

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Lesson in solidarity at Southall : Grunter at it again : Shawcross and the Police State

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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BROWN'S BRAVE NEW WORLD

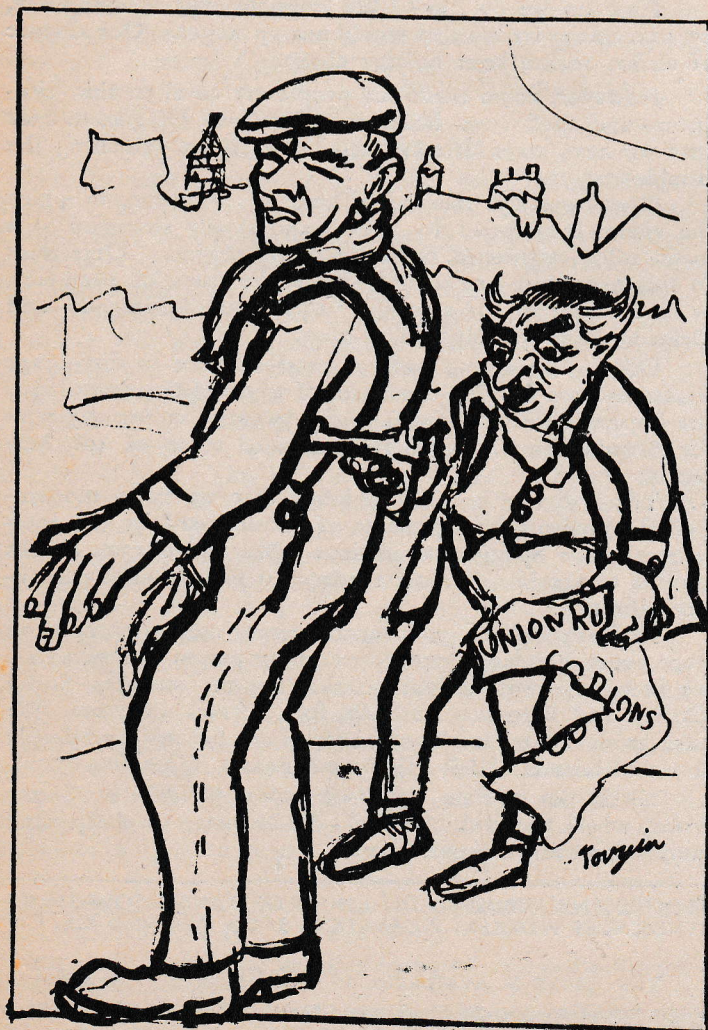
"YOU'RE the first one who has spoken to me about the danger of the Fairfield set-up to the trade union movement," said a transport union shop steward to me last week. True that, while the Fairfield scheme has received great publicity, little is talked about it among active trade unionists.

At first sight it seems a strange case. "Fairfields," a

famous Clydeside yard capable of building ships of 100,000 tons, with seven vessels worth £32 million on its books, the yard recently re-equipped with modern machines and organisation costing £4½ million, had not made a profit for four years and had earned a reputation for late delivery. Late last year, the yard was on the edge of bankruptcy. A Government loan of £1 million did not stave off the threat, creditors called for payment of £4.3 million debts, supplies were stopped and the case went to the official receiver.

Then came a new development in Capital-State-Labour relations. In stepped Iain Stewart, a Scottish capitalist, and George Brown, Labour's Economics Minister and, instead of the Labour Party's panacea of nationalisation, out came

cont. on page 2 col. 1



Busmen need joint action

MENTION the words "Public Transport" these days, and it will arouse more controversy than religion. Railwaymen, busmen and passengers are choked with the whole stinking setup.

A reliable, frequent bus service in London is non-existent. London Transport Board has hacked the service to ribbons in the interests of the holy cow "economy". Busmen's wages are screwed down to the minimum and therefore, they are forced to work overtime and rest days to raise their earnings. Fares are going so high that soon it will be cheaper to travel by cab. The crowning glory is the slash of services, so that seeing a bus on your route is like manna from heaven.

On January 23, busmen began to operate an overtime ban in protest against proposed service cuts due to start on the same day. London Transport's reply was to cut out a total of 84 bus routes! Some routes were stopped completely and others do not operate on certain days of the week.

The plan is to shunt passengers to where alternative bus routes are available and, where possible, *direct passengers to Underground services*. This plan could be blown up, tube-men could take direct action in the interests of safety to prevent this. Let's face it, all transport workers have the same problems, the government employers are the common enemy of all. The only way to beat them is by solidarity, joint rank and file action, after all it's pure commonsense. The SWF has attempted to illustrate this in a leaflet available from 34 Cumberland Road, London, E.17 (cost 2/- per 100).

Brave new world (cont.)

Labour's new pattern of State capitalism. The Government is to subscribe half the new capital, seven unions were to subscribe £50,000 each and the remaining funds were to come from private capitalists. At the head of the consortium, Iain Stewart.

