

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Railways Board on 'go-slow' : Wages and prices : New dock union Law and the worker

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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Fourpence

Twenty years after Hiroshima . . .

WHEN C.P. SUPPORTED U.S. BOMB

ON August 6, 1945, the first atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The second devastated Nagasaki on August 9. These unparalleled acts of mass homicide were not only morally indefensible. They were also strategically pointless. The Japanese government had already issued an open invitation to the Allies to start negotiations for Japan's unconditional surrender.

Commenting seven years later, the *Daily Worker* (August 7, 1952) said in an editorial,

"The excuse that, in the long run, this bestial action saved lives, is worthless.

"It is a rotten excuse which is used to cover up every relapse into barbarism.

"As such it was always a favourite with Hitler and the Nazi sadists."

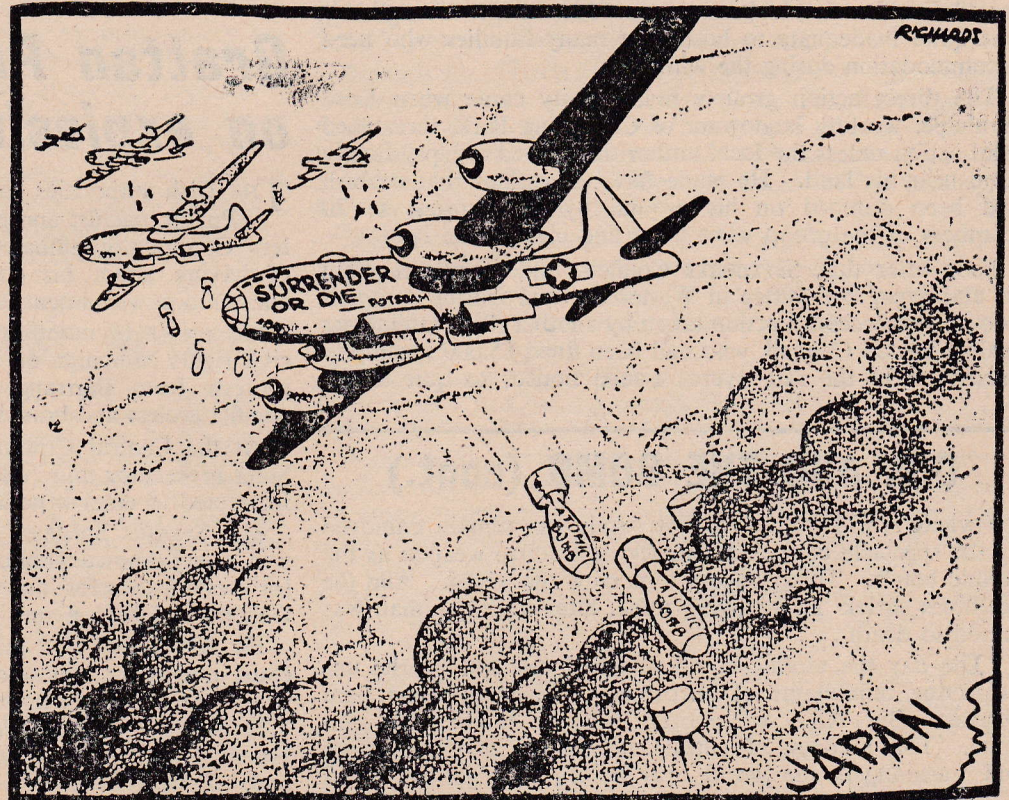
But at the time of the bombings the *Daily Worker* took a different stand. This was exemplified by the cartoon reproduced here, from the issue of August 8, 1945. On August 7, 1945, the editorial said:

"The employment of the new weapon on a substantial scale should expedite the surrender of Japan. Valuable lives in the Allied Nations will have been saved by the new discovery."

The next day, August 8, a further editorial said:

"It [the Atom Bomb] will enormously increase the strength of the three great powers in relation to all other countries."

After the bombing of Nagasaki the *Daily Worker* again said



WINGED WORDS

Daily Worker, August 8, 1945.

(August 11, 1945):

"The use of the Atom Bomb has mercifully shortened the war, with a consequent saving of human life."

Our own attitude to nuclear weapons has been consistent opposition. Here is what we said when the first bomb dropped:

"The news of Man's latest invention has shocked people

cont. on page 2, col. 1

Direct actionists assert gypsies' camping rights

CLIMAX to a long struggle on behalf of gypsies who had been camping on Hoosey Common, in Kent, came on July 13 at Sevenoaks Magistrates Court, when nine members of a local direct action group were summonsed under a bye-law for digging on the common.

The alleged offence was committed on May 18, when the group went to the common with shovels, to fill in trenches dug by the local council to prevent gypsy families having access to what had been a traditional camping ground for them.

