

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Carrión crows again
Irish farmers on picket
After the General Strike
Poverty in Britain

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SUPPORT THE SEAMEN!

IT MUST SEEM strange to most people that British seamen have not had a union strike since 1911—very odd when one considers other industries and the strikes, and threats of strikes, which have protected their workers' wages, hours and conditions. Seamen had a good, militant record up to

1911, but after that year the National Union of Seamen and Firemen was captured by a gang of self-seeking officials, headed by the notorious patriot, Havelock Wilson, who had risen to power on his reputation as a militant.

The union officials made a pact with the Shipping Federation, the largest body of employers, to enforce union membership by refusing to employ any man who would not sign the infamous "P.C.5" form, allowing the shipowner to take union dues from his pay and forward the money to the officials. In return, the NUS officials gave loyal and valuable service to the shipowners. The bureaucratic hands were strengthened by the fact that seamen in work are away and cannot attend branch meetings, no stewards were allowed by employers or union, and seamen out of work were in arrears of union dues and so denied a voice in union affairs. The officials of the NUS actually went to the shipowners in 1931 and asked them to reduce wages by £1 a month. Of course, the owners gladly agreed and praised the union bosses for their patriotism.

RANK-AND-FILE CONTROL

There were many fights against this condition, but in harder times organisation to defeat the powerful, State-supported employers and their union lackeys was difficult, poverty, the magistrates and judges being ever at hand to enforce the employers' will. The one really promising development

cont. on page 2, col. 1



"It would be the duty of the Government, indeed of any Government, to resist the action taken."

—Wilson on TV, 16.5.66.

The same the whole world over

ACCORDING to the *Evening Standard* (6.5.66) Russia is to produce Italian Fiat cars. Under a new agreement, Fiat will build the plant in Russia at a cost of £120 million, financed by the Italian government and repayable over ten years.

It may be recalled that Fiat bosses were prominent financial backers of Mussolini even before his seizure of power. Since that time the firm has been nationalised and now has a factory in Fascist Spain, too. All of which just goes to show that for the boss class, East or West, money never stinks.

RUSSIAN labour made some sort of record last year: Shipyard workers at Sevastopol and other Black Sea ports struck for pay and conditions. Russian leaders try to keep up the fiction that striking by workers is unnecessary, improper and unpatriotic. It's about the same in the USA.

Mike McQuirk in "Industrial Worker"

SUPPORT THE SEAMEN (cont.)

against P.C.5, on the NE coast in 1929 to 1931, was ruined by the intervention of the Communist Party.

However, in recent years an all-ports free movement of seamen has been created. Known as the Seamen's Reform Movement, regular organisation has been created and the fight carried on inside and outside the union, in port and aboard ship, and unofficial strikes have taken place. Gradually, the officials of the NUS, true heirs of Havelock Wilson, have been forced from one position to another, until, unable longer to stem the tide, they have had to accept the strike. If you can't beat them, join them. But, sailors beware, the best position from which to break a strike is the seat of leadership of that dispute. The situation cries out loud for rank-and-file control of the strike. Control of the picket line, regular mass meetings, democratically-elected strike committees in every port and a national federal council of strike committees.

From any point of view, the demands of the seamen, stewards and others are reasonable, when compared to any other industry or service. A 40-hour week, instead of 56 hours. On wages, £60 a month after five-years' service, about 3s a week, and proper overtime rates for week-end overtime. An end to the 1894 Merchant Shipping Act, which makes "misconduct" a punishable offence, liable to jail or fining, and striking a criminal offence. An Act which, 72 years ago, was but a codification of serf laws dating back more than 200 years. Despite Harold Wilson's criticism of this Act in one of his "TV Spectaculars", it is worth recalling that no step was taken by either the 1945-51 or 1964-66 Labour Governments to repeal it. Only when strike action takes place do Wilson and Co. admit the iniquity of serfdom.

VICTORY FOR ALL WORKERS

Well over 100 industries now enjoy a 40-hour week and average wages in most are above those of seamen. Much is said about competition from foreign shipping. Danish seamen receive £74 a month for a 45-hour week and Swedish £69 for the same hours. West Germany pays £64 for a 40-hour week and American seamen get, also for a 40-hour week, £130! These, with the Greeks, are the chief competitors.

