

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Building workers win key struggle : Joe Hill, 1915-1965 : Tyne docks : Industrial unions

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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CAR WORKERS FACE CRISIS

IN SEPTEMBER, union officials met Ray Gunter and formulated a plan to beat unofficial strikes in the motor industry and tighten control over rebel members. This emerged during talks Harold 'the Good' Wilson and Ray 'the Repile' Gunter had with motor manufacturers and union officials at 10 Downing Street.

Under the plan, car bosses were told they must accept the closed shop as a condition of employment, while union leaders would discipline members for taking unofficial action; this would include expulsion from the union, hence legal blacklisting. Both sides were told to consider this plan and report back to Ray in October.

WHAT IS THE MOTIVE BEHIND THIS PLAN?

The motive is clear: far from being a plan to beat wild-cats, it is an attempt to prop up the authority of so-called union leaders, who have continually sold out to the motor bosses and are now faced with mass rejection of the unions. Thousands of people who once believed in trade unionism

now refuse to have anything to do with it.

Over the last ten years, the constitution of the unions has been fully exposed; remember BLSP, Standard Triumph's. On a number of occasions, both at BMC and Ford's, where attacks were made on shop stewards and militants, the gutter press and some union officials presented these people as wild-cats, implying they had taken action without warning. In fact, many times they had taken their problems right through the required TU procedure without result.

For 15 years, members have demanded the right to hold meetings within Ford's in their own time; Ford's have always insisted meetings can be held only with permission. Officials never accepted this on paper, but in practice did nothing about it. Members have never been able to discover how to get permission, meanwhile three major strikes have involved meetings. There were also two strikes where members were 'conned' into returning to work, to let ballots arrive at a democratic decision. Because these returned a vote to strike, officials were forced to call strikes and call them off again; once they even held two ballots and, getting the same result, still refused to take action. During the 1962 dispute, after two official strike calls were put off, the case of the victimised stewards was sent to a so-called Independent Court of Inquiry. Officials hailed this as a major victory, as did many of the members—thinking that, because they had a good case, justice would be done. They soon found the Ministry of Labour decides the terms of reference of these inquiries and they have nothing to do with justice.

The terms of reference were to look into the causes and circumstances of the dispute, not to decide who was right and wrong. This is what the officials had exchanged for the strike mandate from their members.

THE INQUIRY

The inquiry opened with Pro Jack, "another hatchet man", asking who wished to speak first. The trade union side, made up of 22 officials, sat on one side, Ford's on the other. Mr. Blakeman for the management spoke first, saying he did not feel it would be beneficial to the 17 stewards concerned to have their records read out and, if the union representatives agreed, he would submit the cases to Pro Jack and the union side, without making known their contents, as doing so could mean the 17 would have difficulty in gaining future employment. (He had obviously already made

cont. on page 2, col. 1

Three libertarians freed in Spain

THREE LIBERTARIANS, serving long jail terms in Franco Spain, have recently been freed. They are French student Alain Pecunia, sentenced to 12 years in October, 1963 at the age of 17; Francisca Roman, jailed in 1962 for 12 years, and Mariano Pascual, who received 3 years, 3 months in August, 1964.

Many others remain inside—for instance, Pecunia's co-defendants Guy Battoux and Bernard Ferre and young SWF member Stuart Christie, now in the second year of a 20-year sentence.

In Madrid the trial is pending of six ASO members—Jose Pujol, Ignacio Carvajal, Jose Elhombre, Antonio Martinez, Salvador Domenech and Juan Valdenebro. Another, Cipriano Damiano, accused of being a member of ASO and Secretary of the CNT National Committee, escaped after arrest; the fascist authorities were demanding an 18-year sentence for him.

The campaign to free all political prisoners in Spain and Portugal must be redoubled, until the last of Franco's victims is at liberty.

CAR WORKERS FACE CRISIS (cont.)

up his mind how the case would go; it was labelled 'Submission 13' and remains a mystery).

Having gained agreement on this most important point, Blakeman complained of the lack of control officials had over shop stewards and the enormous amount of propaganda put round the plant by stewards and members of a certain political party. His main theme, though, was the failure of officials to maintain discipline and control members.

When Pro Jack called on the spokesman for the trade union side, Wilf Beard had fallen asleep and had to be woken. The main argument from the unions was to defend themselves, rather than their members. The officials also criticised the shop stewards' committee, but pointed out that, because most of the meetings of the joint shop stewards' committees were held in their own time, there was little they could do, other than recommend that they should be disbanded.

After a two-day inquiry, 17 stewards were tried, convicted and sentenced, without even hearing the charges read out, let alone defending themselves. It was a fine example of British "justice".

THE RESULTS

Within the plant speed-up continued, all appeals and resolutions to the officials failed to stop the deterioration of established working conditions. Many disgusted members refused to pay their contributions.

