightly so—but if we workers would open our eyes to what goes on in this land of "Freedom", we would learn about a few things that don't even happen in South Africa.

As an immediate answer, any worker asked to instal such equipment should refuse to help spy on his fellow-workers. as that is what he will be doing—joining the legion of rats who snitch on their mates if, say, they smoke in the toilets, only in a bigger and more terrible way. But the final solution is to get rid of capitalism and build a world where we, the workers, own and control industry. If we build a society like that, what need will there be for spies and spying? Only bosses need such scum.

You might ask how. I will tell you: organise. Not in the useless things we now call trade unions, which are today, with rare exceptions, agents of the boss and bossdom. Witness SIR William Carron. (Who's that chanting "Billy is a b——"? Have respect for your betters, you worker you.) We should organise in Syndicalist Industrial Unions that we control, not King Street, Transport House, or, just as bad (and certainly no worse) the boss.

Anyway, why not write off for some stuff that will tell you what Syndicalism is all about? The Syndicalist Workers' Federation has a stock of suitable material. It won't even cost you the price of a pint.

VINCENT JOHNSON

GROUP NOTICES

LONDON SWF: Open meetings every Friday, except the first one in each month, at the Lucas Arms, 245 Grays Inn Road, WC1 (5 minutes Kings Cross Station) 8.30 p.m.

February 12 Tom Brown: A page of Labour History

February 19 Ed Strauss: "Workers' Control" in Yugoslavia

February 26 Open discussion on Automation

LONDON: SWF Industrial Action Sub-Committee (London). Readers wishing to help in the work of this committee are asked to contact the Secretary, Joe Ball, 27 Jerningham Road, London S.E.14.

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

BRISTOL BRANCH, SWF: Contact Secretary-Treasurer, John Coveney, 34 Banner Road, Bristol 2.

DUNDEE: Meetings every Saturday, 2.30 p.m. at Mike and Alison Malet's, 20 South George Street, Dundee.

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

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

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

SOUTHALL: Enquiries to Roger Sandell, 58 Burns Ave., Southall, Middx.

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), Q5 Queens. Details, town and gown, Adrian Cunningham, 3, North Cottages, Trumpington Road, Cambridge.

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

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

NOTTING HILL ANARCHIST GROUP: Contact the Secretary, 5 Colville Houses, W11.

S. WALES ANARCHIST GROUP. Irregular meetings held. Enquire Peter Raymond, 300 Whitchurch Road, Gabalfa, Cardiff.

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

RUMBLINGS INSIDE THE UAW

UNTIL A FEW YEARS ago negotiations between the United Auto-Workers union and the (United States) motor corporations followed a familiar pattern. A list of demands was presented to the employers. With or without a strike, an overall national agreement was signed, subject to ratification of individual plant issues by the locals. Ratification followed almost immediately and was regarded as a mere formality. The leadership's control over the locals assured speedy ratification.

This is no longer so. The Union leadership can no longer guarantee that the workers will resume production as anticipated. The national contract with General Motors was signed October 5, 1964, but the strike continued, and ratification by the locals was withheld for *a whole month after* the signing of the national agreement.

The workers have lost confidence in their leaders because they have done absolutely nothing to settle 17,900 grievances affecting their working conditions in their places of work. Most of the grievances concerned inhuman speed-ups on the

assembly lines, insufficient time to go to the toilet, insufficient rest periods, setting of arbitrary time limits for each operation by "efficiency experts", who would themselves never be able to sustain the speed they set for the workers, harsh disciplinary measures for alleged violations of company work rules, arrogance of foremen and other supervisors, rotation of night shifts, and so forth.

Unable to get their complaints satisfactorily settled through the union channels, they resorted to direct action by staging unauthorised wildcat strikes in defiance of both the employers and their leaders. There have been literally hundreds of "wildcat" strikes involving tens of thousands of workers all over the country. This has been going on since before 1958. In 1961, the local unions, not the leaders, staged a runaway strike, which the leadership had the greatest difficulty in finally bringing under control. These "wildcat" strikes also concerned grievances. The workers also showed their displeasure by ousting one-third of the local officials.