A broadly-based committee to help the gypsies was set up in Sevenoaks last year, at a public meeting called by the local paper, following the death of a child at a nearby encampment. During the winter, this committee tried to bring pressure on the local and county councils, with particular reference to schooling facilities for the more than 100 gypsy children at Hoosey Common, who were growing up illiterate and receiving no education. One small concession made by the County Council was that a permanent camp for 12 families should be set up at Edenbridge—though this was quite inadequate to house the many families who need accommodation during the winter.

The direct action group's first activity came when Lord Stanhope, wealthy landowner of Chevening Park, threatened legal action unless the local authorities moved a gypsy family from near his land. He made false allegations that rubbish had been dumped on his ground by the gypsies, so 20 members of the group went there and cleared the land.

Soon after this, Sevenoaks Council, under pressure from an anti-gypsy committee in Westerham and fearing a repetition of the successful action taken by another titled landowner against Strood Council, who had been fined £5,000 (promptly passed on to the ratepayers), issued notices to quit to the

Hoosey Common gypsies under the Public Health Act, claiming that they were causing a statutory nuisance.

A sympathetic solicitor set up a Gypsies' Advice Bureau at the common and nine of the 15 families who were left, after most of the winter campers had taken to the roads in Spring, received free legal aid. Again the direct action group moved in, cleaning up the camping site and installing toilet facilities. When the case came to court, the council's witnesses were exposed as worthless by cross-examination and the case was dismissed. The direct action group and the gypsies celebrated with a feast on the common.

Then the council acted, digging trenches as each new family took to the road, to prevent their return to the camping ground. When the direct action group filled in the trenches, local residents called the police. "When the summonses were issued," one of the group told us, "we were afraid the court would throw the book at us. Surprisingly, however, we received a very sympathetic hearing, were all given absolute discharges and costs were waived. It was a great moral victory."

Five families were still camped on Hoosey Common when the case was heard. Now all have left on their annual migration—but a great number of families are expected to return in September and October, when the next round in the Battle of Hoosey Common will open.

Grattan Puxon cleared on explosives frame-up

THE Irish authorities have dropped charges against Grattan Puxon, pacifist and general-secretary of the Irish Travelers' Community (affiliated to Communauté Mondaile Gitane) of having under his control two rounds of .32 revolver ammunition with intent to endanger life.

His arrest 16 months ago, at the height of a non-violent civil rights campaign on behalf of itinerant families, brought protests from Bertrand Russell and Canon John Collins, pacifist groups and branches of the World Gypsy Community.

At the Central Criminal Court, Dublin, on June 23, the State prosecutor told Judge Conor Maguire that he had been instructed to enter a *noïe prosequi* in the case.

Mr. Seamus Sorohan, council for defendant, said Puxon was a well-known public figure and leader of the campaign for social justice for itinerants. The decision by the Attorney General had been a very proper one.

He added that had the trial gone on, Puxon would have come into court and said that the bullets had been planted in his garden by a person or persons unknown.

From the outset *Direct Action* has claimed this case was a police frame-up to intimidate Grattan Puxon and discredit him. Both aims having failed, the State drops its case.

Cat and mouse in Franco Spain

The Franco authorities have been playing cat and mouse with militant engineering workers. Six men—Francisco A. Diaz, Luis Montalban Lopez, Germen Ortega Arenza, Julian Hornes Uribarri, Jose Rubio Veira and Dionisio Allende—were arrested during a demonstration in Sestao, Bilbao on April 7 (see *Direct Action*, May). Two months later they appeared before the Public Order Tribunal and were released. Afterwards, however, the Regional Governor demanded that heavy fines should be paid by the engineering workers for their direct action. On refusing to comply, the six were re-arrested on June 8 and 9 and sent to Larrinaga jail, Bilbao.

C.P. AND THE BOMB (cont.)

the whole world over. No one surely can remain unmoved by the spectacle of such an utterly destructive weapon as the atomic bomb. Today Japan, tomorrow the world. And the headlines shriek 'Every living thing, human and animal, was seared to death . . .'

"The day the atomic bomb was first released on the unsuspecting inhabitants of Hiroshima civilisation faced final disaster. But ARE we entirely without hope? No, not quite. The urgency of getting rid of the state machines and warmongers the world over before they get rid of us is greater than ever today . . . To prevent 'anarchy and chaos' our rulers everywhere intend to uphold 'law and order'. But the law and order of governments and societies rest finally on the governors' right to use force. This force, employed by our rulers in many ways, has now presented itself in a new and terrifying shape—atomic annihilation."

Direct Action, August, 1945.

Consistency, except in turning somersaults, is impossible for the Communist Party. Whoever accepts heavy and regular subsidies from Moscow must carry out the foreign policy of the Russian Government, with all its twists and turns. Who pays the piper calls the tune. The only alternative is to seek a master who pays a bigger subsidy—say the Chinese Communist Party.