George Brown addressed the shipyard workers, giving a vision of the Brave New World, and Stewart, too, addressed them, but the contrasting grimness of his projection seems to have been little noticed in the ballyhoo, the banners "We have won" and the attempts to sing "He's a Jolly Good Fellow." What did they win? Stewart stated his terms of surrender. "I am the boss." The union rule book had to be thrown out, job demarcation must go, no strikes and wage increases would be paid only if "increased productivity justified it." The *Scottish Daily Record* (10.1.66) reports: "Today, Fairfields new boss, Iain Stewart, gets down in earnest to the job of putting the Clyde shipyard back on its feet. He said he can do it—but only on his terms." Oh, brave new world of Labour!

THE MORNING AFTER

Now a union rule book is concerned with the government of the union, contributions, election of officers and so on. What people mean by "tearing up the union rule book" is this: tear up agreements, tear up the documents which express the wage structure, the hours of work, holidays and tea breaks, protection and job control, all the work of a century or more. "We have won." What?

Of course, one understands the fears and worries of workers, particularly the older men, who in this boasted affluent society, are about to be sent looking for work, but certain questions remain unanswered: Can the new consortium produce a viable business? Like the Scotsman, "I hae ma doots." Can they create the kind of peace they proclaim? Will the men who cheered still be joyful on the morning after? Already some of the unions—notably the Boilermakers—are refusing to contribute.

The Fairfield plan strikes at the very foundations of all that the workers have won from capitalism. In conditions of rapidly rising prices, wages are not to be raised for three years—unless productivity (or rather, finance) permits, which it will not. Fairfields could be the hole in the wages dyke. Instead of, as now, wages being determined by the general economic level of the viable businesses in the industry, their level would be determined by the least economic, most mismanaged business to be found tottering over the edge of bankruptcy. At present, a firm which cannot meet the wages bill goes out of business, making way for another. In future, bankruptcy will be subsidised from the wage packets of workers, who have no say in the business and no access to the companies' books.

MUST WE FLINCH?

"But at least it's better than unemployment," we are told. Do lower wages, then, pave the road to full employment? Can we ensure men's jobs by having less to spend in the shops?

Sometimes workers have hard decisions to make, but if men and women had not made those decisions, we would still be wearing brass collars. I recall one such occasion during my apprenticeship at Armstrong Whitworth's engine works at Newcastle. The firm delivered an ultimatum: either the workers accepted piecework, which had been resisted, or orders would be rejected and about 75% of the men dismissed. At a mass meeting, the cases for and against were well put and quietly listened to, then the vote was taken: an

overwhelming majority against piecework. Within a few weeks massive sackings had been completed. That was in the early twenties, when jobs were hard to get. Now, in infinitely easier conditions, on a much greater issue, must we flinch?

I was born of a shipbuilding family, in the midst of one of the world's biggest concentrations of shipbuilding capacity and apprenticed to marine engineering. At work as a boy in the bowels of a great ship, I vowed to get out of the proud craft of my ancestors as soon as I was 21. The vow did not quite come off. I had to wait until I was 23 before I managed to shake the rust of the shipyard from my boots, after trying marine engineering at the other end of the country.

My advice to young men and as many old ones as can manage it is, get out while you can. You'll never regret it.

In any case, the Fairfield scheme as outlined cannot succeed. Conflict will break out at once when it is operated. Then the echoes of songs and cheers will sound like the vows of eternal friendship made by drunken men at closing time.

TOM BROWN

A cheap holiday

IN SPAIN we are able to provide cheap holidays, where you, the tourists, have value for your money, good cheap food and fine hotels which provide good service at prices you can afford—altogether splendid value.

How do we do this? We keep the cost of living low, by preventing strikes that would put up wages. Our absence of strikes makes your holiday cheap.

However, some malicious people try to alter this situation—and spoil your holidays. You will be glad to hear that we have ways to solve this. One is by garrotting the trouble-makers.

Garrotting is a method of humane execution, in which the victim is strapped to a post and slowly strangled by a metal collar, tightened manually from behind. Objections to this procedure are absurd—the entire operation need take, as in the case of the so-called "anti-fascists" Granado and Delgado in 1963, only half-an-hour.

Other methods we have successfully used to discourage strikes include shaving the heads of wives of those who have the impertinence to demand higher wages, as recently with the Asturian miners. We also castrated some of the husbands.

You will also be glad to know that we have modernised the mediaeval instruments of torture used by our forefathers of the Spanish Inquisition. We find electric shocks applied to the body's most tender and private parts particularly effective.

And any risk of your encountering unpleasantness on your cheap holiday is prevented by our prison system, where we keep opponents of our political regime, such as Stuart Christie and Fernando Carballo, for 20 and 30 years. We have modelled it closely on those of our beloved and deeply lamented friends, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini.

So do not hesitate to book your holiday in Sunny Spain, where the cost of living—for tourists—is cheap and human life even cheaper.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED ON BEHALF OF SPANISH TOURISM BY SYNDICALIST WORKERS FEDERATION, 34 CUMBERLAND RD., E.17

THE ABOVE IS AVAILABLE AS A LEAFLET, 1/6 A 100
From Direct Action, 34 Cumberland Road, London E.17. Cheques and p.o.'s should be payable to Syndicalist Workers' Federation

WOOLF'S STRIKE: A lesson in solidarity

WORK in Woolf's Rubber factory, Southall, Middlesex, is—like that in most rubber factories—not particularly pleasant, involving, as it does, high temperatures and unpleasant smells. The employers therefore made a practice of hiring workers from among the local Indo-Pakistani community, in the belief that they would be prepared to tolerate these conditions. They soon found they were wrong when the Indians organised the formerly non-union factory for the TGWU. After this, in November, 1964, Woolf's workers struck for three weeks to secure the return of a dismissed employee.