All this explains why the union leadership allowed the workers to prolong the return to work. *A New York Times* editorial, Sept. 27, 1964, sums up the situation:

"... In the view of Industry he (Reuther) found himself a political prisoner of the Locals which wanted to hold out for a settlement that might end some of the 17,900 remaining grievances—letting the members blow off steam by a relatively brief walkout is less damaging to the national economy than a rank and file insurrection that might drag on for weeks and the Union High Command powerless to arrest it..."

The distinctive issues involved in this situation are:

1. The monetary settlement was not regarded by the workers or the employers as of primary importance; grievances are more important to the workers, because they involve their living relationship with supervisors in the place of work where they spend so much of their lives; important as wage increases are, the workers value their dignity as human beings more.
2. The employers are more susceptible to monetary agreements which can be passed on to the consumer. But settlement of grievances encroaches on the right of the employers to regulate the life of the worker within the factory, and the right of the worker to determine the rate of production; they are apprehensive that such encroachments will gradually lead to what they fear most—workers' control of industry.
3. The "increasing wildcat" strikes indicate the beginning of a grass-root revolt of the plain workers against the union leadership apparatus.

The extent to which the smug leadership has lost contact with the needs and temper of the rank and file workers is demonstrated by a high Auto Union official's silly question:

"How can we get greater loyalty from the individual to the union?" one of the United Auto workers officials asked. "All the things we fought for, the corporation is now giving the workers. What we have to find are other things the workers want which the employer is not willing to give him, and we have to develop our programme around these things as reasons for belonging to the union."

New York Times, 8.9.63.

If this trend continues, both the employers and the union hierarchy will discover, to their unpleasant surprise, that workers will fight for motives which threaten them both.—W.

VIEWES AND COMMENTS (Winter, 1965)

● The SWF has reprinted its leaflet, "A Cheap Holiday", attacking tourism to Franco Spain. Copies are available at 1s. 6d. for 100; 15s. for 1,000, postpaid.

Irish itinerants build new school in Dublin

A YEAR after its official destruction (January 6, 1964) by city authorities, a school built by itinerant families has been reconstructed on the outskirts of Dublin.

Once again the school has gone up without planning permission or the consent of the owners of the site. But this time the project has the backing of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and the London-based Centre for Group Studies.

The scheme is under the lead of War Resisters' International member Grattan Puxon. For the past year he has headed a campaign for social rights among Irish itinerants, better known as tinkers.

Following a series of 12 evictions last winter—described as "brutal and sadistic" by a deputy in the Irish Parliament—the families have refused to vacate the 26 acres of land they have occupied for the past ten months.

They have stood their ground behind barricades when approached by police and have turned down £150 offered by the owners, Ballyfermot Textiles Ltd., to quit and move out. The company is associated with the Irish-American Mining Corporation.

"We will not leave voluntarily until local authorities provide camping sites with full facilities", says Grattan Puxon.

The settlement includes 24 refugee-type huts built to accommodate families living in rag tents. It is in one of the score of horse-drawn caravans that Grattan Puxon and his wife Venice are living. The water supply has been removed by local authorities and there are only lime pits for sanitation.

Sites have now been promised by the Irish Government and their locations are under consideration by local councils. It is likely to be at least nine months, however, before the first are established.

The school, named St. Christopher's II, has been built from large wooden crates and polythene sheeting. Heating is provided by two oil stoves obtained with money from the Russell Foundation.

The staff of five, who include Grattan Puxon and his wife, are teaching nearly a hundred illiterate children from five to 16 years old. They aim to prepare them, with the help of the Centre in London, for entry into national schools when official sites are provided.