The T & GWU tried to regain some of them by offering 'in-compliance' members full benefit for the payment of two shillings. This failed. Recently, they tried another worn-out joke, by threatening to call an official strike if the company refused to negotiate a pay increase. The NUVB, not to be outdone, recently announced that if the company refused to pay the increase, it would withdraw the labour of its 4,000 members; in fact, this union never had 4,000 members, even in its stronger days in Ford's, and not so long ago the Executive threatened to shut the Broad Street, Dagenham office if the decline continued.

Ford workers have heard it all before. The threat of strike action was supposed to bring rebels running back to the union, but this didn't work either, so the NUVB called a mass meeting, with Assistant General Secretary, Charlie 'Weasel' Gallagher in attendance to tell a handful of members it was their responsibility to get everyone they worked with back in the union. He said the NUVB's militant record dated back to the Tolpuddle Martyrs, but members can't remember that far. They can, however, look at the record of treachery and sell-outs they have experienced.

When Ray and Harold summoned all the little reptiles to Downing Street in September, they must have been panic-stricken, what with members refusing to pay their cons and knowing full well that, with any more interference from the bosses and Government, they could well lose the lot. On October 4, according to press reports, there was no mention of the plan, instead a new plan was presented, which would not expose the complicity of the officials so much. In place of the present system of Joint Management Committees, they intend to set up a joint Labour Council, with an Independent Chairman, chosen by Ray 'the Reptile'. Jack Scamp, Ray's choice, is to prepare a report on what is wrong with the

Motor Industry. (He will be remembered as a member of the Devlin Committee). The Joint Labour Council will have the power to investigate disputes even before they start, and ask Ray 'the Reptile' to set up separate courts of inquiry if necessary. He will also have access to confidential documents on both sides and can call witnesses. In fact, he will have what is described as unique authority.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE

Understandably, members feel bitter with their officials, but contracting out of the unions will not solve the problems of the class struggle. For years the movement has struggled along without purpose: as a result, the reptiles have been able to manipulate members to suit the capitalist economy.

Workers in the motor industry are the only people who can solve the problems that exist, because they *are* the industry and their purpose should be to organise a rank and file movement with workers' control as its objective. Their own experience should tell them they owe no loyalty to any TU or political institutions, therefore politics should not be allowed to interfere with their endeavours. Remember the great record of the rank and file workers at Ford? Compare it with the records of officialdom: look at 1961, when Ford workers, without the aid of union officials and despite them, took direct action and won the 40-hour week. In 1965, the man hailed as an expert negotiator and another creature from the deep, Sid Green at £4,500 per year, has been unable to negotiate the 40-hour week, but been promised it for October 1966; no doubt railwaymen will know how to deal with him!

Should Harold or Ray sincerely wish to solve the problems in the motor industry—or any other industry—they should contact the SWF and purchase some of our very good pamphlets on Workers' Control and many others; they are much cheaper than White Papers and 'public inquiries' and far more practical.

E. STANTON

Industrial militants get together

WORKERS from most major sectors of industry took part in a lively and informative discussion on "The Shop Stewards' and Unofficial Movement in Industry" on October 4. The meeting was held at the Conway Hall, London, and organised by the industrial action sub-committee of the Syndicalist Workers' Federation.

Discussion ranged from instances of both successful and unsuccessful strike action to the current efforts by the bosses, union leaders and Labour politicians to bring the unions under further state control.

It seemed generally agreed that workers' control of industry was not something to be won without a struggle, and that it was necessary to counteract in every way the false schemes of those who wanted to reduce this revolutionary idea to a mere seal set by the workers on their own exploitation.

The meeting was ably opened by Joe Thomas (print) and Tom Brown (engineering). It is hoped to hold similar London gatherings for the constructive exchange of information and ideas at regular intervals.

MARK HENDY

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.

BUILDING WORKERS WIN KEY STRUGGLE

THE building trade is one of the most difficult of all industries to organise, nearly as bad as the Merchant Service. A fair proportion of the labour is itinerant and, if one finally manages to get some sort of rank and file organisation established, the job finishes and you have to start all over again somewhere else.

Generally speaking, working and safety conditions on building sites are diabolical and would not be tolerated for one moment in a large factory. The job itself is always on the 'hurry up', with piecework and contract schedules to be fulfilled. As one can imagine all this makes for a pleasant working life.

'LABOUR ONLY'

If this is not enough, building employers are real hard nuts, take everything and give nothing. No wonder they make small fortunes.

Then you come down to the real snides of the industry, who are nothing more than glorified ponces—'Labour Only Contractors'. These villains are sub-contractors to the main contractor on the site, and not to be confused with the specialised sub-contractors dealing with heating, electrical installation and plumbing.

'Labour Only Contractors' are purely for labour only; nine times out of ten they are not parties to national agreements. Many workers have been caught by these contractors leaving them high and dry—no wages, no insurance stamps, no nothing.