Industrial conflict once more flared at Woolf's in December, 1965, when a worker was suspended for being ten minutes late (apparently he had also made a complaint of theft against a chargehand; needless to say, the employers deny any connection between the two events).

From the start the lack of solidarity displayed by other trade unionists was deplorable. Lorries continued to arrive

at the factory. The TGWU refused to aid many of the strikers, as they were not fully paid-up members (not very surprising, in view of the TGWU's lack of interest in conditions there). It was alleged that TGWU members had called the police to eject Woolf's strikers from a meeting they had attended to put their case; the union claims that they had to refuse admission because of the size of the hall, but this does not appear to have prevented the admission of two unionists said to belong to the British National Party.

But what the unions lacked in solidarity was made up for by the Indian community. Indian landlords and shopkeepers extended credit to the strikers—and it is pleasant to record that in these facilities were included a small group of Irish workers who had joined in.

SCABS

Woolf's replied by dismissing the strikers and recruiting scabs. Allegations of intimidation were made against the strikers, though the only arrests made were of three Indians who had broken a window in another man's house and no evidence linking this with the strike was given in court. On the other side, a scab assaulted a picket with a stick. Police began regularly to patrol the factory gates and pushed the pickets around. By now the strike was beginning to attract the attention of the national press, notably the *Daily Mail*, which published a nasty piece of yellow journalism by Rhona Churchill. This sought to give an impression of illiterates, ignorant of English being manipulated by agitators. In fact, it was the Indians themselves who organised Woolf's, as pointed out earlier. As for the charge of ignorance, according to the *Observer* (9.1.66) only one in seven of Indian workers speaks no English. The *Mail's* article contributed further to racialism, by claiming that the population of Southall was one-third coloured. It would be interesting to know the evidence for this statement. The local council's own estimate is that the town is 10% coloured. Not even the fascists have placed the coloured population as high as one-third.

After several weeks of the strike, Woolf's agreed to a settlement in mid-January. The terms are puzzling, however. Only about half the strikers were to be re-employed immediately, with the rest taken back gradually as work recommenced. None of the strikers' other demands, including better pay, have been met. It certainly does not seem that Woolf's will be quiet in future.

BLOW

Whatever happens, by showing that they are not prepared to be used as cheap labour the Indians of Woolf's have struck a blow for all workers of any colour. That they should have been forced to do it with so little support is an indication of the extent to which racialism has eaten into the Labour movement in Southall. Like the Smethwick Labour Party, Southall Labour Party told voters during the General Election that "the blacks came in under the Tories." Indians who worked for Labour were snubbed after the election. At least one Labour Party member who took a stand against racialism found himself manoeuvred out of a council seat. Six councillors (since expelled from the LP) joined with the Tories in opposing a set of housing regulations that would have meant council houses for immigrants.

It seems the Labour Party is not the only organisation with concealed racialists, however. At an inter-party brains trust last year, a Communist speaker demonstrated the sincerity of CP internationalism by saying that if Britain entered the Common Market, movement of workers from Europe to Britain would lower Britain's standard of living.

ROGER SANDELL

'JOHNSON'S FOLLY'

THE USA war in South Vietnam is very unpopular with millions of American citizens. Many able-bodied young Americans are evading the draft call by refusing to register, tearing up the draft cards, changing their names and getting married; but getting married is no longer any protection against forced military service. To dodge the draft call in the USA carries penalties of up to five years in a Federal Prison and a \$15,000 fine for these brave and courageous young men, who are sincerely opposed to all wars and induction into the armed services.

For a long time there have been demonstrations in this country against war, with IWW members and anarchists taking active parts in them. It is a sad, heart-rending, tragic thing to view the flag-draped caskets, which represent the flower of young American manhood, being returned home for their loved ones and friends to weep and mourn over.

All the pro-capitalist labour unions and high-salaried labour fakirs are supporting war and militarism and their rank and file membership, who may be strongly opposed to it can be damned, so far as these high-salaried pie-cards are concerned. As long as the ignorant wage-slaves of every nation continue to work in war industries and join the armed services of their various governments, war and mass murder will continue all over the world.

For many years the IWW put up stickers throughout the USA which read "Join the army and get a wooden coffin to match your wooden head!" The IWW has long urged the wage slaves of the world to call a general strike against war and militarism. Many Americans refer to the USA war effort in South Vietnam as "Johnson's Folly".

Roman Catholic political power is growing in the USA, with Catholics holding down cabinet offices in the Federal Government in Washington, D.C., and also in many State Governments. President Johnson whose daughter joined the Catholic Church visited the Pope recently in New York City. The Pope and President Johnson plan to visit each other again later on. They are a world-wide political power and are social reactionaries. It is very urgent that the IWW, the SWF and all branches of the IWMA increase their educational and organisational activities all over the world, not only to prevent World War III, but to build a free libertarian industrial commonwealth of the workers the world over.

