

# Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Threat of general strike wins Canadian oil dispute : Another phoney lobby : Judges

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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## WHEN THE KIDDING HAS TO STOP

"October was the month when the kidding had to stop."  
George Brown, 19.6.65.

THE period since the General Election has shown yet again that parliamentary politics have nothing to offer the working class, but a great deal to offer the bosses.

In anticipation of its favours to the ruling class, one of the first acts of the new Parliament was to vote itself a vast payrise. MPs put their salaries up from £1,750 a year to £3,000. Old-age pensioners were given 12s. 6d. per week—as from March 1965. This was not to be back-dated, though the MPs' rise was effective immediately. The pensioners' pittance was understood as a stop-gap measure, though in June 1964, Len Williams, Labour Party General

Secretary, promised that an Income Guarantee scheme linking pensions to national earnings would be introduced "at the earliest moment after the return of a Labour Government." The OAPs are still waiting.

### FREEZING YOUR WAGES

Brother Brown was entrusted with the major task of the Labour Government, which is that of any new government—renewing the attack on the workers. The TUC and employers' associations were roped in to sign a Joint Statement of Intent on Productivity, Prices and Incomes. Introduced with the proud boast that "the class war is over", Brown's Statement laid down the major objectives of national policy as "dynamic" industry with competitive prices; high productivity, with wages kept in line; and "stable" prices.

To oversee these matters, Brown appointed a Tory, Aubrey Jones, as Chairman of his Prices and Incomes Board, at £15,000 a year.

### ATTACK ON UNIONS

To date, Brown's policy has largely failed, though the shop assistants' union, representing one of the most poorly paid sections of the working class, was persuaded at its annual conference not to seek a £2 weekly rise. Workers have hardly been encouraged to lay off the pressure on union bosses by the record profits made by employers—18% higher in the first quarter of 1965 than the same period in 1964.

The next round from Brown will be legislation to compel unions to give notice of pay-claims, the TUC's voluntary scheme having fizzled out. As the *Sunday Telegraph* puts it (19.12.65): "Ministers are keenly aware that a compulsory early warning system on wages and prices was one of the guarantees they offered the foreign bankers who came to the rescue of the pound last summer."

### THEIR DEBTS—NOT YOURS

Since October 1964, the British trade position has been poor, the employing class owing more to other employers abroad than it has looked like being able to repay for a long time. To prevent devaluation of the pound, which would weaken also the dollar and other currencies, the government has had to borrow large amounts of foreign money. To attempt to provide guarantees it has had to redouble its efforts to squeeze the workers—who owe nothing abroad, but alone produce the goods.

Thanks, though, to the long series of open sellouts over

## Manchester Vietnam demo attacked by police

*Within 24 hours of the events described below, Manchester Syndicalists and Anarchists had the following leaflet on the streets.*

ON SATURDAY, 27th November, 1965 a demonstration was held by the British Council for Peace in Vietnam in Manchester to protest against the savage barbaric war in Vietnam.

The "so-called" organisers of this march had provisionally accepted an obscure car park at Watson Street as a CENTRAL meeting place for the public meeting at the end of the march.

Many marchers, however, felt this site was far from adequate and was certainly not central, and that Albert Square, as a traditional meeting place, was far more suitable. This site had been refused by the Lord Mayor, the Town Clerk and the Chief Constable.

When the march reached Market Street, the more militant members of the march had decided to go down Cross Street to Albert Square, which they did, leaving the rest of the march and eventually occupying Albert Square without any interference whatsoever. When the rest of the march passed us via Brazenose Street on the way to Watson Street, we invited them to join us. Some did, the rest, however, were

cont. on page 6, col. 1

cont. on page 2 col. 2



# CNT militants denounce **KIDDING (cont.)** 'criminal manoeuvre'

**K**NOWING that a group of men who belonged to the CNT have formed a "co-existence pact" with representatives of the Franco Unions of Spain, we declare:

1. That the CNT, Syndicalist organisation of anarchist inspiration, defender by principle of the interests of the exploited classes, and also by principle against the interests of Capitalism and the State in all its manifestations, cannot accept in any way the irresponsibility of that "pact".

2. That the CNT fought against Spanish Fascism and its allies during the period of the Spanish Civil War, sacrificing thousands of its militants to prevent the Franco tyranny or any other triumphing in Spain.

3. That ethically, men of the CNT, as such, cannot reach a shameful agreement with the representatives of Fascism without betraying themselves and also betraying all those whom fascism has sacrificed on battlefields, in concentration camps, at forced labour, in police headquarters and prisons, where many of them are still punished for the crime of fighting for the freedom of the Spanish people.