These leaders of the building industry were responsible for the recent Barbican dispute, where 380 carpenters were locked out. The whole affair was sparked off by the site committee calling for regular union card inspection. Some men refused to show their cards, some eventually joined the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers (ASW), the remainder were challenged again at a later date to show their cards. When they again refused, the site committee drew the only conclusion possible, that they were 'non union' and decided not to work with them until they proved their TU membership.

SACKINGS

Immediately 380 men were sacked. Turriffs, the main contractor, thus defied the Working Rule Agreement. Turriffs' agent, dismissing the men, claimed breach of agreement under the Contracts of Employment Act.

A disputes commission declared for unconditional reinstatement of all men sacked, to be followed by negotiations on all disputed matters. Turriffs refused to operate the decision of the Commission and claimed the right to retain

124 scabs, introduced to the site by forcible methods, and to pick and choose who would be re-engaged. This was the second time in a matter of months the workers at Turriffs had faced mass sackings—and the bother each time was 'Labour Only Contractors', who employed tactics deliberately designed to split the workers, paying higher rates, etc. In return, they could shift them anywhere, any time, cutting the job to ribbons in the process, with inferior labour and poor workmanship due to speed-up.

Union officials tried to negotiate a return to work, but Turriffs were not interested: they had 124 scabs (to whom they gave free dinners) and would take back the selected few who signed an undertaking not to take industrial action.

DOGS

The scabs came and left the site in fear of their skins, they even tried to leave in concrete mixers to avoid the pickets. At one stage a pitched battle took place at the entrance to the site. A foreman tried to drive a lorry full of men on to the site and bricks were hurled to and fro. Turriffs' security officer kept the two sides apart by threatening to set Alsatian dogs on the men. Around the site entrance it looked like a policeman's ball, coppers and 'blood wagons' everywhere. One coach arrived to pick up the scabs, but the driver, to his credit would not pass the picket line. The short time I was down there I noticed several lorries pull up with materials, the drivers chatted the pickets and drove the stuff away.

Eventually the strike was made official by the T & GWU, ASW and the AUBTO and again Turriffs were asked to reinstate the men. Harry Weaver, general secretary of the AUBTO, said that if the company refused this request the unions would assume that it was a lock-out. Mr. Weaver then played the tune that employers love to hear *that as soon as the men were reinstated the unions would set about disciplining the shop stewards at other London building sites who have organised unofficial strike action in support of the Turriff men*. One hopes that this was a 'tongue in cheek' remark; if it wasn't, building in London will grind slowly to a halt.

On Thursday, October 14, it was agreed that all men working on the site on September 21, when the 380 were sacked, presenting themselves for work would be reinstated on the basis "All shall be members of a trade union or willing to join." Also, Turriff's 'black circular' was withdrawn regarding strike action.

WHERE THEY BELONG

The strike was won, the push toward 100% trade unionism was one more step forward.

This dispute should strengthen all building workers in their opposition to 'Labour Only Contractors'. Building employers and trade union leaders can shout all day, and the 'Labour Only Contractors' will continue to ponce; but determined, organised rank-and-file action can put them where they belong—down the sewers with the other rats.

NOTE: On October 18, 1,200 of the 2,000 workers on Fiddler's Ferry (Lancs.) power station site stopped work in protest against 'Labour Only'. At time of going to press further action is being considered.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

SWF EVE-OF-CONFERENCE SOCIAL

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

LUCAS ARMS, 245 Grays Inn Rd., London, W.C.1.

(5 minutes from King's Cross station)

8.0—11 p.m.

ADMISSION 2s. 6d

MUSIC—ENTERTAINMENT—BAR—GOOD COMPANY

Direct Action

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

No Africans need apply

WILL HE? Won't he? And at the time of going to press Mr. Smith has not declared UDI for Rhodesia.

When Lord Gardiner and Mr. Bottomley visited Rhodesia in February this year Mr. Smith was in the same frame of mind as he is now—UDI only.

On June 9, Mr. Smith was returned with even greater support for his Right-wing Government and as a result there are 50 European MPs on the Government side, opposed by 13 Africans, one Indian and one European Liberal Independent. One thing about these boys, they certainly advertise their political chicanery, without batting an eyelid.

During the recent talks with Harold Wilson, Mr. Smith gave the impression that only the Africans were opposed to UDI, when in fact the opposition is far more widespread. The Central African branch of the Institute of Directors overwhelmingly oppose UDI, Association of Rhodesian Industries oppose, so do the Association of Chambers of Commerce. These boys are worried about their pockets and, when these are affected, they can exert considerable pressure in the right places.

FINANCE

Wilson and Smith were poles apart in their discussions, they never looked like reaching an agreement. Smith wants to ensure the security of his white police state, while Wilson is content with the *status quo*. To justify his position, Smith quietly points to the excesses of African governments. Britain trained them, so what do we expect—revolutionary syndicalists?