Seattle, Washington, USA.

SKIDROAD SLIM.

Direct Action

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

Don't kill the baby, Mother dear!

IN THE END it is always the rank and file that start rank and file organisations, not the doctrines provided by the thousand and one brands of leadership on the left. These organisations arise from need, not doctrine. Over 200 people from all sections of industry assembled at Mahatma Gandhi Hall, on Sunday, January 16, to hear the case for rank and file unity expressed by the members of the platform, at the request of the ENV stewards of Willesden.

The meeting stemmed from the practical experience of the ENV stewards when faced with victimisation. They realised the inadequacy of our present trade union set-up but where else could they turn? Isolated pockets of militants here and there, a branch or two, well-wishers and small political groups on the left. There was no-one to turn to, for joint action on a London scale. So they called this meeting, which was enthusiastically greeted by all present. It has become increasingly plain to everyone, even those who put their faith in the traditional "working" class institutions, that these bodies are totally inadequate for the defence of the workers' rights. They are, in fact, actively demanding the surrender

of privileges and agreements, in return for vague promises of social improvement.

The SWF has long known the consequences of faith in bureaucratic institutions and wholeheartedly supports any rank and file organisation based on the workers and directly reflecting their interests. If, however, this is a political kite, flown by those wishing to frighten their party organisation into action, then successfully wrecking the rank and file organisations as the price of returning to the party fold, then the rank and file should have no part in it. It must be realised by those involved that there is every shade of political thought reflected in this committee. There will be no agreement if a solution in the terms of party politics is attempted, or any faction tries to foist yet another half-baked leadership on the backs of an already disillusioned working class. If either of these two solutions are imposed, it will, of course, result in the inevitable splits. The London Industrial Shop Stewards Defence Committee must leave party politics out of it and concentrate on spreading the struggle throughout London for better conditions and wages.

It is sad, perhaps, to greet a newly-formed rank and file organisation with so many reservations, but, if the lessons of the past cannot be applied, there is no point in wasting time on useless bodies. If the political hatchets are buried, then maybe a rank and file organisation, based on industry, will at long last have been born.

DIGGER

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 Sion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

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

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

● We are receiving the publications listed below. If yours is not among them and you are getting DIRECT ACTION from us, please put us on your mailing list: Direct Action, 34 Cumberland Road, London, E.17.

Industrial Worker (Chicago), Rebel Worker (Chicago), Le Monde Liberaire (Paris), Red and Black (Sydney), USI Bulletin (Genoa), Arbetaren (Stockholm), Espoir (Toulouse), Combat Syndicaliste (Paris), Tierra y Libertad (Mexico), Libertarian Broadsheet (Sydney), Regeneración (Mexico), Informations Correspondances Ouvrières (Paris), Buiten de Perken (The Hague), Défense de L'Homme (Golf-Juan), Noir et Rouge (Paris), Organización Obrera (Buenos Aires), The Peacemaker (Cincinnati), L'Anarchie (Seine), AIT (Caracas), News & Letters (Detroit), Socialist Current (London), De Vrije (Rotterdam), Reconstruir (Buenos Aires), L'Agitazione del Sud (Palermo), El Gastronomico (Miami), Spartacist (New York), Cahiers des Amis de Han Ryner (Seine), Southern Patriot (New Orleans), Front Noir (Paris), Ruta (Brussels), Action Liberaire (France), Direkte Aktion (Hanover), Ruta (Caracas), Towards Anarchism (New York), L'Anarcho-Syndicaliste (Nantes), Candis (Harlow), CILO Bulletin (Buenos Aires), CILO Bulletin (Paris), Marxist Humanist (Glasgow), Mujeres Libres (London), CIRA Bulletin (Lausanne), Brand (Gothenburg), Boletín de Información Libertaria (Miami), FAF Internal Bulletin (France), War Resistance (London), Umbral (Paris), Industrial Youth (Lancs), ALU Bulletin (Montevideo), Nieuwe Strijd (Rotterdam), Free Federation (Japan), Resurgence (London), Peace Press (London).

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London S.W.5, T.L. 10s; Sandvika, Norway, P.G. £10; Liverpool, V.J. £1 9s; London N.1, P.D. 3s 6d; Toronto, P.P. £2 13s 6d; London W.13, M.S. 13s 6d; Greenford, J.O.H. 13s 6d; Wolverhampton, J.L. £1; London S.E.5, C.H. £1; Tynemouth, P.R. & S.R. £5; Madison, Wis., G.G. 4s; London E.6, B.S. 10s; Reading, M.B. 3s 6d; sales of CNT "Spain Today" Postcards 8s; Aberdeen SWF Group 11s; London SWF Group £3 18s 1d. Total £28 17s 7d.

ESSENTIAL READING—IN ANY YEAR

HOW LABOUR GOVERNED, 1945-51

A RECORD TO REMEMBER 9d (postpaid)

LENIN AND WORKERS' CONTROL

by Tom Brown

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

From Direct Action, 34 Cumberland Road, London E.17. Cheques and p.o.'s should be payable to Syndicalist Workers' Federation.