4. That those who, saying they belong to the CNT and have experienced the 26 years of tyranny, make treaties with it, must do so by rejecting their past and immediately face the serious charge that "making a pact with the enemy" is an attack on personal integrity and an act of treason.

5. That the CNT can only be identified as the genuine expression of the group of men that form it, and that nobody has the right to consider himself its representative unless *normally verified through its congresses*, where, directly or indirectly, all its members are represented, have themselves discussed and passed resolutions of a collective character in a responsible way. The contrary is defeatist blackmail which cannot be ignored.

The Nucleus of the CNT exiled in Great Britain feels pity for the weakness of those, our comrades of yesterday, and condemns their infantile diversionist attitude, giving in to the bureaucracy of the Vertical Syndicates and the Franco regime, joining those who have inflicted so much harm on the CNT, the Libertrian Movement and anti-fascism in general.

We are pleased that our comrades in Spain have reacted against this disgraceful, premeditated and criminal manoeuvre, which will be equally denounced by every worker who is a victim of the abominable regime which tyrannises them.

Fascism, represented by Franco, promoter of the bloody Civil War endorsed by 26 long years of scorn, humiliation and murder *en masse*, tries to find a way out from its perfidy; for this, it wants to use some names without thinking that those same names would be sacrificed immediately to the moloch of their own discredit.

Commission of the Nucleus of the  
CNT exiled in Great Britain.

## 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.

the years, trade union bosses no longer have so much power to discipline their members in the interests of the capitalist class, and this job falls more and more on the State, particularly under Labour.

### GRUNTER

Hand-picked for the role, Ray Grunter has proved a more reactionary Minister of Labour than the Tories have produced for a long while. Within two days of taking up office he was attacking striking dockers. In June he told striking baggage porters at London Airport that they were acting with "sheer viciousness". Before and since his appointment, Grunter has broadcast his hopes of formally bringing unions under the State's heel.

### ALL THE WAY WITH L.B.J.

Labour has used its working-class support with dire effect—against the workers. In most other respects its policies have been: more of the same. Labour sent Buccaneer bombers to South Africa, under a Treaty made by the Tories. Labour continues the British military alliance with Portugal. The Aden constitution, giving some freedom of speech, assembly and strike action to Adeni workers has been suspended.

Labour has acquiesced at the restoration of a puppet dictatorship in Dominica by the US Marines. As to Vietnam, Mr. Wilson "does not consider that public criticism of American policy would be either justified or helpful." (Letter to Peggy Duff, 24.5.65).

### DISOWNED AGAIN

In office, Labour has disowned every principle of its founder Keir Hardie—once again. The Labour Party is very fond of using Hardie's name, and Wilson's *Relevance of British Socialism* has a careful reference to him. Probably their biggest break with him, though, is over immigration control—an earlier measure of which he described as "fraudulent, deceitful and dishonourable". But Labour front-bench spokesmen were using similar terms themselves only in 1961 at the time of the Tory Act. Now they are in the saddle they too have bowed to racist pressure—and furthered the racist cause. They bowed so low that they had to have a credit squeeze (and to chop home, hospital and school building) in August because of the labour shortage resulting from immigration cuts.

### "LEFT WING" FARCE

Throughout this sick joke (a very expensive one for the working class) we have been treated to the farce of the antics of the Labour "left wing" who gave their support, critical or otherwise, to Wilson (a left-winger himself till he became the leader) to uphold the daily exploitation and oppression which is the lot of the workers under class rule. Despite Labour's tiny majority, Britain has kept the Bomb; and that political white elephant, State ownership of steel, is well and truly shelved. A small amount of hot air was allowed to escape at the Party "conference"—but that's all part of keeping the capitalist three-card trick of Parliament running, with workers' direct control and common ownership of industry well out of sight.

MARK HENDY

### ESSENTIAL READING—IN ANY YEAR

## HOW LABOUR GOVERNED, 1945-51

A RECORD TO REMEMBER

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# LEST YE BE JUDGED!

THE Lord Chief Justice of Rhodesia resigned! This is a good thing. At last a judge with a moral and non-legalistic outlook on life! Or has he? I take the fact with a slight flavouring of salt. The question we should ask is, did this man resign because of his sympathy with the great African majority in Rhodesia and his hate for the obscene racialism of the Smith regime—or because he's a legal stickler who sees Smith's regime as a breach of Constitutional Law?

Don't ask what "Constitutional Law" is—it's a myth which old men with blue blood and po-hatted women cling to every year at the Tory Conference, when they scream for sadistic, reactionary or barbaric legislation against all forms of human progress. I could fill the whole of DA telling you what Constitutional Law is NOT. Anyway there is no formal Constitution in Britain. But my point is that if we must have law and judges, let the law relate to human need, human psychology, and a true sense of equity. Let the judges be chosen or elected for their humanity, compassion, understanding and true wisdom—that is if we must have them—but then, who the hell in the working class wants either law or judges?