The fact that stands out a mile is that everything revolves around finance. If it didn't, no one would worry two hoots about UDI, or no UDI, all this allegiance to the Queen is a load of old toffee. There has been no real concern expressed about the African majority; Wilson paid lip service and included them in his five points, but if UDI blows over, Smith can stick as many as he likes in jail and there will be no protest from the Labour Government.

Smith's latest act of putting Garfield Todd under house arrest shows the outlook of Rhodesia; they have always had a close affinity with S. African policies. The Cecil Rhodes outlook, the benevolent white settler helping the illiterate African by drinking his very life's blood.

What can one say about this whole sickening episode, only express solidarity with Africans to sling out Smith's racist regime and that of any other bright spark who has ideas about forming a government, and including aspiring African politicians. The only difference between black and white masters is one of degree.

DIRECT ACTION PRESS FUND—OCTOBER, 1965

Capel Curig, Caerns., H.D. 7s.; Portland, Oregon, J.C. £1 15s.; St. Cloud, Minnesota, M.A. 14s. 6d.; London, D.R. 10s.; London E.15, E.S. 9s.; Hong Kong, M.S. 7s.; Dartford, K.B. 3s. 6d.; London N.W.6, C.F. 5s.; London N.1, J.P. 7s.; Colchester, S.T. £1 1s.; London W.9, W.C. £1; Glasgow S.E., H.McI. 5s.; Glendaruel, Argyll, H.D. 13s. 6d.; Aberdeen, G.R. 1s. 2d.; Longhrea, Co. Galway, S.G. 10s.; C.N.T. p/c sales £1; SWF London Group £3 19s. Total £13 7s. 8d.

A pressing question . . .

DEAR READER,

We are appealing to you for help in producing a bigger and better DIRECT ACTION.

Our present platen press is inadequate both because of the limit on paper size and because of its speed. We acquired it in 1951 and it has been very useful. But in the present period of growth of interest in Syndicalist ideas we must have a better one to cope with our expanding needs.

Also, the main criticism of DIRECT ACTION has been the quality of production. We have been well aware of these faults. A new and better press will overcome them.

We intend to buy a larger, faster-running flatbed machine. For this we need £400 to pay for the machine and more money to replenish and expand our stock of movable type for headlines and other displayed material.

Financial assistance can be of two forms:

1. Donations—can you send a sum right away to help us pay the deposit on the new machine? And/or:
2. Pledges—will you guarantee to send a fixed sum regularly (either weekly or monthly)?

Obviously, we would prefer to buy the press outright immediately, and so avoid hire-purchase interest payments. Which course we take depends on you.

The intention on our part is firm. We need the new press to print other things beside the paper. Among these are pamphlets, broadsheets, strike bulletins, and so on. It is always our aim to provide assistance to day-to-day struggles against wage-slavery and in order to deal satisfactorily with situations as they arise it is vital that we have our own press.

As far as DIRECT ACTION is concerned, it is our aim to start the seventh year of the present series with the bigger paper on the new machine.

All money will be acknowledged.

SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION
NATIONAL COMMITTEE

November, 1965.

GROUP NOTICES

SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION 7th NATIONAL CONFERENCE London, Sunday, November 14

For further information contact the Secretary, 34 Cumberland Road, London, E.17.

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

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.

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

GLASGOW: Contact R. Lynn, 2B Saracen Head Lane, Glasgow, C.1. Meetings at Horseshoe Bar, Drury Street, Tuesdays, 8.00 p.m.

HULL & E. YORKS: Contact Jim Young, 67 Sandringham Street, Hull.

MANCHESTER & DISTRICT: Contact Jim Pinkerton, 12 Alt Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lanes.

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

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

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.

JOE HILL: the man who never died

JOE HILL, born Joel Hagglund at Gavle, Sweden, on October 7, 1879, died at the age of 36 before a firing squad at Salt Lake City, Utah on November 19, 1915—fifty years ago this month. He fell, riddled by bullets in a cold prison yard, the victim of a frame-up by the police and copper bosses, but his name lived on to become a legend in the working-class movement, the oft-sung composer of "Pie in the Sky", "Casey Jones", "The Rebel Girl" and many other songs that have helped to keep picket lines on the move.

Like many other Swedish workers, Joe emigrated to the US just after the turn of the century and spent some time on the East Coast, earning his living playing the piano in a Bowery saloon and doing other casual work. With thousands of others, of all nationalities, he joined the great drift West, working in the wheatfields, laying pipelines, digging copper, smelting and, ultimately, arriving on the Californian coast as a docker, based at the port of San Pedro.