LAW AND DISORDER

LORD SHAWCROSS, who as the 1945-50 Labour Government's Attorney General—then popularly known as Sir Smartly Doublecross—led the Old Bailey prosecution (it failed) of striking dockers (see "How Labour Governed"), spent a recent week wailing in the *Daily Mirror* about the "Crime Wave". We have not the space to answer him point by point and, were the *Mirror's* readers not so numerous, wouldn't be bothered to answer him at all.

Briefly, His Lordship wants the Law made easier. Not for you and me, but for judges, coppers, screws, informers and stooges. He disagrees with juries. He believes in trial by inquisition (Code Napoleon) and, of course, the full carrying out of laws "to improve social conditions" (Socialism by

Decree). In every respect he believes in the Corporate State (Fascism). If he had his way, half of us would be in the nick. All demonstrators are pro-Communist and anti-America, so he says. Civil Liberties organisations are interfering busy-bodies. We'll gain Socialism (he doesn't say this, but it is implicit in his articles) by strengthening the State, giving more powers and help and money to the police and being more severe with criminals. He doesn't state which criminals—train robbers, or his friends, the legalised wages robbers of the City.

THE ROOT CAUSE

His Lordship says—and I agree—City life destroys communal spirit . . . this is one of the causes of crime. Well, what are he and his mates doing about it? He says there should be more family life. Rubbish! What use is family life when it is dominated by the telly, advertising, keeping up with the Joneses and struggling to pay high rent and H.P.? He says there's a falling-off in religion. What good is a religion based on threats and promises, save your own skin (or soul) and to hell with the other bloke? This is the very essence of capitalism.

We are all, including Shawcross, the coppers and criminals, products of a rotten, greed-ridden system, geared to help the greedy and suppress the altruist. The system is criminal and "socialists" who think they can build the New Jerusalem in its lousy, moth-eaten fabric are either barmy or criminal themselves.

OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID

Shawcross says the coppers are overworked and underpaid. I agree, they are overworked. I mean, 31 people nicked for interfering with children at the Schoolboys and Girls Exhibition at Olympia—without complaints from parents or children. A bloke dragged out of a public convenience before he had the chance to do up his flies . . . indecent exposure . . . fine £15. A homosexual arrested for soliciting in a deserted street (he may have smiled at a copper) . . . sentence six months. Demonstrations with more coppers than demonstrators. Hours of duty keeping the people away from their MPs in the Gasworks. Guarding Downing Street, Buckingham Palace, Town Halls and other public monuments up and down the country. These are some of the unnecessary jobs they do. I'll say they're overworked. If I were a copper I'd go on strike—permanently.

SOLUTIONS

We have capitalism—we have crime. By crime I don't mean large-scale robbery, that's just takeover. If some dame loses £20,000 worth of gear, I ask myself how she acquired it in the first place. By crime, I mean the robbing of working people, cheating of widows, pensioners and those too stupid to look after themselves. I know the Anarcho-Syndicalist solution, but the free society is not here yet—despite the beatniks.

So meanwhile let the reformers turn their attention to scrapping of anti-homosexual laws, laws against prostitution, street bookmaking, begging, vagrancy and street selling; scrapping all laws relating to the "Safety of the State", including the Official Secrets Act; withdrawing coppers from meetings or demonstrations, where the police only act as agents provocateurs, and from the House of Commons and other such silly places. And I hope that one day the Free Society will be born and the claptrap of Shawcross and his cronies will be forgotten and all coppers will be put out to graze.

DESMOND McDONALD.

NO COMPENSATION!

THE assistant manager of a Wimpy Bar had his leg broken in a scuffle with rowdies. He was carrying out the orders of his boss. He sued the firm for damages, but a High Court judge ruled he could get no compensation (*Alveran v. Phillip Leonard Catering*).

In this case, there is no question of the judge having bent the rules to reach the decision; he acted here as a slave of the law. In the recent King Hill Hostel case, the judge again had no choice *in law* but to make an *eviction* order, but, later, when the husbands broke the order, the judge was under no duty at all to sentence them for contempt of court, as he did.

Some people have already decided that, since employers are not bound to compensate for injuries caused in protecting their property, "there ought to be a law about it." What they fail to see is that there is *no duty* on an employee to protect the master's property in the first place, *or to do anything* unless it is specifically within the terms of employment. This was established over 100 years ago (*Price v. Mouat*, 1862).

So, if you work in a bank and bandits walk in, there is no duty on you to lift a finger apart from shutting your till, unless you are employed to stop bank robbers on the premises. And as you watch the bandits disappear, remind the manager that it is all covered by insurance anyway. It might be added that the employer is under no duty to protect *your* belongings (*Deyong v. Shenburn*, 1946).

But what would be the actual effect of the legislation called for? Compensation provisions (no doubt not over-generous) would be settled after a long campaign and as part of the dealing that must take place because of the parliamentary convention on "consultation of organised interests". The employers' organisations would say that they could accept such a law (possibly involving contributions from them) only if a duty to act was placed on the servant.