Readers of DA need no instruction on the infamy of the law; many of us have read Kropotkin or others on the subject and few of us have not been actual victims of the legal game. I will not bore you with an obscure treatise on the immorality of law. Just a few short words on judges. In the play *Winterset* one of the characters, enumerating the villainies of society and at the same time trying to justify his own dubious position, keeps repeating the words "—especially the judge!" What he means, in a crude way, is that judges are among the worse enemies of the people in any State. While in Germany and South Africa a few judges resigned—in Germany some went to the concentration camps because of their opposition to the State—on the whole, judges support the *status quo*. Like the police, they support the group in power, whether it be Fascist, Communist or "Democratic".

## SACROSANCT

Witness the judges in the Moscow Purges or the judges in Nazi Germany (the majority of them) or the judges in Franco Spain, or in the American Sacco & Vanzetti and Rosenberg cases. Or even here in the Casement or Timothy Evans, or the Great Train Robbery trials. These were obvious cases of "organised vengeance". The law bears no relation to any abstract ideas of immutable ethics and morality. The law is expedient to place and time and judges are the final arbiters of that expediency. Policemen, lawyers, spies, these are the stooges who do the real dirty hard graft. The judge is God. The judge is sacrosanct—the jury is a collection of poor suckers roped in to make it look good—the judge is the *Vox Dei* of the State and its machinery. Judges are surrounded by a halo of wisdom which can be summed up in one word—"crap".

Unfortunately too many people believe in this "crap". So when the docks are in trouble or the "Ministry of Bull" suspects fiddling in its ranks, or some broken bricks turn up where they couldn't be—there's an enquiry headed by a judge, who in due course pronounces his infallible findings



—and everyone is happy. The dirt is swept under the carpet and duly forgotten.

Where were the judges on the hunger marches or at Aldermaston? Ever met a judge kipping in the "Starvation Barmy"? Ever heard of a judge on strike? Did you meet any judges in the nick who'd refused to carry out the State's will? Of course you didn't—these boys are the perennial Vicars of Bray. They'll support any government or social system so long as there is "legal precedent" for it (another piece of legalistic chauvinism)—all in the name of the humbug they call justice.

## RULE OF THE POWERFUL

Contrary to press fiction, judges are not gifted with special experience in the human field—although they harp on about "never in my experience, etc." *ad nauseam*. Their experience invariably ranges from prep school, public school, Oxbridge to the Inns of Court then the Bench. Some experience! They are humourless—their wit usually consists of taking the piss out of people who don't answer back. Apart from his gross self-righteousness and intolerance of new ideas, the only special feature of the judge is that he plays God with other people's lives—and invariably uses the hocus pocus of the law to further entrench reactionary attitudes. The rule of law is the rule of the powerful over the weak—the "Judges Rules" are the rules of God against Humanity. Away with the lot!

DESMOND MACDONALD

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# Direct Action

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## An 'experience' we can well do without

LAMBETH TRADES COUNCIL have called for a Lobby of Parliament on January 26 to oppose legislation against trade unions. The Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists are backing this call, though God knows why. Both these organisations claim to be revolutionary, yet they go to Parliament, the centre of reform, reaction and skulduggery. If they really wished to go to the centre of power, why not the Bank of England?

I wonder what slogans the Trots will try to get the Lobbyists to shout? In 1963 it was "Tories Out, Labour In." Well, "Comrades", we have Labour in, and we also have the threat of this legislation—a thing the Tories would never have dared to try. When anti-parliamentarian workers' organisations warned this would happen we were laughed at and insulted.

They will now, I expect, shout "Wilson Out". Ah, but if they could only see that the Labour Party will never change. A different leadership will not help either. All the traditional workers' organisations have betrayed or failed us, as they were doomed to from the beginning.

The SLL offers itself as a new "leadership", yet its ideas are as outdated as the horse-drawn ploughs which were in vogue when its basic attitudes were put on paper by Lenin.

The lobbyists may not even see their MPs. Maybe they will be beaten up and charged at by mounted police as in 1963. Of course this is what the Trots expect; this is what they call "taking the workers through an experience". It is what I call lying to our class—if the League is not to be trusted out of power, what would it be like in power?

Syndicalists oppose any strengthening of the power of the State, since if allowed it means a weakening of the workers' already threadbare civil liberties. The legislation is not

## Halfway there!

We are still only about half-way towards the £400 we need for the new press and type. We are sure that at least several readers fully intend to send us money, but haven't got around to it yet. Now's the time!