RAILWAYS BOARD ON 'GO-SLOW'

NEGOTIATIONS have been going on for over a year between the British Railways Board and ASLEF, on the question of bonus pay for drivers, but it is only in the last few weeks that the rank and file have decided to take direct action. Workers are often criticised, particularly on taking unofficial action, that insufficient time has been taken to consider the problem. Twelve months seems more than enough.

The basic difference between the footplatemen and the Board is that the former believe they have increased productivity and therefore a bonus payment should be forthcoming. The Board, for their part, state quite firmly that any bonus payment for footplatemen will not be granted without a further increase in productivity.

In the last two years footplate staff has been cut by 17%, and the gross saving by British Railways through general working economies has been in the region of £70 million. In 1957 a manning agreement was signed, it limited single manning—one man in a cab—to 200 miles, or six hours per shift, for stopping trains. This applies to passenger trains drawn by diesel or electric locos. On non-stop services the limit is 100 miles, or two-hour shifts. There is no single manning between midnight and 6 a.m.

British Railways Board is not satisfied with this arrangement and wishes to end the mileage limit on all trains. The only concession they will grant is that trains scheduled to run over 50 m.p.h. will be limited to 2½ hours of single manning. Trains running at under 50 m.p.h. will be limited to 3 hours single manning. Obviously this single manning operation can only go so far and the people to decide the stresses and strains are surely the footplatemen themselves; it can't be decided miles away from the scene of the crime.

As productivity bonus has been granted to other workers on British Railways, no wonder footplatemen are incensed over the delay. British Railways adopt the same policy of divide and rule as any private employer. The national press, as usual, use the wooden spoon to stir things up. As was to be expected passengers are choked *because it affects them directly*. If it didn't they couldn't care less and the dispute could go on for years for their part.

The *Financial Times* in its editorial of July 14 called on the British Railways Board to stand firm. It quotes the ASLEF wage increase last December and another claim which is due to be discussed, implying that this bonus is little more than a straight wage increase. What these people very conveniently forget is that conditions do not remain stable and that, if it takes 6 months or more to negotiate an increase, as it often does on British Railways, by the time the claim is met it is worthless.

The Prime Minister added his two pennyworth when he stated at Durham Miners' Gala: "If the magic phrase, working to rule, means slowing up or crippling essential services, then we had better change the rules. There is no room for working practices which impede production, outdated demarcation rules or insistence on overmanning any job." If any job is overstaffed, it's the House of Commons; if increasing hot-air counts for productivity, then Westminster is on a winner.

ASLEF met the Railways Board on July 21. Still no joy. Ray Gunter has intervened and has made no progress. The ASLEF leaders have decided to recall the union's Annual Conference. What the leadership will recommend is not known, but obviously they must have some sort of a compromise in mind, *otherwise they would have declared an official national work to rule*.

Annual Conference, only a few weeks ago, overwhelmingly instructed the Executive to proceed with bonus talks on the basis of no strings. Rank and file action has kept the union leadership tight on its mandate and it is obvious they want to come off. The ball is now firmly at the feet of Annual Conference: it is for them to decide and only them. Outside influences can scream blue murder, but it's the rank and file Loco men who have to do the work and when the re-convened Annual Conference makes its decision, it will remember this important fact.

SOLIDARITY NOT FOR DISCRIMINATION

ONE hundred and fifty workers at Stubbs Foundry, Openshaw, Manchester have just finished a 12-day strike over the sacking of their shop steward. He was sacked by the core shop foreman, for refusing to move out of the core shop while carrying out his duties as shop steward.

During the first 10 days of the strike the solidarity shown by the other members of the union in various parts of the country was excellent—and a major factor in successful conclusion of the dispute, which resulted in restoration of the shop steward. Only on the last two days was the strike made official. Unfortunately while the foundry were out, other shops remained at work during the dispute because the strike was unofficial.

BLUE AND WHITE, NO! PALE BLUE, YES!

A MOVE by the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union has failed to compel the Dock Labour Board to appoint NASD nominees to a local labour Board. The union took legal action after the Board had rejected its nominees for the Hull and Goole Dock Labour Board. The Board claimed that to make the appointment would interfere with the efficient operation of the docks.

Every year since 1954 NASD representatives were rejected on the grounds that NASD were not representative of port-workers. Nominees of the T & GWU were appointed instead. Being frank about the whole affair, neither the T & GWU nor the Board want the blue union represented. T & GWU consider they are kings of the castle in the docks and the Board are scared of the militancy of the blue union. Solidarity between the white union and the Board has proved very successful to date.

It is interesting to note that Mr. H. A. P. Fisher, Q.C. for the Board, made the point that NASD was expelled from the TUC for poaching members in Hull and that other unions on the National Joint Council had been unwilling to sit with it. Although the question of expulsion is a fact, introduction of it quietly added fuel to the fire.

Lord Chief Justice Parker said the Court rejected the NASD claim "with reluctance" and that Blue union members would leave the Court with a legitimate sense of grievance.