THE SINGING UNION

These were the years of working-class ferment. The militant, syndicalist IWW was founded in 1905 and, five years later, a local was formed at San Pedro, with Joe among its earliest card-carriers. A born musician, Joe was quick to realise the value of songs in the IWW's great organising drive. One of the first he penned was "Casey Jones—the Union Scab" and by 1912 it had achieved pride of place in the IWW's Little Red Songbook. Others quickly followed and Joe set his songs to popular melodies, some of them well-known through the street-corner meetings of the Salvation Army. One was "The Preacher and the Slave", better known as "Pie in the Sky", and set to the tune of "The Sweet Bye and Bye." Twenty years after Joe's legal murder this was to become the marching song of unemployed American masses during the great depression of the 1930's. "Work and pray," they sang, "Live on hay, you'll get pie in the sky when you die—it's a lie!"

But the period of Hill's song-writing was also that of the Wobblies' great free-speech fights and here, too, his ditties helped the organisation's struggle. Joe was badly beaten up by the police at one of these free-speech meetings, in San

Diego—and the scars he then received were to be the subject of perjured testimony against him during his trial for murder three years later.

The Wobblies' great strength lay in the mobility of its militant organisers, who helped build strong unions among the migratory farm and railroad workers, in the lumber camps, on board ship, in the textile mills. Among the unorganised and viciously exploited workers were the copper miners of Bingham Canyon, in the State of Utah, where 440 men of a total labour force of only 5,000 were killed through "accidents" in 1911. Wages were rock-bottom low; the mine-owners' profits sky-high. During 1912 and 1913, the IWW moved into Utah, among its organisers—Joe Hill. On January 3, 1914, two of his fellow-workers in the Salt Lake City local wrote in the IWW paper, *Solidarity*, "Concerted action is now going on all over the country to imprison members of our organisation on some pretext or other." A prophetic statement.

Seven days later, two masked men entered the Salt Lake City grocery store of Morrison, an ex-policeman turned tradesman. He and his elder son were shot dead before the eyes of the younger son. Three days later, Joe Hill was arrested on a charge of murder, although the 13-year-old boy could not identify him. At first he declined to let the IWW handle his defence, saying the organisation's cash was needed for more urgent purposes. Later, however, he agreed that defence was also a form of organisation—and a nationwide campaign was launched. Complete details of his trial, during June 1914, are nowhere available, since the transcript conveniently disappeared from the court archives soon afterwards. But even from newspaper clippings it is clear that this was a classic case of capitalist "justice" framing a rebel worker. Some of the perjured evidence and blatant contradictions in the prosecution case are listed in Barry Stavis' book, *The Man Who Never Died*.

LARKIN'S TRIBUTE

The trial, the subsequent appeal and Joe's appearance before the Board of Pardons were all governed by one overriding factor—the determination of Utah's copper bosses to have Joe Hill's life. A great international campaign to save him, the intercession of the Swedish Government and of US President Woodrow Wilson were all unavailing.

Twenty-two minutes after sunrise, on Friday, November 19, 1916, the State of Utah murdered Joe Hill. His body was handed over to the IWW. Thousands of workers filed past his coffin in the undertaker's parlour at Salt Lake City. He was taken for cremation to Chicago, where a procession more than a mile long followed him to the cemetery. Earlier, at the Coliseum there had been funeral orations in English, Swedish, Russian, Hungarian, Polish, Yiddish, Spanish, Italian, German and Lithuanian by Joe's sorrowing fellow workers. Said Ireland's Jim Larkin, "Joe Hill was shot to death because he was a member of the fighting section of the American working class, the IWW."

On the night before he died, Joe penned his famous Last Will—"My body? Ah, if I could choose I would to ashes it reduce, And let the merry breezes blow My dust to where some flowers grow." The wish was carried out... his ashes were scattered in every American State except Utah, in Latin America, Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa. "Don't Mourn, Organise!" was Joe's last message to his comrades. His songs are still helping us do that, fifty years later.

Glasgow barmen get the message

A LITTLE PIECE of pub history was made on Friday, October 8 in the Crystal Bell at Glasgow Cross, Gallowgate. While the public were supping up their drinks, the barmen had a lightning strike. Syndicalist tactics are becoming the fashion these days, though usually done unconsciously. The barmen thought one of their colleagues was being sacked, so service was stopped for two hours and the pub doors were closed. Several customers tried the doors, disbelieving what was going on. Finally came an official from the brewery, who spoke to the barmen. Then the pub was re-opened and service resumed.

The manager, Lawrence Anderson, explained: Douglas is not being sacked. He is being given a part-time job with the brewery firm. Douglas Ogilvey and his fellow barmen were not so sure if this was really the case before they left the beer taps idle, however. Syndicalist ideas are filtering through. I don't mean through the beer taps. DA is occasionally left in the Crystal Bell.