### DIRECT ACTION PRESS FUND—DECEMBER 1965

Stranraer, Wigtowns, T.N. 10s; Concord, N.H., N.G. £2 2s; London S.E.7, D.R. 6s 6d; Motherwell, D.C. 14s; Belfast, K.G. 3s 6d; London S.W.2, M.P. 3s 6d; Twickenham, I.A. 7s; London S.W.15, S.L. 3s 6d; Liverpool, J.M. 2s 6d; Tadworth, D.W. 8s; Red Deer, Alberta, W.G. 16s 3d; Whitley Bridge, Yorks, J.C. £2 13s 6d; London W.2, T.B. £5; Huddersfield, A.L. 13s 6d; Seattle, S.S. 7s. 2d; London N.W.10, J.M. £5; London N.W.10, J.T. £5; London S.W.20, D.W. 2s 6d; London S.W.5, M.H. 15s 9d; Swedish Workers' Central-Organisation £68 18s 4d; Sales of CNT "Spain Today" Cards, 12s; SWF London Group £5 17s; Manchester SWF Group 5s. TOTAL £101 1s 6d.

against trade unions, but to get at unofficial strikers and to try to discipline us still more. Most trade unions are phoney anyway, today. Workers don't need them to strike, and in many places, for instance Fords, they reduce and weaken solidarity and militancy. Worse still, the so-called leaders collaborate with the boss-class to try to tie us up. A union organiser's job is a cushy number today. The organisers are the middlemen of the labour market.

Yes, we oppose 100% any attempts at legislation, but have no starry-eyed illusions about the nature of trade unions. We do not offer leadership. The crisis is not lack of leadership, but the existence of leadership. All the parties claim that they will unite us under *their* banner for their *socialism*. They all claim to be so clear-sighted, so sure. Yet where is the mass workers' movement, why have we not united under them? There are as many leaderships as there are Christian churches. I wish they would forget their bloody soft egoism and act like the rank and file they constantly appeal to.

If we wish to win workers' control, we must forget all concepts of party, of leadership, and build the revolutionary workers' organisations. It is not *re-building*. All past and present movements have failed. We have to build. Let's look at past and present syndicalist movements in other countries and learn. We must build rank-and-file committees at our places of work, and try and develop them into genuine *revolutionary* unions. Above all, we must practice now the democracy we yearn for in the future.

As I have said, the Syndicalist Workers' Federation is not a new leadership. We are mainly a propaganda organisation. We will also do printing for strike and rank-and-file committees. We preach class struggle and practise it. If we can help your committee, write to us. The very least we ask you to do is send for some of our pamphlets. Why not, eh?

VINCENT JOHNSON

## 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.

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.

ABERDEEN: Contact R. Comrie, 288 Hardgate, Aberdeen. Regular meetings.

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

BRISTOL: Contact Mike Davis, 130 Chesterfield Road, Bristol 6.

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.

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

MANCHESTER & 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.

CORRECTION: In last month's report of the SWF Conference, Tom Brown's name was inadvertently omitted from the list of comrades elected to the new National Committee.

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.



# GENERAL STRIKE THREAT IS WINNER

**T**HE THREAT of a general strike by British Columbia workers succeeded in changing probable defeat into victory for striking oil workers.

The workers, members of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW), had been on strike for ten weeks in a dispute with the major oil companies. Essentially, the workers wanted protection against being put out of work due to automation in the refineries, while the companies wanted a free hand to introduce automation as they saw fit and to hell with the workers.

OCAW tried to break the solidarity of the oil companies by striking only one of them, British American Oil. Unfortunately automation in the refining industry had already reached a stage where the refineries could be kept in full operation with a few scabs recruited from the managerial and engineering staffs.

Unable to stop production at BA refineries, the workers had to admit defeat or seek to extend the strike. They chose the latter alternative and served notice to all major oil companies that they would pull their members from the job

on November 24. This action, in itself, would not have assured success, as it is probable that the companies would, thanks to automation, have been able to keep their refineries in production with the help of white-collar scabs.

It looked like being a long drawn out strike, with the oil companies sitting back waiting for the workers to admit defeat. Then the scene changed dramatically. The British Columbia Federation of Labour called all its members in the province to "withdraw their services" for 48 hours, starting November 24, to demonstrate solidarity with the striking oil workers.

That did it. Oil company executives, politicians, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and the capitalist press all started screaming foul. They didn't mind strikes where the workers quietly starved for a few months, then came back on the bosses' terms; but this was different, this was blackmail, it was illegal, unconstitutional, undemocratic and besides it would mean victory for the workers.