The Blue union (NASD) has always been the Cinderella in the docks and while the official hierarchy of the White union (T & GWU) is forced to recognise its existence, they would dearly love to rub it out. Solidarity between Blue and White rank and file dockers is pretty good and this must be strengthened at all costs. The ideal solution of course, would be one industrial union for all dockers; inter-union rivalry is the worst weakener for any industrial action, enabling employers to drive a wedge. Both the Blue and White union leaderships have their own axes to grind, both are bedevilled with political factions, so it is up to the joint rank and file to get down to terms of real solidarity.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

Direct Action

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION, BRITISH SECTION OF INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

Draughtsmen's leaflet calls for direct action

"SYNDICALISM", we are told by refugees from work, "is no longer relevant because the industrial workers are rapidly shrinking away, while white collar workers are increasing." Producing no evidence to support their "ever-decreasing manual worker" theory, they consider it unnecessary to tell us how they arrive at the conclusion of their syllogism.

In fact, Syndicalism has never confined its doctrine to "manual workers", but is equally applicable to all workers. From its beginning it has recognised that "white collar" workers suffer the same problems of rates, wages, prices, mortgages and insecurity as do their brothers and equally need the weapons of organisation and direct action.

This is being increasingly recognised by shop assistants, technicians, clerks and teachers. One encouraging example is given us by DATA, the highly-skilled Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians Association. Recently the *Daily Mail* was greatly upset by a six-page circular on strike tactics issued to the 205 branches of DATA by its secretary, George Doughty. DATA, which totally rejects the Wilson wage freeze, conducts on average one strike a week among some or other of its 67,000 members.

Much of the circular would be at home in a handbook of Syndicalism. "Industrial militancy is the only measure whereby our members can protect and improve their living standards in the society in which we live. That it is necessary for us to resort to this measure is a condemnation of that society."

"A successful strike must be followed by more demands, the pot must be kept boiling." This is the voice of experience. "The return to work will find your unit at a height of its unity and power. The members must be strong and alert, so as to gain further benefits from their enhanced position."

But strikes and higher wages only mitigate the pressure

Tweedledum and Tweedledee

"I do not think of them as the Honourable Member for X or Y or Z. I look at them and say 'investment trusts', 'capital speculators' or that is the fellow who is the Stock Exchange man who makes a profit on gild-edged."

James Callaghan, Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer, Swansea, July 3, 1965.

"I look around my colleagues and I see landlords, capitalists and lawyers. We are a cross-section of the national life and this is something that has never happened before."

Arthur Greenwood, Labour Lord Privy Seal, *Hansard*, August 17, 1945.

on the workers. Strikes should teach us the ultimate solution, common ownership and workers' control. The circular says the alternative to class war is to change the fundamental structure of society: "Only if our industrial policy helps to teach this can it effectively assist progress towards a society where man will receive the full reward for his work without strife."

The paragraphs on strike tactics are lessons learned generations ago by industrial workers. It is still necessary to teach them today and so long as capitalism blights the earth: "Once the strike has begun, the full machinery of militancy is switched on. Pickets must man the factory gates from the very first day, from the first shift to the last." Very sensible, too! The *Daily Mail* especially complains against the following advice to strike committees in the circular.

- "1. Involve as many people as possible.
- "2. Impress on colleagues the lifelong stigma of blacklegging.
- "3. Create pressure on the firm by creating real difficulties for it."

This advice is based on the vast experience of the industrial workers. In a hard fight these principles are absolute necessities. No. 2, in particular, was established as a condition of success by workers more than 100 years ago. It is still so.

The *Daily Mail*, in condemning DATA, praises George Brown and George Woodcock of the TUC, and has a special bit of praise for the darling of the Communist Party, Ted Hill of the Boilermakers, the "left wing militant" who opposed *all* wage freezes, but supported one by the Labour Government. By their friends you shall know them.

GROUP NOTICES

LONDON SWF: open meetings every Friday, at the Lucas Arms, 245 Grays Inn Road, WC1 (5 min. Kings Cross Station) 8.30 p.m.

Open-air-meetings every Sunday, Hyde Park, 3 p.m.

Open air meetings at East St. Market, Walworth, S.E.1, Sundays, 10.30 a.m. Help needed with lit. selling.

LONDON : SWF Industrial Action Sub-Committee (London). Readers wishing to help in the work of this committee are asked to contact the Secretary, c/o 34 Cumberland Rd., London E.17.

BEDFORD: Contact Doug Holton, 47 Dunville Road, Queens Park, Bedford. Meetings Wednesdays, 8.00 p.m. at above address.

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

BRISTOL: Contact John Coveney, 12 Normanton Road, Clifton, Bristol 8.

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

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

Meetings at Horseshoe Bar, Drury Street, Tuesdays, 8.00 p.m.

HULL & E. YORKS: Contact Rod Baker, 6 The Oval, Chestnut Avenue, Willerby, E. Yorks.