R. LYNN

KEN HAWKES

TYNE DOCKERS WIN TIMBER DISPUTE

NEWCASTLE dockers have at last won their dispute over the handling of packed timber cargoes (DIRECT ACTION, Oct.). The same cargoes that have brought dockers out in the past in Liverpool, Belfast and, now, Bristol. Independent arbitrators agreed to by both sides upheld the dockers' claim. This was after the men had resisted an attempt to make them handle the disputed cargo before the arbitrators had inspected it, and had also staged a two-day unofficial walkout because some firms were hiding facts from the arbitrators.

There has been some considerable talk of the strike causing loss of trade for the Tyne to other East Coast Ports, and talk of loss of jobs in Tyne docks as a result. Dockers' national organisation to stop the unloading of redirected ships from the strikebound area will overcome this.

SCABS IN GOWNS

ACADEMIC staff at Durham University scabbed on their 100 technician colleagues during the one-day official strike on October 12. They did the preparing work for lectures and practicals in the laboratories, which the technicians usually do. In any future stoppages the technicians will have to consider picketing *inside* the buildings.

A GOOD SENSE OF TIMING

MUSICIANS in Newcastle's Northern Sinfonia Orchestra staged a lightning strike in Paris on October 14. This was at the final rehearsal for a concert they were there to perform. The strike occurred when they found their numbers swelled by amateur string players and also because their performance was to be broadcast without the proper fees being paid. Their united action won the day, and the concert went on.

LABOUR PARTY POLITICS v. DEMOCRACY

NEWCASTLE'S Labour-controlled Council seem to be out to change everything these days. What with the City Manager, Regional Councils of one kind or another and the new Tyne County, it might be imagined that a few changes

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

TYNESIDE YOUTH AGAINST THE BOMB—Folk song social. 5th November, 7.30 pm, Bridge Hotel, Newcastle. Admission 2s. 6d.

OXAN—Quarterly bulletin of Oxford Anarchists. Specimen copy 1s. from L. Otter, 5 New Yatt Rd., North Leigh, Witney, Oxon.

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

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.

for the better should occur through all this ruthless centralisation.

Take the Policy Advisory Committee for example, set up three years ago to "co-ordinate and advise" other committees and thus avoid duplication and red tape. In parliamentary committees and other local committees membership is proportional to the various parties elected, but this was not good enough for the PAC which is a select little band of nine Labour members—"Dan Smith's good boys".

It is an official committee, but the minutes are usually kept secret and everybody is excluded from its deliberations—press, public, even other Labour Council members. This of course is illegal under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960. Perhaps it is time for the public to assert its rights.

Having started work (at least, one presumes that is what goes on behind the locked doors), the PAC conveniently stopped advising and began dictating. The stage has now been reached when it decides important matters without reference to any other committee, let alone the dupes who elected its members. Did the other councillors know, for example, that in May last year the PAC agreed in principle to paying a cool million of ratepayers' money towards the Tyneside scheme?

RESPECT

"THE Labour Party Conference ended at usual with the notes of 'The Red Flag'. Labour leaders take the song's sentiments about as seriously as they do Father Christmas, but it's a nice token of respect to a Socialist past."

The Journal, Newcastle, 2.10.65.

DIRECT ACTION REPORTER

INDUSTRIAL YOUTH ORGANISE

We got off to a good start this month when the 'Union of Industrial Youth' distributed its first leaflets in and around Manchester. Unfortunately, after a couple of thousand leaflets had gone out at factories, coffee bars and technical colleges, it was not just the young workers who were showing interest. The police have challenged us on a couple of occasions, without getting anywhere. And local employers are showing interest hostile in tone. Also the press, both national and local, are creeping and crawling all round us.

It is now only a matter of time before we attempt to turn the UIY into a national union of young workers. We therefore call upon our friends in the SWF to put the struggles of the industrial young as the first job to be tackled by syndicalists and socialists alike, on the shop-floor.

Preaching and parroting we don't want, but help in organisation and assistance chatting up the lads all over the show, would be valuable. Also the distribution of the UIY leaflet would be handy; as yet it's only been published in Manchester. Then there's always our paper, INDUSTRIAL YOUTH, which we're trying to turn into an effective weapon for the apprentice and young workers' movement.

THE INDUSTRIAL YOUTH COMMITTEE

Subscribe to DIRECT ACTION

Yearly subscription rate 6s. 6d. (US & Canada \$1—dollar bills preferred to cheques, owing to loss in negotiating latter) from SWF, 34 Cumberland Road, London E.17. Cheques and p.o.'s payable to Syndicalist Workers' Federation.

ONE PRODUCT, ONE UNION

IF UNITY IS STRENGTH, 'twere folly to have half-a-thousand unions. There was some public discussion and wonderment when it was revealed that Ford's workers were divided among 22 unions at the Dagenham factory, but there only one commodity is produced. I have worked in more general engineering factories where twice that number of unions were "organised". Syndicalism, as one of its many principles, says, "Let us first have one union for each industry." That makes sense to most industrial workers and in any case is more dignified than twenty-odd sets of union officials, jostling to be head of the queue into the firm's office.