Laws on compensation would therefore mean a few more scraps for the workers from the bosses' table at the usual price: greater intensification of capitalist exploitation.

And what about cases where somebody actually is injured through accident or interference with a bandit's "redistribution of wealth"? The answer is simple and direct. Linked job organisation and action, used skilfully, can make any boss—however unwilling—pay proper compensation to anyone. Why rely on the State; when it is the biggest employer of the lot? Why rely on the union bureaucrats when you can do it yourself?

P.R.

Open letter to the Labour Leader

Dear Harold,

Belated New Year greetings! We were all so busy getting ready for a March election that I haven't had a minute to write—and now it seems you're not going to the polls after all. So you must have yet another gimmick up your sleeve. You're going to need it if Jim comes up with his Horror

After the port was over

LABOUR'S Chancellor of the Exchequer, James Callaghan, recently composed a ditty of praise to his capitalist masters, and duly sang it to them. The occasion was the Stock Exchange Christmas beano. "Called to his feet after the port, the Chancellor announced that he was going to sing for his lunch," reported Frederick Ellis in the *Daily Express*. To the tune of Widdecombe Fair Callaghan sang:

*As I was a-going a-pushing a share,
All along down along Throgmorton Street,
Ted Heath said: "Please can you keep Reggie there,"
With John Thomson, Duncan Stirling, Harald Peake,
John Keswick, Archie Forbes, David Robarts,
Old Rowley Cromer and all,*

*As I was a-going without ever a care,
All along down along Throgmorton Street,
William Davis said to me: "I'll tip you a share,"
With Freddie Ellis, Harold Wincott, Patrick Sergeant,
Ansell Egerton, Tony Vice, Bob Heler, Kenneth Fleet,
Old Francis Whitmore and all.*

*As I was a-going a-pushing a share,
All along down along Throgmorton Street,
I was hurled to the ground by a bull and a bear,
With Hill Samuel, Morgan Grenfell, Schroeder Wagg,
Lazard Brothers, "Sigi" Warburg, Kleinwort Benson,
Lord Ritchie, Martin Wilkinson, and all.*

*As I was a-going a-pushing a share,
All along down along Throgmorton Street,
I met Maurice Laing who cried out "Beware,"
With Capital Gains Tax, productivity, take-overs, George
Woodcock, Aubrey Jones, Dick Wilkins, Gilt-edged,
record takings, lower profits, gold fixings, no equities and
earnings, loan capital, Old Neddy, incomes and prices,
and all.*

FINE VOICE

Commented Ellis: "The Chancellor, I am assured, has a fine voice, and his fellow guests, illustrious names in the City, were greatly amused. Especially so in that the Chancellor managed to include so many of them in his ditty.

"I congratulate Mr. Callaghan on his originality—and his top of the pops performance underlines the better understanding that exists these days between City and Westminster. For those not so well versed in City personalities here is the chorus call:

"*Verse One*: Mainly the chairmen of the 'Big Five' banks, with 'Old Rowley' Governor of the Bank of England. *Verse Two*: The financial journalists and I. *Verse Three*: The merchant bankers with Lord Ritchie, former chairman of the Stock Exchange and Mr. Wilkinson his successor. *Verse Four*: Sir Maurice Laing, boss of the Confederation of British Industries and Dick Wilkins, the leading jobber in Gilt-edged stock."

Budget. What's the gimmick to be this time, I wonder.

That idiot, Bro. Grundiman, says that it'll be that you're going to shoot every tenth unofficial striker as from 1st March. The man's a fool, of course, but that's the only way you'll ever get George's Wage Freeze working.

Your gimmicks have certainly been getting better and better, Harold—it's a pity they just don't quite come off. Someone always spoils them for you. When you were going to fix up the Vietnam war for Johnson everyone told you to get lost. After you couldn't do a thing with the India-Pakistan business, now Kosygin comes in and carries off all the honours. Your great UNO speech was ruined because the Pope got in first anyway and then all those African so-and-so's trooped out. And Bottomley's taken the shine off all your Rhodesian gimmicks by bolting home on the first plane next morning, every time you've left him behind to clear up the muddle.

And now just look at your great peacemaker, Sir Abubakar, the man you relied on to show Smith the value of African majority rule. You've hardly turned your back when he gets himself bumped off in an army revolt.

No, Harold, it seems there's a jinx on even your most dynamic vote-catching gimmicks. And after all, you and I both know that it's only the votes that matter. You can leave the governing to the Banks and the Civil Service.

In one way this globe-trotting of yours has been very successful, even though you never get any results and it's all a bit of a muck-up. It keeps people's minds off their troubles at home—the pensioners, the nurses, the teachers, the railwaymen, the bakers, the coppers and all the rest of the malcontents who just won't listen to Grunter's wise words about sacrifice and effort and discipline and dedication and all that.

It keeps the papers and the TV reporters happy, too—and while I'm on that, Harold, congratulations on your brilliant Honours List! Everybody's wondering why, for the first time, all the journalists and TV newsmen were elevated. *We* know, don't we? Trouble is, you can't give them all medals at once, and there are still a few who dare to criticise.