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

POTTERIES: Contact Bob Blakeman, 52 Weldon Ave., Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent.

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

TUNBRIDGE WELLS: Contact J. D. Gilbert Rolfe, 4 Mount Zion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

WITNEY: Contact Laurens Otter, 5 New Yatt Road, North Leigh, nr. Witney, Oxon.

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LAW AND THE WORKER

THREE BOOKS have appeared recently concerning the law and morality, or the law and the worker. These are Professor Wedderburn's *The Worker and the Law* (Pelican), *Labour Relations and the Law* by Professor Kahn-Freund (a comparative study, which should be worthwhile reading for anyone interested in the international scene) and Professor Hart's *Law, Liberty and Morality*, which is concerned with the field of sexual, rather than labour morality, but throws some interesting light on the attitude of judges.

Although Wedderburn's book is written for the lawyer and union official, rather than the rank and file, it contains a useful description of the law and how it has developed, as well as a surprisingly sustained attack on the judges for a social democrat, which ties in well with Hart's book.

Two legal ideas are basic to the worker, whether employed by the State or "private" industry. The most fundamental is property, on which all law—as opposed to morality—is based; one has only to think of the sentences on the train-robbers to see this. We can illustrate it by the Master-Servant relationship, the essence of which is the right of the Master to control the manner of work as well as the whole work situation. As Lord Denning put it, "the man is employed as a part of the business and his work is done as an integral part of that business." In other words, one is considered from the start as an object passively to be administered, as much as a lathe or a typewriter; one is property.

Secondly, the notion that a contract is sacred as a voluntary relationship freely entered into is ridiculous where contracts of employment are concerned, since every such agreement is made under duress in a society where social and economic penalties are forced on the non-employed.

These concepts are central to the Common Law attitudes of the judges, and the labour history of the last hundred

years bears out, as Wedderburn shows, their prejudices as members of the establishment, aristocracy, shareholding and managing class, insulated from the real world by their books and ritual and favoured for their role in the maintenance of class society by public obsequiousness and such gestures of the coming 25% pay rise for services rendered.

The way in which every piece of reformist legislation since 1867 has been eroded or perverted by them should make salutary reading for those who look to Parliament as the cure for all our problems. In 1854 more than 3,000 people were imprisoned for leaving or neglecting their work. In 1867 the Master and Servant Act was passed to cut down this criminal liability except in "aggravated" cases, nevertheless the convictions continued, reaching a high point of 17,100 prosecutions and 10,400 convictions in 1872. In 1875 an Act abolished "criminal conspiracy" in trade disputes, which had been the legal ground for all this persecution, whereupon the Judges imposed damages instead on the grounds of "civil conspiracy". In 1895 unionists were made liable under this heading for circulating a list of "blacklegs", whereas similar lists of militants made by employers were held not liable in 1892 and 1902 as "legitimate self interest"!

In 1906 the first Trade Disputes Act was passed as a result of union pressure to counter the effect of the famous Taff Vale case, where damages were enforced against Union funds and at last it was felt that freedom to organise and withdraw labour had been achieved, with certain important exceptions: gas, water and electricity workers, the police, aliens, seamen, civil servants; post office workers were also excepted—last year's strike being a notable example of large-scale civil disobedience.

There the position rested until 1964 and *Rookes v. Barnard*. This case was a classic example of the Judges unearthing "dead" Acts or cases to get round a statute. In "The Lady's Directory" case this was done by dredging up "the conspiracy to corrupt public morality", itself an abortion of the Court of the Star Chamber and, as Hart points out, this notion reminds one irresistibly of Nazi jurisprudence.

In *Rookes v. Barnard* it was done by resurrecting the vague tort of "civil intimidation", resulting in a breach of contract (not covered by the 1906 Act), the last case of which was in 1793 and concerned a man firing cannons to scare the locals from trading with his rival off the coast of the Cameroons! As Wedderburn says, "What stands out in the speeches of the Law Lords is their determination to reach this result and their plain satisfaction in doing so". "It is not possible to read the Law Lords' speeches without concluding that most of them possessed the strongest desire to find for the plaintiff." This decision was extended even further in *Stratford v. Lindley* (1964), which amounted to a "labour injunction" in the American tradition of legalised strike breaking.

As Professor Kahn-Freund has said, "one is under the impression that the repressive tendencies which in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had to be repeatedly counteracted by Parliament are on the point of being revived."

P.R.

Dock union organises on the right lines

THE NEW UNION for dockers and all portworkers reports "tremendous response for the idea of an industrial union from all ports in Great Britain." Formed in November, 1962 and registered in February, 1963 as the National Union of Portworkers, the young union was the result of deep discontent with the Transport and General Workers' Union, the lesser unions and the interference of political parties, growing non-unionism being the fruit of this condition. Working quietly and steadily at first, the new union is now able to spread its wings. Its principles make refreshing reading. Its aims are.