An open letter to the Labour Leader

Dear Harold,

I was waiting till the end of the 100 dynamic days to write to you, and to congratulate you on what will certainly be your greatest TV appearance. But now that you've postponed it—I'll bet you were upset, Harold, after the Leyton result—I thought I should write a few lines, just to advise you as I have often done before.

My word, what a time it's been! One dynamic crisis after another! But we've missed you from the telly, Harold—after having so much of you before the election, I mean. Still, I think it's been wise to lie low, with all these simple-minded people about who expect, or pretend to expect, that you are going to keep your election pledges. You just can't bother about people like that, Harold, but you're wise to keep out of sight until your great 100 D-Day television speech.

The boys are keeping quiet too, aren't they? I'd push them out front a bit now, Harold—George, Gunter and Callaghan. Serve them right for bellyaching about how you hogged the screen for eight weeks before the election.

To tell you the truth, I don't think they're much use to you, Harold—they're a weight to carry. I mean, look at all the worry you had carting Gordon Walker around and trying to get him elected for somewhere or other—and he always

looks so dejected. Made me depressed to see him standing talking in an empty street down the East End with rain running down his face.

Cousins is not much better, hanging on to his TU job like that makes everyone feel he knows you're going out on your ear soon, instead of leading us into the great, scientific, technological, sociological future.

I'm worried about another matter, too. You're not losing much of that weight, are you? Now, I warned you about it three months ago and you know I'm always right. I mean, you took my hint about turning up at the Old Folks' Xmas treat, didn't you? Well, keep away from the carbohydrates and champagne—the aircraft workers and the miners who are going on the dole won't like seeing you looking plumper and posher as they pull in their belts. I mean, George could do it—I must say, it seems to have made him a bit more touchy—so you try, Harold. Trust your old friend Jimmy and cut down the calories. Drop all those banquets with the university dons and the big-shot planemakers for a start. Anyway, it gets all these old-age pensioners' goat, that sort of thing, and they start up again about not having a shilling for the gas and that sort of sordid business.

Well Harold, I'll wait anxiously for your TV Spectacular. It should be a wild success. And now our exports are up. One increase we can brag about. But, in the meantime, try to keep your missus and your old man out of the papers a bit. What with Mum copping most of the *Observer* the other Sunday, and the old man almost filling the same Sunday's *Sunday Mirror*, we're all getting a little bit choked.

I know you won't mind my saying that, but it's come to something when we can't argue with Grundiman when he jokes about it at the Ward meeting, and declares that he's tired reading in the Sunday papers about when little Harold was photographed outside No. 10, or when he got his first knee pants, or which one of the 57 varieties he prefers with his Thursday dinner. I mean, we know Grundiman's a wild one, but I'm afraid we're all inclined to burst out laughing before Cllr. Blott manages to restore decorum and retrieve the situation.

I just thought I'd let you know that it wasn't always like that, but if you take my advice on these little things I know you and your team of scientific advisers to the Cabinet can handle the big ones.

Yours fraternally,

JIMMY WIGGINS.

WIREMEN, BEWARE!

AS readers no doubt know, "Labour Only" has been a curse in the building industry for many years. This is now on the increase in the electronic wiring field. Wiremen obtain work through agents, on a self-employed basis. The most notorious of these people is a person operating under the name of J. P. Hurley Ltd., 27 Stroud Green Road, London N.4. He persuades wiremen to sign a form of contract for six-monthly periods at an all-in rate of ten shillings per hour.

Most of these workers do not realise that they are not covered for the following benefits: Industrial Injuries, Contracts of Employment, Unemployment Benefit, Paid holidays, Industrial Disputes Act.

Just before Xmas, 23 wiremen working at Ether, Langham and Thompson Ltd., Bushey, Herts, through J. P. Hurley, were refused the one-hour reduction without loss of pay, which has just been gained in the engineering industry. The wiremen took strike action to try to gain this.

J. P. Hurley, taking advantage of the agreement they had signed, refused to meet the men and threatened legal action. This resulted in a return to work the next day, less three men who were victimised. These workers suffered a wage cut of ten shillings a week.