Ignoring these cries of anguish from the exploiting class, the workers of British Columbia expressed their solidarity. Support for the general strike came from all over the province, bus drivers, wood workers, building trades, postal workers, civic and municipal employees all pledged their support, despite threats of suspension, dismissal or legal action from their employers.

The seal of success was put on the strike when the Independent Teamsters' Union, with 11,000 members in B.C., voted to refuse to transport "hot" gasoline or diesel fuel until the oil workers' dispute was settled.

These developments caused a flurry of activity among the politicians, who, after a few futile appeals for the general strike to be called off, went into a huddle with the oil bosses. These gentlemen were forced to fly into B.C. from Eastern Canada, where they had previously been content to remain, leaving their underlings in B.C. to sit out the strike. Faced with the general strike and the Teamsters' "blacking" of their products, the bosses were persuaded to retreat from their stand on automation. Hours before the strike deadline they came up with an offer acceptable to the oil workers.

## WHERE IT HURTS

The companies agreed to the establishment of a labour-management automation committee, to give six months' notice of any lay-offs due to automation, to institute a company retraining programme for workers displaced by automation, to give one week's severance pay for every year of service to employees discharged because of automation and to give a 35 cents an hour wage increase. The union had wanted severance pay of one year's wages for every five years' service and a 50 cents an hour increase.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for unskilled or semi-skilled workers to win strikes against individual firms: automation, the use of clerical and engineering staff as scabs and the willingness of a segment of the labour force to take jobs as strike-breakers all contribute to this situation. The recent events in B.C. have shown that the general strike, unfortunately seldom used, is still a potent weapon in the class war.

Strikes are not undertaken lightly, nor are they won by being gentlemen: they are won by hitting the bosses hard and where it hurts most. The reactions of the bosses politicians and press to the threat of a general strike showed that such action would hit them hard. This demonstration of the effectiveness of a general strike in winning labour's battles should not pass unnoticed.

**BILL GREENWOOD**

## Young teachers form Action Committee

**T**HERE is a hangover of an idea, among both industrial workers and teachers, that teaching is a mission rather than a job. This may be so, but the fact is even missionaries must eat, buy clothes and pay rent. So we should welcome the news of the formation of a Young Teachers' Action Committee. The YTAC has been formed on Clydeside to fight for an immediate rise of 25% in young teachers' pay, that is the pay of any person who has been a teacher less than six years. If you're a teacher long enough and you're lucky, you will eventually get a decent wage. The point is that the young teachers want it *NOW*.

Do teachers need a rise? Well, to take one example. My sister, after three years of training and 18 months' teaching gets £613 a year. This works out at about £40 a month with tax, etc. off. Some months are four weeks, some are five. Many young teachers, of course, get more. But who can doubt that they do not get enough for a vitally necessary job?

The YTAC held a one-day token strike on Clydeside on November 18 and closed the gates of 75 schools. When David Arthur, Secretary of the YTAC,\* was asked, "Won't this harm the children's education?" he replied, "One day will make little difference to a child, but a shortage of teachers due to low wages will make a lot of difference." Now we, as syndicalists, regard the State's education system as outdated and authoritarian. But since it will be with us for some time yet, there can be no doubt the YTAC is taking the right course.

Some time ago a nurse wrote in the workers' paper *Solidarity Scotland* "I would never leave a sick person, no matter how bad my conditions were." While we can sympathise with this viewpoint, it does not apply in the case of teachers. So to the teachers, who can take direct action, and to the nurses, who cannot, we say—"Fellow workers! We are with you. Only through the unity of the working class can a better life for *All* be won."

**DAVE COULL**

\*David Arthur's address is—137, Linthaugh Road, Cardonald, Glasgow.



# Union bureaucrats fall out on Tyneside

**Y**ES, it actually happened—a union official threatened (vaguely) to spread a dispute. This was Tyneside's Alderman Cunningham, District Secretary of the NUG & MW and a new member of the Labour Party National Executive. But the dispute was with the AEU, over "poaching", a family quarrel between rival bureaucrats. The ins and outs are not important. What is important is that disputes of this kind are the only ones where "militancy" can be expected from union officials.

Why? Because their corner of the labour market is threatened, or needs to expand. These persons are not unionists, but middlemen, selling you and me and using their disposal of our labour-power as a bargaining-counter. They cannot work to give us greater strength on the factory floor—because to do so would be to release us from our dependence on them. They can only resist such moves from the rank-and-file.