But you don't have to worry. That Baronetcy for Sir Jock Campbell, our richest millionaire supporter, should do a lot of good among the bosses. And you've split them anyway by getting the Confederation of British Industries on your side, just as you've split the Tories by becoming the biggest Tory in Labour history. The Banks are delighted with their greatest-ever bonanza, and they'll see no harm comes to you if you get your 3% unemployment pool going and get your anti-strikes legislation through.

Pity that hot-head Mike Quill brought off the terrific New York strike—it gives the workers ideas, that sort of thing. L.B.J. should get himself an Honours List—that's the thing to stop the strikes!

Just a word about the Lagos Press interview, Harold. We all thought that "Belt up, there!" touch was rather an anticlimax after "knocking hell" out of the Yanks last year, and the "sheer damn laziness" of the workers. "Belt up" is a bit on the common side, we felt. Councillor Blott was forced to close our last ward meeting early because Bro. Grundiman kept on suggesting things you could have said instead. We were all shocked, of course, by his language, but remember, before Tynan used *that* word on the BBC no one had ever heard of him and look where it's got him now!

Think about it, Harold, before I write again—which will be very soon.

Yours fraternally,
JIMMY WIGGINS

THE VOICE OF WHAT?

MANY readers will have come across a group of publications known collectively as the *Voice* Group. You find various "Voices"—Union Voices, Humberside Voices, Labour's Northern Voices, Loud Voices, Soft Voices, Dockworkers' Voices. Once there was even an Aircraftworkers' Voice; trouble was, though, they couldn't find an aircraft worker to edit it so, logically, they chose a university lecturer.

With another publication, *The Week* (which title, however misspelt, aptly describes its policy), they claim to represent the left wing of the Labour Party. They also claim to campaign for Workers' Control.

CONTRADICTION

The first aim is no doubt true, the second most definitely not! Always, they link this with nationalisation, the full demand thus being "Nationalisation under Workers' Control". This is a contradiction in terms. At best it is meaningless, at worst a blatant distortion.

Just what do they mean? Do they honestly think the workers can be given control? They always fail to answer questions on who will have ultimate authority, the State or the workers on the job.

If it's the workers, why wait for lengthy legal wrangles to finish? Could they not just take over? Is there not a danger of industries given to the workers being taken back? Industries have been denationalised in this country before, road haulage and steel being but two examples. In Russia, factories which revolutionary workers had taken over were confiscated by the brutal Bolshevik (Communist) State machine. These two issues display the incompatibility of State and Workers' Control.

If it is, as it would be, the State which holds the real power, it is a lie to talk of Workers' Control.

CORPORATE STATE

Not for nothing have these people been called Titoists. Weekling Tony Topham has written a pamphlet on "Workers' Control (sic) in Yugoslavia" (Fabian Society, 1963). Yugoslavia is praised by many people, of many different views. Capitalists proclaim it as more "realistic" than Russia. Left (?) socialists acclaim it as more "socialist" than Russia. It is true that a certain amount of autonomy is allowed in the industries. It is also true that a certain amount of industrial representation is allowed. However, ultimate control is in the hands of the State. Many, including some libertarian socialists, equate Spain, Nazi Germany and the Sino-Soviet bloc. This is, of course, correct. The sad thing is, though, that so many do not see that Yugoslavia is the classic example of the Corporate State. It is pure fascism. Fascism need not be racist or ultra-nationalist. If it is, it's because one of its major ingredients is opportunism. If the Voice Group have their way, we, too, will have all the instruments of the Corporate State—including secret police, jailing and torture of militants. In fact, with certain infamous legislation by the Labour Government, one might think this could arrive sooner than expected.

The Corporate State has been called by some "bureaucratic capitalism". This is perhaps a more apt title. It could arrive many ways, the *Voice* Group being just one. It is a real tragedy that so many people, including perhaps themselves, are taken in by these ideas. Many, I know, are very sincere.

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.

OXAN—Quarterly bulletin of Oxford Anarchists. Specimen copy 1s. from L. Oller, 5 New York Rd., North Finch, Wincey, Oxford.

and do not intend such a society; however, we all know what the road to hell is paved with . . . The present boss class may well oppose the plan. It may mean the end of *their* rule—are you so sure it won't herald the arrival of another? To change the master is not to be free. Neither I nor the SWF as a whole have any crystal balls. We could be wrong. But are we?

NEGOTIATE?

There is a bit of a giveaway in the plan for the docks, as published in *The Week*, 15.7.65:

"That the NPA and trade unions be responsible for negotiating basic wages in the industry."

The question arises, if the dockers do in fact have control, just who do they negotiate with? Themselves!

As I have said, the danger, or perhaps the tragedy, of these groups is in their power, albeit unknowingly, to delude workers. Even papers like *Socialist Leader* and *Peace News* refer to them as the Workers' Control Movement. A recent *Guardian* report referred to their plans for Hull transport as a form of "super syndicalism".

Well, Syndicalism may be "super", but I doubt if even our *Voice* friends would have the gall to call themselves syndicalists. Anyway, read any SWF pamphlet or paper to prove that.