One big industrial union for all portworkers.

An industrial union which is thoroughly democratic in its constitution and day to day working.

Where officials are democratically elected and subject to recall by the membership if they fail to carry out the wishes of the members.

The industrial union is not to be affiliated to any political party.

The unity of all portworkers.

Our good wishes go to the union, whose aims are expressed in the language of Syndicalism and the IWW. We welcome its statement, "The union is no longer just an idea. It is in being, with a rapidly growing membership."

The old, old story

Notice in a Hampstead bookshop, during the successful Foyles strike: "We have no strike here. This business is run under worker management principles, the workers work and the managers manage."

We've heard something like that before.

WAGES AND PRICES: that old fallacy

THE theory that wages determine prices has long been a favourite with employers—"we can't give you workers an increase or we'll have to put our prices up and then we'll be forced out of business, and then you'll have no wages at all." The Labour Government's "Prices and Incomes Policy" generally opposes wage increases that exceed rises in productivity, on the grounds that such increases will put prices up.

A moment's reflection gives us serious doubts about the theory because Britain's share in the world market has been declining for many years despite the rising standard of living of the workers in the countries that are her competitors. However, we need to have no just doubts about a theory that was in fact discredited long ago, but a clear picture of the true relationship between prices and wages.

There are two economic laws that determine the prices at which commodities are sold, both independent of either falls or rises in wages.

The first is supply and demand. All prices tend to fluctuate more or less according to variations in supply and demand, rising as demand exceeds supply and falling as supply exceeds demand. Over a period, however, the fluctuations tend to balance out, not least because of the workings of competition, so that there is a central or average price. Moreover, if supply and demand are equal and so cancel each other, a price still remains. The central or average price of a commodity is its value; and obviously the law of value is more important than the law of supply and demand.

Now, commodities can be exchanged for one another on the market in certain proportions. A pair of shoes may be exchangeable for (in everyday terms, fetch the same price as) half a cwt. of sugar, 10 yards of cloth, one chair, and so on. Each differs from the others regarding the use to which it may be put, yet all have the same value. Why?

All these things have one thing in common (apart from

being useful). They are all the products of human labour. This labour is of different kinds—that of the shoemaker, sugar worker, textile worker or carpenter. And, as productive techniques advance, more and more different kinds of labour are expended in one commodity. But we can usefully talk of all these different kinds of labour as average labour, just as we can, for certain purposes, talk of all men as average men.

What determines the value of a commodity is the amount of labour embodied in it. So, commodities with the same value like those listed above, all embody the same amount of labour. This explains why their common value is well below that of a diamond necklace, though each is considerably more useful than it. Diamonds, being scarce, require a great deal more labour to produce.

A qualification must be added, though. Value only corresponds to the amount of socially necessary labour expended in production. A car made entirely by hand, but the same as that made on an assembly line, would have no greater value even though more labour had gone into it. Society's productive forces have reached the stage where car production needs much less labour than in the earlier days of the automobile industry. Other factors that affect the amount of socially necessary labour are the prevailing degree of skill and intensity of work.

Wages are the price of labour power. Labour power is a particularly important commodity for the worker since it is the only thing of permanence that he has to exchange for the necessities of life for himself and his children, whose labour power will replace his when he is worn out. And the value of labour power, like that of all other commodities, depends on the amount of socially necessary labour needed to produce it—to keep the worker and his family.

So, in selling his labour power, the worker gets value for value. How, though, does the capitalist make a profit? The answer is that labour power, like all commodities, has its use, or it would not find a buyer. The usefulness of labour power to the capitalist is that its application produces values many times its own. Thus the employer, the capitalist, as a condition of employment insists that the worker actually performs for him many more hours' work than represent the value of his own labour power, his ability to work.

Exploitation, then, takes place at the point of production, and the way for the worker to get back a greater share of what he produces is to wrest more in wages for the capitalist. Literally this means increasing the value of his labour power, which consists not only in the value of the bare means of subsistence but also of a recognised standard of living. The higher the standard the workers can force the capitalist to recognise, the better.

Now, of course, we can see why the theory that wages regulate prices is so popular with employers as a method of combatting wage demands. Rising wages mean falling profits. And the Labour Government, elected to run capitalism, just falls into line. For running capitalism means running society for the benefit of the capitalists, and using their methods—from H-bombs to phoney economic theories.

MARK HENDY

LETTER

Call to young workers

IT IS now painfully obvious that no successful apprentice strike can be launched without a determined effort to set up a united apprentice and young workers' organisation. We call on supporters of the political and libertarian left to drop their political differences in the attempt to improve apprentice conditions and organise the apprentice movement.

We appeal to all existing young worker and apprentice committees to increase their agitation. And call on all socialists to step up their propaganda on the apprentices' behalf. To all young workers in industry, we urge that they devote their energies to organising 'One United Industrial Youth Movement' to fight for our industrial demands.