## RED TAPE—FOR THE BOSSES' BENEFIT

**B**OILERMAKERS at Hawthorn Leslie's shipyard, Hebburn, have learnt the score on modern management techniques. They had not had an overall pay rise for four years. They had been trying to get a bonus claim for five months; the firm has a well-filled order-book. In the end the manage-

ment refused point-blank and after a canteen meeting the men came out, followed shortly after by the apprentices in sympathy.

Press statements by the two sides show the inevitable gulf between them:

Mr. R. Ibison, Managing Director: "This is an unofficial strike, which demonstrates a pathetic lack of discipline among a certain section of the labour-force. We are not going to do anything about it as a strike. The whole matter is one I regret. This will have inevitable effects on our ability to maintain our labour force. There is a recognised procedure for problems of this kind and the management will not negotiate at all until our colleagues (*sic*) see fit to come back to work. This must be dealt with on the lines of recognised procedure. Unless we follow the recognised procedure the result will be plain anarchy."

One of the stewards: "The official negotiating machinery is choked with red tape. Nothing ever comes out of it. The management can manipulate it to delay the settlement of legitimate pay claims. After months of stalling you are told: go back and settle it at yard level. Then you are back where you started. . . .

"The men's patience was at an end. They were particularly angered because another Tyne shipyard is paying its caulkers and burners considerably more for the same work. The only action left was to walk out."

## JOINT? NO, RIGGED

**I**N South Shields, a direct struggle over conditions continues between dustmen and the local Council. The dispute is over foremen generally, and one in particular whom the men consider arrogant. This is a challenge to management's methods and its right to manage.

The dispute resulted in an overtime ban followed by a very well organised strike in September, with support from Council baths and lavatory attendants. Another issue was negotiation rights. The men wanted direct confrontation with the Council Cleansing Committee—and *not* at the Town Hall but in their canteen.

At one time it looked as if the union (NUG & MW) officials were going to direct the struggle into the usual frustrating channels. At the end of November a joint consultative committee was set up by the union and the council: six Council representatives and six employees who included one of the foremen, the superintendent and the local union official—nine against three.

But the men saw through this. After getting no satisfaction they ran another overtime ban and refused to allow the dispute to go to the joint committee.

## WITHOUT COMMENT

**A**T Dinnington, Northumberland, a family was evicted from their Council house during a snow-storm on November 25. The family consisted of a building labourer, his wife and seven children.

Councillor Rutherford insisted that the eviction was to protect public property and that the snowstorm was a coincidence.

## SURPRISE! SURPRISE!

**A** FORMER Tory candidate for Consett (Durham) has just joined the Gateshead Labour Party. When interviewed about his reasons for this apparent change of colour he said, "I have fought Socialism all my life."

**DIRECT ACTION REPORTER**

## FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

**INDUSTRIAL YOUTH**—the young workers' voice, 5d from 1Y, 34, Cumberland Rd., London E.17.

**RESISTANCE**—Committee of 100 Bulletin, 6d. From 32a Fellows Road, London N.W.3.

## VIETNAM DEMO (cont.)

afraid of the police and marched past to hold a totally ineffectual meeting in the drab streets behind Central Station.

A meeting was held and the speaker, a visitor from London, was arrested. We felt it our duty to try to prevent this arrest as the principle of FREE SPEECH was being broken by the police.

The police then tried to bully, then arrest, other members of the march and a scuffle broke out. The marchers emphasised by chanting that they wanted a Non-Violent demonstration. The police however took no notice trying to drag our mates off, so we tried to prevent them from doing so. At this the police became very violent, punching, kicking and trying the occasional 'Karate' chop. Constables observed to be particularly violent were P.C.107, P.C.33 and P.C.44. The four police inspectors we noticed (names unknown) did nothing to stop the bullying and intimidating tactics used by their men and by themselves when asked to do so. The police were ill-treating marchers who were trying to stop a war in Vietnam, not start a street brawl in Manchester.

The police managed to arrest two people on the streets.

Various marchers, however, thought that they could protest against police violence formally at Bootle Street Station. Ten people were arrested as soon as they entered the Station to complain and **CHARGES WERE PINNED UPON THEM!** A 16-year-old schoolboy was beaten up by the police in Bootle Street Station after he was arrested.

This leaflet has been published because we realise that an official protest will be ineffectual (as with the Challenor case) also complainants will be victimised in the future, and also because the press both local and national, never give coverage to events of this sort. Events which rob us of the little freedom we have left and bring us even closer to the fearsome Police State of George Orwell's "1984".



# A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

**R**ADICAL changes have taken place in building methods and in types of constructions over the last fifteen years. Not only are buildings much higher, but there is also much more mechanical equipment in use now. These factors have led to an ever-increasing number of deaths and accidents occurring on sites, which can be veritable death traps if the necessary precautions are not taken.