As most of the work is on defence projects, a strict screening system is in operation, which could well be used against any dissenting worker.

This type of thing can only lead to a general break-down of conditions and added exploitation of workers. All shop stewards and active trade unionists must beware of the introduction of non-union contract labour at their works.

The men involved in this dispute were a mixture of AEU, ETU and non-TU members.

M. BIRCH, ETU.

Will comrade Birch please let us have his new address —Eds.

BIRMINGHAM MEETING

A meeting was held at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham, on January 4 to discuss whether "left wing" groups could work together on matters of specific interest. The first issue, suggested by the original organisers, mainly from the YS and ILP, was to do something about racialism, particularly in Smethwick. It was finally agreed to call a public meeting, to be addressed by representative spokesmen of the various radical groups, trade unionists and social scientists specialising in race relations, to suggest to the audience ways and means of tackling the problem. Members of the West Midlands Committee of 100 agreed to study this problem and refer back to an informal meeting to be held in the bar of 'The Talbot', Digbeth, on Monday February 1, at 7.30 p.m., everyone interested invited.

PETER NEVILLE

HELP SPANISH TOURIST BOYCOTT

FROM the Spanish comrades of the exiled CNT in this country, the SWF has received the gift of 1,000 two-colour postcards, in aid of our Press Fund. These beautifully-produced cards, 7×4 in., with the CNT imprint, depict four aspects of Franco Spain that Costa Brava tourists usually miss: photographs of a Spanish prison gallery, political prisoners, slums in Madrid and armed Civil Guards on patrol. By using these cards, which have the normal spaces for greetings and addressing, readers can help both the Spanish Tourist Boycott campaign and the SWF Press Fund. They are 6d. each, 6s. for 12, plus postage (2½d for single copies, 6d for 12) from SWF, 34 Cumberland Road, London, E17.

ABOLITION OF THE WAGES SYSTEM

"You were saying, sir", returned the Secretary, "that you considered the time had come for fixing my salary."

"Don't be above calling it wages, man", said Mr. Boffin testily. "What the deuce! I never talked of my salary when I was in service".

"My wages", said the Secretary.

Our Mutual Friend, Dickens.

WHAT, more than all else, distinguishes capitalism from previous social systems? Not just exploitation of labour or class society; feudalism and slave society had such characteristics. Production for sale, instead of production for use, as the primary intent applied to all goods and services, is the special trait of capitalism. Primitive society was entirely for direct use; in slave and feudal society most goods were produced for use, only the surplus being exchanged. In capitalist society all goods (with the exception of a few vegetables grown in back gardens, or model ships in bottles made in back kitchens) are made to sell.

I recall a boyhood experience. I was sitting in a workmen's cafe, when a man near me ordered a pot of tea and a meat pie. He accepted the tea, but looked doubtfully at the pie. "Do you make these pies to eat?" he asked the man behind the bar. "No", came the prompt reply. "We make them to sell. We don't care what you do with it. You've paid".

This incident first set me thinking about the nature of the market society. Everyone is trying to sell something, selling to live. But while some have land, oil, shares or machines to sell in shopping streets or stock markets, millions, the great majority, are launched into life without patrimony. Without gold or land, what do they sell? They can sell only their power to labour, they can but look for a buyer of labour power and to him offer their commodity for sale at so much a piece or, more often, by the hour, day or week.

That time which they have sold belongs to another, part of their life has been exchanged for the means to live. The day's work done, life begins again. At the dinner table, in the pub, before the telly, in bed, the wage worker lives for a while his own life.

Of course, having sold his time along with his labour power, the worker will try by craftiness to pinch back a little of what he was forced to sell. So, any factory or office may shelter secret eaters, underground gamblers and disguised readers. What appears to be a hive of industry may be in a condition of being gnawed from within, as a log cabin is gnawed by termites. All sorts of pleasures, from crosswords to making love, are attempted.