Revolutionary industrial unionism, or Syndicalism, is easy to understand. First a factory produces a certain commodity, such as a motor car, or a number of related commodities, say clothing. The goods are not made by one person but by many, each adding his work at the appropriate stage—machinists, assemblers, packers, storemen, clerks, cleaners and others, all needed to produce a commodity which is the fruit of a social process. Why should they not all be in one union?

This is clearly seen by workers. Who opposes it? If there was but one union, there would be only one president, one general secretary, one executive council and so on. What would happen then to the other 21 outfits at Ford's? Does a man sign his own dismissal? And behind, treading on the heels of office-holders, are hundreds of groups and persons who look to trade union office as their career. If hundreds of unions were to go by amalgamation, there would be fewer jobs for an ever-increasing horde of egotistical political aspirants.

Of course, some unions masquerade behind an industrial label. The AEU, for example, seeks to enlist workers in every industry, as does the ETU, evading the cardinal principle: one commodity or service, one union. To organise industrially, it is not enough to enlist men who all work in one industry. We have organisations of Post Office anglers, Catholic teachers and Protestant policemen, organised by occupation, but not organised on the job. Industrial unionism is so called because it organises men and women where they work, not where they sleep, as do most unions; and the place of decision and power to carry out that decision is at one's place of work.

Our opponents often say, "You want industrial unions, Sweden has them and the TUC recently sent a delegation to Sweden to study their industrial unions and found that workers there have lost the right to strike and may be jailed for not accepting an official wage decision."

The TUC did not send its deputies to Sweden to study industrial unions, the principle of which has been well known here for more than 50 years. Forty-one years ago, at the 1924 Trades Union Congress at Hull, it was resolved, "that the time has arrived when the number of trade unions should be reduced to an absolute minimum. The aim should be, as far as possible, organisation by industry." The General

Council was instructed to draw up plans to this end. Of course, little came of it all.

What the TUC did study—and that sympathetically—in Sweden was the compulsory arbitration and legal penalties for strike action, which had been put in force by the Swedish Government, that is by a *Labour* Government. Yet our critics themselves support and helped return to power a Labour government which seeks to do just that, with the help of the TU bureaucrats.

Syndicalists have no part in this. We stand, with the IWW, for industrial unions "without affiliation to any political party."

Is industrial unionism possible? Suppose that all trade union officials suddenly died of a mysterious disease, that all the union offices fell to the ground and all union treasure melted away. There would still be a labour movement. At their places of work, the workers would still be aware of their common bonds, there would still be shop stewards and factory committees and the ability to negotiate wages and conditions. There would still be the power to strike. Life would go on, but that movement would be free and independent and it would develop. Born of industry, it would be the industrial union.

TOM BROWN

Rank-and-file seamen prepare for conference

Swansea, Glam.

AT TIME of writing, we're wrapping up the last of the copy for *Seafarer* No. 3, which is due to reach its seamen-readers next Monday. One thousand copies of this four-page *Seafarer* will be printed. Most will go to the seamen of the five ports—Swansea, Port Talbot, Barry Dock, Cardiff and Newport. A couple of hundred will be distributed to the various rank and file seamen's committees in other UK port areas. Our all-UK leaflet, calling for the National Rank-and-File Conference and National Committee will go out at roughly the same time as the *Seafarer*.

The Bristol Channel Committee will be calling a mass meeting of rank-and-file seamen in November, on the two points aforementioned, also the Channel Committee will be up for re-election (or rejection). It will be a good pointer to feeling generally.

If the lads feel as strongly on the 56-hour betrayal as we think they do, the seamen at the meeting will also elect delegates to the Natl. Committee and the Conference. We are hoping to consolidate our local committee at the meeting as well, by enlarging it with another ten members. Right now, when our four committee members are all away, there's no organising being done in the Channel.

I understand the *South Wales Echo* is interested in doing a "profile" or something about yours truly. Well, if this does happen, it can't do any harm and it might easily do some good—and boy, what it'll do to my already inflated ego!!

The seamen's articles on page 3 in the October DIRECT ACTION make it sell itself to the average seaman I meet. Page 3 is on the wall of the Ship and Pilot pub in Cardiff, beside a *Seafarer* notice.

G. FOULSER, A.B.

ESSENTIAL READING—IN ANY YEAR

LENIN AND WORKERS' CONTROL

by Tom Brown

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

SPARKS ON TOP AT TYNAGH

THE NOTORIOUS Scottish electrical contractors, Kilpatrick & Sons, of Paisley, have just had their first encounter with trade unionism as practised in the land of Connolly and Larkin. Sadder and wiser, they will soon be returning to the land of "the heather and the glen", swearing they will never touch Ireland again! And this will suit the natives of the Republican West right down to the ground.