M. Mitchell (AUFW)

B. Dean (ASSET)

J. Shrane (AUFW)

A. Barlow (T & GWU)

B. Bamford (ETU)

B. Shuttleworth

P. France (AEU)

(T & GWU)

V. Johnson (T & GWU)

R. Marsden (NUG & MW)

K. Brennan (NALGO)

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LABOUR COUNCIL APPOINTS GAULEITER

MUNICIPAL SOCIALISM is a term one still hears used now and again, but up to a couple of decades ago it was a high hope of many Labour Party enthusiasts, especially in Scotland and the north of England. All public utilities, such as gas and transport were, where not already so, to be owned by the boroughs; to these would be added municipal ownership and control of any service or business the Local Government Acts would allow. Where these acts did not allow such ownership, companies were to be formed, with unpaid councillors as directors, to develop business for the benefit of the town's prosperity, service to its citizens and to earn profits for the town's treasury. Numberless examples of municipal enterprise (the favourite examples were from Tory Birmingham), ranging from power stations to pawnshops, were listed in many books and countless articles.

Municipal Socialism would escape the dangers of Nationalisation, divorcement from the people and control by high-salaried bureaucrats. Because it would be in smaller units and local, the people could see it working, could criticise and suggest, for its organisers would be of the people and their next-door neighbours. A Labour Government would initiate Acts of Parliament to extend the scope of township enterprise. Such was the oft-repeated theme of *Forward* and the *Herald*, Labour's brightest, now both defunct, and other journals.

Yet the last extension of municipal scope was the introduction of "council houses" by a Tory Government in 1919, but with this distinction; council housing made no profit to aid the rates, as could most of the other enterprises suggested.

Labour governments did nothing to further local socialism, though many of the latter's warmest advocates, such as Tom

Johnston of Glasgow, were in high office. On the contrary, the 1945-51 Labour Governments sliced it by nationalising two of its principle components, electric power and gas, while the present Government vows to nationalise a third, water. "What next? What will be left a few years hence," ask some councillors.

The lowest plunge, something of the shape of things to come, has been taken by the Labour-controlled Newcastle City Council. Newcastle-on-Tyne is the first city in Britain to adopt the American principle of appointing a City Manager. Its manager will bear the title "Principal City Officer with Town Clerk." The proposal came from Councillor T. Dan Smith, one of those very Left persons who believe you should get into the Labour Party to make it more radical, etc. Dan, a clever man, has already secured the job of Chairman of the North Regional Economic Council. Now, who is the democratic revolutionary force who has secured the job of City manager?

W. Frank Harris, a Ford Motor Company executive, their manager of Product Planning. From Ford Mr. Harris received the very fine salary of £7,500 a year, Newcastle Socialism will pay him £9,000 a year, £1,500 a year more. Socialism pays even better than motor cars.

Perhaps Mr. Harris has a vast experience of town administration and such profound experience that he cannot be passed over? Councillor Dan Smith says that he does "not think Mr. Harris' lack of local authority experience need be a drawback." Of course not! On £9,000 a year he should be able to buy a book about it.

Just in case you think that Mr. Harris' appointment was made by Dan, by his Socialist self, I must add that the Labour councillors, lacking confidence in themselves or one another, engaged a London firm of consultants to do the sorting out—cost, £1,500.

Let Dan have the last Socialist word, "Most important, ~~he~~ will not be a first among equals like other town clerks. *He will be the boss.*"

It occurs to me that, in quoting the American example, the Labour Party ignore two things. When I argued against the manager principle with students of Des Moines University some years ago, they were silent when I voiced the fear of yet another clipping of the tender democratic plant. Then a very intelligent young woman said, "In any case, nothing can be worse than the bunch we now have in City Hall." "That's right, for sure," came in a great chorus. To that I had no reply. Wherever I discussed this issue, from Chicago to Laredo, I got the same retort. A dreadful comment.

The other factor is that usually before an American city adopts the manager principle, great public discussion goes on, generally followed by a plebiscite, a people's vote. Labour advocates of the American super-bureaucrat plan ignore these two factors. Do they wish to copy only the worst of American politics?

TOM BROWN

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, 7x4 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.

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

WANTED: People as extras for film about Spanish Civil War. I am making a film based on events in Barcelona between May 3-7, 1937. Filming sessions take place exclusively over weekends (weather permitting) and invariably in London area. For more details, please contact me at 47, Burntwood Lane, London, S.W.17 (WIM 7491). If I'm not in, please leave contact address or phone number—Pat Kearney.

INDUSTRIAL YOUTH—voice of militant apprentices and young workers. 2d. monthly from 25a Duffield Road, Salford 6, Lancs.

RESISTANCE—for Peace and Freedom. Bulletin of the Committee of 100, 6d. per copy, 10s. a year post free, cut rate on bulk orders. 13 Goodwin Street, London, N.4.