In case anyone may think this sounds like the exploitation of capital by labour, I most quickly add that the underground have a very limited success, in some cases none at all. But when all else fails, men's thoughts tend to wander from their

tasks to more personal interests. Some will think of holidays, some, like the exile, forever think of home, but one cannot tell what thoughts, sacred or profane, are passing behind the mask. I asked a Communist docker I worked beside what he thought of. "Leninism", he answered. That was all. A machinist said, "Women". "You always say that", remarked his mate, "Don't you think of anything else?" "Is there something else to think about?" replied the first man, relapsing into thought.

The social situation in which the worker sells his labour power has been named the Labour Market. I can recall even when the cobbled yards at shipyard and dock were called "The Market". In a market, what is the final deciding factor in determining the price of a commodity? Supply and demand, of course. Few goods, many buyers, up go prices. This social arrangement makes man kin, not to the angels, but to beer and books, caps and carrots, pots and pullovers.

Often sections of workers try to restrict new entries to their work, so that wages may be kept up. Artisans limit apprentices, dockers and market porters control new entries, journalists, doctors and lawyers do the same. Manufacturers practise "price maintenance". Whoever seeks to abolish "restrictive practices" under capitalism is going to be very busy.

From all this it follows that any social system which is not capitalist cannot have production for sale and a wages system as its major principles.

What of Communism, what of Socialism? It is true that Russian economy is based on these same principles. Because of this and other capitalist attributes, we speak of the Bolshevik economy as being neither Communism nor Socialism, but State Capitalism.

As to the Labour Party and the varieties of Socialists and Communists who support it, far from abolishing capitalism and the wages system, they are pledged to support them, doing so with vague election promises of higher wages.

Yet once what was called the "Movement", Socialist to Syndicalist, was against these things. Marx in his pamphlet *Value, Price and Profit*, said: "Instead of the Conservative motto 'A fair day's pay for a fair day's work', the unions ought to inscribe upon their banners the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the Wages System'."

Now it seems the Syndicalists are alone and what the Marxists want is Marxism without Karl.

TOM BROWN

Provincial busmen say 'no'

SOME 100,000 busmen have rejected an equivalent to 8s. 6d. on the basic rate. They want to close the gap between provincial and London busmen. The approximate difference is £11.12s.9d. for provincial and £14.3s.6d. for Central London. One would have thought that driving a bus in any town is bloody murder.

HOME WITH THE MILK

HARRY COOPER, United Dairies milk roundsman, will soon retire after a lifetime delivering milk in the West End of London. Many wealthy and well-known persons received their milk from Harry's barrow, including the Countess of Haddo, the Lord Chief Justice and Winston Churchill.

Harry has seen many changes for the better during 52 years as a roundsman. When he started, says the *Marylebone Mercury*, he had to get out of bed at 3.30 a.m., now he lies in bed until 4 a.m. But many of his customers are still going to bed as Harry is getting up.

AGAINST CONSCRIPTION

Demonstration, Thursday, Feb. 25

**ASSEMBLE 5PM, TRAFALGAR SQUARE, AND
MARCH TO AUSTRALIA HOUSE**

PICKET UNTIL 7.30PM

CONTROVERSY

Automation threat

TOM BROWN'S article "The Hidden Hand of Cousins" (Direct Action, December 1964) dismisses automation all too easily. The "cybernetic revolution" in the USA is putting thousands out of work weekly and is fundamentally more crucial to the segregation issue than Jim Crow himself, according to one influential negro leader. The Soviet Union has geared its entire economy to the development of automation. There cannot be a boardroom in any major British industry which is not either seething with plans for a change-over, or rattled out of its wits at the prospect of lagging behind. Even the government is fumbling its way towards an appreciation of the situation.

The only sectors which are ignoring or playing down the problem are the trades unions and that amorphous institution, "the left". The SWF would be doing us all a service if, while not ignoring the pressing needs dictated by conventional conditions, it could encourage thought and discussion related to the more serious challenge of automation in the near future.