The Labour Government, as expected, has come out completely against the strike. Also announced is the use of the armed forces under Tory emergency special laws to break the strike, as previous Labour premiers, MacDonald and Attlee did. Wilson on TV threatened the strikers and declared, "it would be the duty of the Government to resist the action taken, for this would be a strike against the State." An ordinary industrial, legal dispute is a "strike against the State." We Syndicalists, too, understand the nature of the State and that it is not changed by a "Labour" vote—and warn workers against the Socialist and Communist crooks who urge workers to put their trust in a Labour Government and "Vote Labour".

Much support is promised the seamen. We must each see to it that these tokens of solidarity are increased and made effective. Victory of the seafarers will be victory for all workers. Wilson has threatened our fellow workers, while profiteering dealers in foodstuffs doubled prices in the first three days of the strike, but were not threatened with prison or substantial fine.

We know what side Her Majesty's Socialists are on. WE ARE FOR THE SEAMEN.

Merchant Navy Losses, 1939-45 War

Killed and missing: 35,462. Wounded: 4,402. Prisoners: 5,556. Total: 45,420.

NEWCASTLE SYNDICALIST GROUP meets every Thursday, 8 pm, at The Adelaide, Newgate St., Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Operation kidnap

EUROPE'S FORGOTTEN MEN, the political prisoners of fascist dictator Franco—among them SWF member Stuart Christie, nearing the end of his first two years of a 20-year sentence—had their fate dramatically highlighted last month.

Members of the CNT, Spain's clandestine anarcho-syndicalist labour unions, kidnapped Mgr. Marcos Ussia, ecclesiastical counsellor at the Spanish Embassy at the Vatican on April 29—and held him for 12 days, during which the world's press gave wide publicity to their demand for the freeing of political prisoners in Spain. Ussia, member of a rich and aristocratic Basque family, said his captors had treated him well—but gave him a Protestant Bible to read! He was freed, near the Vatican, on May 11. Earlier, a Spanish comrade had been arrested on suspicion of complicity in the kidnapping.

This daring coup recalls that of three young Italian Anarchists in September, 1962, when they kidnapped Franco's vice-consul in Milan, in protest against the death sentence, by a Franco court-martial, on libertarian militant, Jorge Conill Vall. On October 5 of that year Vall was reprieved, thanks to the action of our comrades and the subsequent intervention of Cardinal Montini, now the Pope.

NORTH-EAST NOTES

Steward reinstated

THE sacked shop-steward at Vickers' Elswick works, Brian Shave, is reinstated (DIRECT ACTION, May). The management's offer of a job in another shop at less pay was rejected; the management was finally brought down by an overtime ban throughout the works, caused by the withdrawal of all stewards from joint negotiating committees, and the added threat of a general walkout by all 19(!) unions.

One drawback with this "official" approach is the time it takes, however. Shave was off work for five weeks before reinstatement. He was forced to apologise and to promise to obey future orders as a condition of reinstatement. At another engineering works, at Aycliffe, Durham, last month it took just five hours for the hundred men involved to get a steward reinstated—with no apology. They walked out and stayed out.

The other Vickers' Elswick news, the "worker's court" affair, has come to a satisfactory end. The two men exceeding the £35 per week ceiling have paid their fines and shown their payslips to the works convenor, thus keeping their union cards. Ironically, while local press and radio were going to town on this, the convenor himself, a Labour councillor at Gateshead, was being disciplined by the local Party for voting on the Newcastle line over the Tyne county proposals. One cannot help wondering if the convenor's position in the Labour Party influenced Ald. Cunningham, local boss of Shave's union (NUGMW) to give his support to that dispute. For Mrs. Doreen McNally, a non-political militant, was publicly jettisoned by Cunningham after she had got him negotiating rights at Blaydon Wire Works, and herself suffered victimisation.

NO STRIKES—GETS MEDAL

FOR 20 years, Joe Moat, sheet-metal workers' craft union steward at Vickers' Walker Yard, had never allowed a dispute to turn into a strike. On retirement, Vickers gave him a British Empire Medal in the Honours List, plus the usual watch. And laid on a free taxi ride to Alnwick and back for him to shake hands with the Duke of Northumberland and be presented with the medal on Her Majesty's behalf.

DIRECT ACTION REPORTER

THE CARRION CROWS AGAIN!