At long last it does seem that unions, employers and workers are waking up and are doing something about safety. To be quite honest, some workers ignore safety precautions because to observe them somehow reflects on their masculinity.

The figures show that the building industry has one of the

## Steelmen get pay cut

**T**EN MILES west of Manchester, on the Ship Canal, lies an industrial area called Irlam. It has a small population, but a variety of industries, including a steelworks. The steelworks has its own wharf on the Ship Canal and ore carriers of up to 10,000 tons arrive regularly. This area of Lancashire was once a strong mining and agricultural district. With the decline of mining and the mechanisation of agriculture, there would have been severe unemployment around Leigh and Wigan but for the steelworks.

Up to six weeks ago, wages were high for the area, because all workers not on shifts were working seven days a week plus overtime. In conditions like this, where men want work at any cost, the militant has a hopeless case. In the last two apprentice strikes, when apprentices all over the area were out, there was no strike at the steelworks. The bosses, of course, took advantage of this and have been content to reap in the profits without renewing any plant.

Recently, with the decline of steel and the cost of running an out-of-date plant, profits have been cut. The first reaction was to cut wages, which they did by stopping week-end work by day workers. The results have been startling. The first two weeks saw mass resignations of workers from Wigan and Eccles, who cannot afford to work there without week-end work. These are usually married men, who are paying off a mortgage on a house. With these resignations the works is short of workers. With a greater percentage of unmarried workers and under-employment, it looked as if rank-and file feeling would grow more militant.

### TROUBLE

Just four weeks after the stop of week-end working, the rank and file took advantage of their strength. After a collision between a crane and a locomotive, the crane driver was suspended for three days. Immediately the other crane drivers refused to work and the man's suspension was cut to 2½ hours.

The feelings of the workers after having had their wages cut and work increased have been running high, but the unions have done nothing except make agreements to help the management. One example: workers can be forced to do overtime in a breakdown. If anything does break down at an awkward time, I can see nothing but trouble for the employers.

A few months ago, when it looked like Labour would nationalise, there were suspicious signs of deliberate neglect. I think that at the moment the management are praying to be nationalised.

B.S.

highest accident-rates. Over 200 men are killed and approximately 20,000 are injured annually. Building firms are doing something to combat these terrible figures, but one must question their motives. Mr. Ure of Trollope and Colls gives the following reasons why an employer should take safety seriously. "—first, he is obliged to, by law, and, secondly, it pays him so to do. The first of these reasons brooks no denial but the second passed through years of doubt until it reached the widely accepted position that it holds today. It cannot be denied, however, that there are still some companies—though a dwindling number—which are not entirely convinced of the validity of the economics of safety." There is no question of any humanitarian reasons in this point of view. With the present boom in the industry, it pays to have every man "gainfully employed."

Obviously, some of the more "enlightened" employers are upset by the image this high accident-rate gives. They are worried that they will not be able to attract to the industry, at site level, the "right men" to deal with the heavy workload that is envisaged for the future. To them, the safety of operatives only becomes important when the number of accidents is so high that production and profits are threatened.

In the Birmingham/West Midland area, some of the employers are so concerned about the accident rate that they have introduced an industrial health service to look after the men on the sites. This service is carried out by the West Bromwich, Smethwick and District Occupational Health Service Limited, which is a non-profit making company, registered as a charity, getting a grant of £20,000 from the Nuffield Foundation. It employs 12 nurses, each of whom is responsible for 10-12 sites. Each one has a van, with all necessary medical equipment and visits each site once a day to deal with any worker who needs treatment.

### ORGANISED

This is all very good and something that should be extended throughout the industry, but surely it is better to prevent accidents in the first place. A lot of firms pay lip service to prevention. A visit to site canteens will show a wide selection of posters illustrating how accidents occur and what to do to prevent them. Taylor Woodrows even have notices saying SAFETY FIRST dotted about all over the place.

One of the contributing factors to the high accident-rate is the operation of bonus schemes. Men tend to take risks in order to do a job more quickly and employers or their representatives in charge either turn a blind eye to this or even encourage it. In other cases, those in charge don't even bother about safety and more or less anything goes. Safety inspectors pay periodic visits, but usually stay about five minutes and never ask the men on the job if they have any complaints.

Usually, the most effective way of ensuring safety is for the sites to be organised. A works committee of stewards, elected by the men, is there to take up their complaints and with their backing will soon get results. Employers might pay lip-service to safety and in some cases have health schemes on their sites, but prevention is more important. The fact that a site is organised helps to achieve a lot in this direction.

P.T.