The story starts about three or four years ago, when a passing Canadian geologist heard some talk of the chickens dying of lead poison in a remote Galway village. Our feathered friends had only been nibbling at the richest deposit of base metals ever found anywhere in the world. Under the rocky fields of Connacht were billions of pounds' worth of lead, zinc and silver. After a deal of thuggery on the Toronto Stock Exchange, a firm called Irish Base Metals was formed. They engaged the Bechtal Corp. of the U.S. to develop the mine. When Bechtal needed an electrical contractor for the crusher plant and mill, they called in the notorious Kilpatrick's, or KP as they are often called.

SHOP ATTACKED

As every "spark" in the UK knows—KP stinks. This is the mob who sacked 400 ETU men at Sizewell Nuclear Power Station last year. More recently they fired every spark and mate at the new Tilbury Power Station and 120 at the Enkalon plant in Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland.

More than a month ago, they decided that they would have to break the ultra-militant shop at Tynagh Mine, Loughrea, Co. Galway. They flew in plane-loads of blue-eyes from Scotland, but most of the Scottish brothers stood by the existing shop. The demands for travelling time, finishing bonus and one week's pay in lieu of notice, plus paid meal breaks on "ghosters" still stood. Finishing date was getting near. Then, reminiscent of the "Mount Street Spies" of 1921, they flew in the one-and-only Harry Martin. Harry sacked the 400 at Sizewell.

Harry is the biggest KP "heavy" of them all. Harry was supposed to do his bit as a trouble-shooter and give the peasants a "whiff of grape-shot". But we Irish peasants have a reputation for holding ground under fire—and Harry

is just a paper tiger. There was no repeat of Sizewell. Harry is just another tourist and we hope it keeps fine for him. We are all still here, including Harry, and the West of Ireland is still one of the last unspoilt corners of Western Europe!

SOLIDARITY

The Tynagh mine opened on October 22, with Seán Lemass and a trainload of parasites from Dublin, Toronto and New York consuming £27,000 worth of free booze and grub. The sparks and fitters were paid 8 hours to stay away that day. But the job has been finished on the terms of the rank-and-file. Needless to say, the union bosses had nothing to do with all this. They may even try to victimise some of the lads—but Tynagh has proved once more what Connolly, Larkin and the IWW were saying 60 years ago, that the strength of the workers lies at the point of production, where, with solidarity and direct action we can make our maximum effort and achieve the greatest results.

Talking of solidarity, sparks at Tynagh Mine—ETU (UK), ETU (Ireland) and Irish Engineering Industrial and Electrical Trade Union—are now levying themselves £1 per head per week for the brothers at the Enkalon plant in Co. Antrim.

SEAN GANNON

Syndicalism in Poland

WITH THE GREATEST INTEREST I've read your article about the ZZZ in the Warsaw Rising (DA, September). The Polish Anarchist Federation decided, about 1936, to influence the ZZZ and asked the IWMA to support this work financially. It was my task to research the character of the ZZZ and for this purpose I was for about ten days in Warsaw, where I spoke with many leaders of the ZZZ.

Poland has been the country of the sit-down strike, called "Polish strike" (!). And direct action in Poland was extremely interesting. I remember that thousands of women, working in the State match and tobacco factories struck against the taxes on wages. They would make a demonstration and, being Catholics, went first to church, where they burnt candles for the Virgin Mary, promising her more candles if they won the strike. Then they asked the priest to go at the head of the demonstration, as that would prevent the police hindering it! Perhaps you can understand how astonished I was. I was a narrow-minded Dutch anarchist. I believed that everywhere anarchists and syndicalists would be freethinkers and against the church, as they were in Holland. In Poland I learned that Catholics, too, know how to fight against exploiters—and even against the exploiter-State. And, of course, I felt very great sympathy for them. I felt that they were comrades, friends. *In Poland I learned very much.* Of course, as a freethinker, I don't agree with religious conceptions, but it is the action, the struggle against injustice, against the wrongs that unites us all.

The women won the strike. The taxes were maintained, but wages were increased by the amount of the taxes.

Your comrade,

ALBERT DE JONG

Heemstede, Holland.

EDITORS' NOTE: Comrade de Jong was, before the war, editor of the Dutch weekly paper, *DE SYNDIKALIST*. He remains active and, with his son Rudolf and other comrades, publishes the monthly anarcho-syndicalist review, *BUITEN DE PERKEN*.

LITERATURE

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE UNIONS ? by Tom Brown	4d
Workers' Control (SWF pamphlet, 2nd printing)	6d.
HOW LABOUR GOVERNED, 1945-1951	6d
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INDUSTRIAL WORKER (monthly paper of IWW)	4d.
VIEWS AND COMMENTS	
(organ of the Libertarian League, U.S.)	8d

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