This may be due to my own lack of political insight, but I often feel that the analyses and proposals in the columns of "Direct Action" fail to take into account changes in technology, institutions and public attitudes. The theoretical and moral basis is there, but that is all. We live in a complex world with complex problems, all requiring exceedingly complex measures to deal with them.

We are told that the Labour Party is wrong, as are the trades union leadership, the employers, State institutions and all political groupings, apart from our own. So they are. But what is right and practical? What can we, as militants, do which will make a measureable impression on the total situation and carry enough conviction to activate sizeable areas of opinion?

The average working man will not swallow the slogans of the Labour Party, which are familiar to him. How much less likely is he to respond to ideas expressed in a language—

sometimes even a jargon—which is almost as unfamiliar as Chaucerian English? Perhaps I can underline my own guilt in this respect by returning to cybernation, from which I had not intended to digress when I started.

There is just no other word for it. Capitalism must have been an esoteric term at one time. It became the number one word in every progressive's vocabulary (most people, incidentally, still find it difficult, if not impossible, to define) because it portrayed a system which, from being concerned, in the first instance, with the production and marketing of goods, spread its tentacles into every other area of social activity with appalling consequences for the majority of men. The human personality was downgraded in the process of making labour just another commodity.

Cybernation, too, is concerned with the production and marketing of goods. If that were all, its benefits would be mixed. The trend set by mechanisation would continue, so that work satisfaction would be possible only at the higher levels of technology and research. On the other hand, the need for labour would decline, theoretically, resulting in a dramatic increase in the opportunities for leisure.

However, as it was with capitalism, the implications of radical changes in work and leisure reach deep into the fabric of contemporary society. What started as a mere technical process will end in social change, unrelated to the ideological courses men chart for themselves. It is one thing to have ideas and aspirations rejected because other men think otherwise; it is another if all ideas are rejected, not by men, but by the technology they have created.

At the bread-and-butter level it is clear that over the next twenty or thirty years, the changeover period, mass unemployment is almost inevitable. The new class structure will be "the workers" or well-qualified, high intelligence technicians, and the "unemployed" who owe their condition to a bunch of blackleg machines. The wealth will be there in ever-increasing quantities for an ever-decreasing number of people. The only answer would be a guaranteed living standard for everyone, regardless of their contribution to the production process or public services. How remote that possibility seems today. The recent series of Reith Lectures by Sir Leon Bagrit will be of inestimable value if they succeed in convincing a large public that cybernation exists. What strikes me as ominous is his bland refusal to recognise that those little machines from which he anticipates making so much money, do represent a threat to our minds and our bodies which can be averted only if all of us change our attitudes and institutions now and in our own terms.

TONY SMYTHE

LITERATURE

"Direct Action" pamphlets:—

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE UNIONS?

by Tom Brown

4d

WORKERS' CONTROL

4d

HOW LABOUR GOVERNED, 1945-1951

6d

THE BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE

by Tom Brown

4d

THE BOMB, DIRECT ACTION AND THE STATE

6d

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION, 34 CUMBERLAND ROAD, LONDON, E.17.

In case you didn't know—

"SPEAKING for a Labour candidate during the General Election, I was heckled by a group of Young Conservatives as to why I, the managing director of a public company who owned an expensive limousine, should want people to vote Labour. I retorted, perhaps rhetorically, that I wanted them to vote Labour because I wanted things kept that way.

"On reflection, and in view of developments in the last two months, I think there was greater substance to my answer than was perhaps seemingly apparent at that particular time."

Michael Montague, *Sunday Telegraph*, 3.1.65.

Mr. Montague is described as the "dynamic" managing director of Valor (the paraffin heater firm). Less than nine years ago he started his own electric fire and garden furniture company. He sold this as a going concern to Valor. His membership of the Labour Party is "recent".