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

OXFORD ANARCHIST GROUP: Contact H. G. Mellor, Merton College, Oxford.

SURREY ANARCHISTS are invited to meetings on 1st Thursday of every month at Chris Torrance's, 63 North Street, Carshalton, Surrey (ring 3 times) and on 3rd Thursday of every month at M. Dyke's, 8 Court Drive, Sutton, Surrey. Both meetings 7.30 p.m.

S. WALES ANARCHIST GROUP: Correspondence to M. Crowley, 36 Whitaker Rd., Tremorfa, Cardiff. Lit. selling outside Home Stores, Queen St., Cardiff, Saturdays, 2-5 p.m.

ESSENTIAL READING—IN ANY YEAR

LENIN AND WORKERS' CONTROL

by Tom Brown

DIRECT ACTION Pamphlet No. 8 6d. (postpaid)

Unemployment: A 'socialist' dole?

MANY workers still look to Russia as a country where the worker to some degree or other gets a better deal than in the West. Despite repression, despite the Russian H-Bomb, they are inclined to listen with more or less sympathy to claims that Russian society contains some greater degree of justice, and that where this is frustrated from full flowering it is because Russia is surrounded by "reactionary" countries.

According to an article that appeared recently in the Russian government magazine "Problems of Economics", however, this view is not a little distorted. Soviet Russia, hailed so often as "the land without unemployment", has a serious unemployment problem on her hands. In Leningrad and Moscow between 6 and 7% of all workers are without jobs; throughout the country as a whole the figure is higher and in Siberia it is more than 25% and reaches 40% in some parts.

So bad is the situation that the author of the article, an economist, advocates a break with Russia's official "socialist" values. In the country where "he who does not work shall not eat" he puts forward the revolutionary idea of—the dole!

The reasons for the crisis are given in another government magazine article, this time in "Problems of Philosophy" (these problems!). Backward industries, particularly those in backward areas like Siberia, are going over increasingly from crude manual labour to the use of more machinery. Unskilled workers, for example, wielding pick and shovel, are being replaced by bulldozers.

A worker in Russia and one in the West are again shown to have the same basic problems. Advances in productive techniques guarantee neither of them a higher standard of living, and may well take away that living altogether. That is capitalism, the system of society in which all useful persons live by working for wages, and are denied the full enjoyment of the fruits of their labour. Capitalist society, East or West, may be able to send men into space, but on the ground men stand idle and impoverished because their masters can find no way to exploit them.

Blyth dairy is 'black'

BLYTH Model Dairies of Bridgegate, Netford do not employ union labour. In fact, the condition of work is that employees do not belong to a union. Twelve women employees have been given the sack for joining the NU of G & MW. The proprietor of the dairies said the women could come back if work was available and they were not trade unionists.

Obviously Blyth Model Dairies should be boycotted in the old IWW tradition. Maybe we should get out a list of employers who should be boycotted and circulate it to all trade unionists. Probably there would be a few injunctions flying around, still, so what?

Subscribers who are about to change their addresses are asked to notify us of the new one in advance. This way, we keep track of our subscribers and they go on getting "Direct Action" without any interruption.

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IWW ORGANISES MIGRATORY WORKERS

Seattle, Wash.

SUMMER has arrived in these Benighted States and with it a vast herd of migratory wage slaves, all travelling around the country in broken-down jalopies, freight trains and hitch-hiking. They are searching for work on ranches, farms and orchards. Others are slaving for the agrarian masters for low wages, long hours and living under miserable conditions in dirty, insanitary shacks. Most of them are unorganised and the majority are scissor-bills who never were in a strike or walked a union picket line. Some try to forget their miserable existence by getting drunk on alcoholic bug juice and using dope.

This year the Agricultural Workers Industrial Union 110 of the IWW has started an educational and organisation drive among the migratory wage slaves and their families, which will extend all the way from New York State across to Washington and California on the West Coast.

In Yakima, Washington, the IWW stationary delegate in that valley has received threatening phone calls from the bosses' rats and finks and has had petrol bombs thrown at his house by night-riding hoodlums. All the large ranches and fruit orchards in Yakima Valley are owned by outside banks. These agrarian capitalists are extremely anti-union and very reactionary. The Valley is ruled by a vigilante outfit called the Associated Farmers, said to number about 1,000 locally. They will attack union picket lines at their ranches and orchards with pickhandles, while they wear white arm-bands to avoid the sad mistake of assaulting each other.

Nevertheless, the IWW has forced the brutal masters of Yakima Valley to raise pay, shorten hours and better working conditions and members of the IWW are very active spreading propaganda among the wage slaves and lining up new members. These slaves are badly exploited by their capitalist masters, as well as being preyed upon by hi-jackers, tinhorn gamblers, bootleggers, religious fakirs and phoney politicians. They need the IWW to give these parasites a damn good licking.

SKIDROAD SLIM

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