Along with calls for nationalisation go constant appeals for "men of principle". Who? Foot, Brockway, Heffer, or our member for Peking East, Bill Warbey? (The last two are sponsors of *The Week*.) People who stab Wilson in the back—with a knife that goes back into the handle when it touches him. And when they bay, they need Labour Party muscle to open the mouth. No worse, the so-called left is the parasite that burrows under the hound's skin; it cannot live without the hound of Labour.

SHAM

They have not the guts to vote against Wilson. For this would bring the Tories back—which would be far worse. Yeah, yeah, yeah! Do they not realise that the Tories and Liberals would vote to save Wilson, for he would only carry out *their* policies? Which do they fear losing most, their government or their job? Or do both go together?

How pathetic it all is. They perpetuate the sham of Parliament and of reform. At Hull, Gott was attacked in a disgusting manner by Coates (editor) and his Weeklings. They show how much they honestly oppose Wilson. Gott has his tactics wrong, and of course he is a former friend of theirs. He just thinks he's a better leader than the rest.

But just look at the leaders once they get power. Take Dickie Barrett of the dockers' Blue Union—he's so busy getting on to commissions now that he doesn't even want to recruit for the union. His ex-pal Gerry Healy of the Socialist Labour League wants to take the control of strikes out of the hands of unofficial strikers by making them official. Of course, under a better leadership—Dickie for instance? Cousins of the T & G marched from Aldermaston for peace, then landed a job in charge of a ministry which helps to make the Bomb.

However, if we had chosen . . .

On the lighter side, no less a left-winger than TUC boss George Woodcock once worked for the *Voice* Group many years ago. 'Nuff said.

VINCENT JOHNSON

YOU SAID IT, BROTHER!

"We have had 15 months of good Conservative government."
Mr. J. K. McNamara, Labour Candidate, Hull, 19.1.66

THE PARTY IS OVER!

"THE party is over, it's time to call it a day, we have burst your pretty balloon."

These opening lines of a well-known song are the very words being sung by Brown, Grunter, Wilson & Co., to the trade union movement.

George Brown's speech when he signed the "Declaration of Intent" was the finest piece of acting seen in years—Brothers, the class war is over, we must go forward hand in hand to make our country great! The acting was so convincing that George Brown nearly convinced himself that a "Prices & Incomes Policy" would work on a voluntary basis.

According to Peter Paterson (Industrial Correspondent) in the *Sunday Telegraph* (16.1.66) the Labour Party prepared a document nearly three years ago referring to voluntary action on prices and incomes. The document states "Without something more reliable than voluntary co-operation no policy will be durable."

That's it brothers, the "old voluntary gag" is exposed for all to see. Although, to be perfectly fair, from the very beginning Ray Grunter made no secret of his opinion regarding the "voluntary principle"; he played the game "loyal to one's comrades" and all that jazz, but he took every opportunity to advocate wage legislation. If it had been in his power it would have been legislation from the very beginning. Our Ray prefers the mailed fist not covered by the velvet glove.

In a speech at Ilford (8.1.66), Grunter read the riot act for the benefit of the wicked, unpatriotic workers who keep pressing for higher wages. He said, "There are far too many people in this country living in cuckoo land unwilling to face the harsh realities of our position." Intensifying his attack on the working class, he went on to say "This is surely a moment when every rule book should be reviewed and every hallowed practice coolly examined in the light of the needs of a modern industrial society."

All through the Grunter diatribe, the employers didn't rate a mention, the attack was aimed plainly and simply at the workers. According to Mr. Grunter, the price control part of the prices and incomes policy has been a success. He must be joking, although of course on £9,000 a year one

wouldn't notice. The reverse is the case, the Prices and Incomes Board has frozen the railway claim, castrated the bakers' claim, and told the bank employees to come back another day. George Brown and his heavenly body tried to interfere with the printworkers' claim but was told in no uncertain manner to f— off.

The present Labour Government has pulled more strokes than a Tory Government would have dared pull. It has ponced on the misguided loyalty of the working class, ably assisted by the TUC. When George Brown pulled the strings, the TUC puppet responded immediately and endorsed compulsory notification of wage claims and price increases.

Chubby Wilson, in a New Year message to the Labour Party, stated that higher living standards are well within our grasp, "but many will have to hold back on their claims if others are to receive their rightful share". The Rt. Hon. Gentleman from Huyton is a purveyor of inexactitudes; railwaymen, busmen and bakers can prove it, not to mention the workers whose measly pittance is governed by Wages Councils.

At the risk of being accused of acting like a clairvoyant, these next months will see active industrial struggle. If they don't, we may as well shut shop, because the mob at the gasworks at Westminster will walk all over us—ably assisted by the TUC.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

Workers' Forum

LONDON SWF held another Workers' Forum on Sunday, January 23. Despite a somewhat smaller audience than at the previous forum in October, useful information and ideas were exchanged.

Bill Christopher introduced the discussion on "The values and the limitations of unofficial committees in industry." Concentrating on his experience in the printing industry, he was followed by contributors on the docks, and the building and car industries.

It was agreed unanimously to continue the series, the next discussion being on the subject "What's wrong with the unions?" on February 30. For further details contact the Secretary, 34 Cumberland Road, E.17. It is stressed that the purpose of these meetings is constructive open discussion between fellow-workers.

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.

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LITERATURE

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