**RESURGENCE**—Fortnightly bulletin of Wandsworth Libertarian Youth, 3d. Specimen copy and group details from Tony Groves, 87 Ravensbury Road, London S.W.18.

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



# CROCODILE TEARS FROM 'NEWS'

By the time you read this copy of DIRECT ACTION, London busmen will have made their point regarding Boxing Day working. They are claiming a shorter shift at double time. London Transport, in the spirit of goodwill and all that jazz, has offered the usual Sunday rate, time-and-a-half for full shift. Some garages are threatening to strike on Boxing Day: one garage for the full four days and some on Christmas Eve.

This demand is far from unreasonable for men who have to work while the majority of other people are partaking of the Christmas spirit. Personally, I think a day off in lieu should be added to their demand.

The claron of the people is already crying on behalf of the public. An *Evening News* editorial (8.12.65) calls the busmen "The Awkward Squad", and winds up, "This is sheer bloody-mindedness. It is unofficial action of the worst sort and with the worst motive: to squeeze more money (double time on Boxing Day as well as Christmas Day) from the shrunken resources of London Transport."

"Shrunken resources of London Transport!" What a laugh! It's not the busmen's fault if London Transport is incapable of running a four-wheel pram. According to the *Evening News* editor they should express their concern by working for peanuts. Would the editor of the *Evening News* do the same in similar circumstances? Like hell! Come off it, this editorial is merely as sanctimonious as the regular Saturday effort.

## TIME FOR A CHANGE

No. 1 BRANCH of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers has called for the retirement of Dick Barrett, their general secretary. Barrett has been ill for some time and on occasions has been represented by another member of the union leadership at important meetings.

The reason for the resignation call by No. 1 branch is not known, but for public consumption it is likely to be one of ill health.

The NASDU rank and file are at odds with their leadership over the recruitment of members in the Northern ports. To obtain a seat on the modernisation committee, NASDU

leadership had to refrain from recruiting members to keep the peace with T & GWU.

Feeling is so high among Blue members in Hull, Liverpool and Manchester that representatives of the union are considering taking legal action against the union, in an attempt to get the recruiting decision declared unconstitutional.

The dock employers would like to see the Blue Union rubbed out altogether, leaving—the T & GWU, with whom they can cope. Even Devlin gave the T & G a hammering in his Report for their *lack of militancy*.

## PRODUCE MORE — FOR THE SACK

WILKINSON SWORD is to sack 250 workers from its Acton Factory starting early next year. Wilkinson's main competitor, Gillette, is to increase production by 25 to 30% next year.

Wilkinson hoped to achieve a 40% increase in their overseas sale, this they failed to do, they are now faced with *over-production*.

Unions are being consulted on methods of procedure for the dismissals. Payments will, of course, be in line with the new redundancy pay legislation. This really is good news, real progress, does anyone dare mention a shorter working week?

## PARALYSATION A LA C.P.

IT IS interesting to note the CP's revived "let's all be friends" policy. They list nine points in their "Left for Progress" policy. Number five is very interesting: "Steel Nationalisation now as the first step to an attack on monopoly domination".

In the *Daily Worker* (13.5.65) the Political Committee of the party issued a statement on steel nationalisation, calling for a 'new type'. Compensation proposals must be *scaled down*. National Steel Corporation should have majority of technicians and workers chosen for their technical competence. Complete change in the relations of *management and workers*, on the basis of a genuine system of consultation. Unions reinforced by workers from the factory floor and the office must be represented at all levels, when plans are formulated, or when changes in processes are being made.

This is, of course, pure State Capitalism and from the CP point of view it would work better if they had a dozen or so Communist Party MPs in the Westminster Gas Works.

This is Labour Party nationalisation amended to suit the left wing, thereby making the whole idea a bigger and better phoney.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

## Joe Hill badges

Dear Fellow Workers and Comrades,

I am enclosing a \$1 bill to help buy a new press for our paper, DIRECT ACTION. It is 50 years ago today since F.W. Joe Hill was murdered by the master class in Salt Lake City, Utah. The IWW has just made Joe Hill buttons. These have a large picture of Joe Hill, and an inscription which reads, "Don't Mourn—Organise. Joe Hill: murdered November 19, 1915." The buttons will be advertised in the next issue of *Industrial Worker* for December, 1965. They sell for 25c. each. Proceeds from sale will be used by the IWW for organisation purposes in Yakima Valley, Southern Michigan and elsewhere. They can be purchased from the Secretary-Treasurer of the IWW, Carl Keller, 2422 North Halsted Street, Chicago, Ill., 60614, USA.

Yours for the IWW, the IWMA and the Free Society.  
Seattle, Wash.

SKIDROAD SLIM

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