SINCE 1956 the AEU policy-making conference has been contaminated by the presence of that loathsome crow-like creature, Sir William Carrion. Apart from the Knighthood conferred on him by a grateful British government, the Carrion has many other honours, including a Papal Knighthood. He is also a Director of the Bank of England and a Knight of the Grand Order of Witch Hunters. All these honours have been conferred on him for services rendered and, as president of the AEU he has been an able and a willing servant.

This was the year trade unionists will remember with disgust. The Carrion's presidential address included his now famous Carrionade, he described militant Shop Stewards as Werewolves rushing madly towards industrial ruin and howling delightedly at the foam upon their muzzles, which they accept as the guiding light. It was at this conference that the national committee voted against Gaitskell's Nuclear policy. Later in the year at the TUC in Douglas, the Carrion used his facing-both-ways technique to defeat the national committee's policy. He succeeded in getting a delegation to agree by 17-16 to cast their vote in support of the Nuclear policy.

CARRION COMEDIAN

He was once accused by a television interviewer of being a bit controversial and not always representative of his members' point of view. He admitted this was true, but stated it was inevitable in a big union such as his. When asked if it bothered him, he said no, but on these occasions he found a quiet corner somewhere and went down on his knees and prayed for divine guidance. Of course, he neglected to say he was plugged in to 10, Downing Street.

Sir William got off to a good start again this year with a special eve-of-conference television interview. Asked what he thought was the most contentious item on the agenda, he said it would be the government's Prices & Incomes policy and he expected plenty of opposition from the subversive elements. Asked if he meant the communists, he reluctantly said yes, but that his own right wing was equally represented, so it was the uncommitted delegates he would have to convince. He went on to say the AEU was already supporting the TUC's early warning system on wage claims, so there was no reason why they should not continue to do so in the coming year. He criticised the communist delegates, who, he said, he had invited to the interview to put their point of view. Again he did an about-face, by paying tribute to the now retired Executive Officer, Claude Berridge. He said that although they had had differences of opinion on many issues, they had learnt to respect one another. Finally, he said that unless delegates supported the government's PIB policy, they could all end up on the industrial scrap heap—and who should know more about scrap heaps than Carrion?

POLICY-MAKING CONFERENCE 1966

Some 53 rank and file delegates attended this year's conference and the Carrion didn't have it all its own way. On April 28, a resolution, carried unanimously on Automation, laid down the following conditions: 1, No introduction of automation without previous consultation and agreement. 2, No redundancy to arise from it. Any labour displaced to be retained on payroll, pending alternative work without loss of earnings. 3, Increased productivity resulting from new processes to be reflected in increased earnings and reduced hours. 4, Technical training to be a government responsibility. 6, District committees and shop stewards to insist on discussions with individual employers to discover their plans for automation.

In the debate, Sir William Carrion, president, said we must

not blink our eyes at cold hard facts of life. We must accept that change must come: there was no indication that the introduction of sophisticated machinery was creating unemployment. In fact, Good Old Mr. Wilson had introduced legislation to cushion the effects of unemployment if it came.

Mr. Les Elliott (Acton), said 50,000 people *a week* had lost jobs in America because of automation. Carrion replied that this figure was correct, but an even greater number of jobs had been created; in addition, advanced forms of automation had enabled the American aircraft industry to lead the world; he didn't mention that the American aircraft industry had been built up on a war economy, or that it was being ably assisted by our own government, who, while making workers in the British aircraft industry redundant, continue to place large orders for aircraft with their American masters.

AND THE CARRION CROWED THRICE

The debate on Prices & Incomes was confined to one morning session, mainly for tactical reasons. The Carrion took up most of the time, trying to explain that everyone, including the housewives, were fed up with prices chasing wages: "It does not matter if the sky is the limit in the wage packets, if the sky is the limit-plus for prices." He ridiculed the suggestion of several speakers that union leaders were in danger of being thrown in the Tower. The AEU had 17 MPs in parliament and it was dreadful to think that they would be party to any legislation that was oppressive, no one was under any illusions as to Sir William's safety. He assured members that, if the TUC's voluntary early warning system worked, there would be no need to operate the conditions of the Bill. The Government's Prices & Incomes policy was accepted by 30-22. By the afternoon resolutions were still pouring in opposing the Bill and it looked like the left wing was going to perform a classic *volte face*, but the Carrion was facing the other way again and repeated, five times in all, that he intended to carry out the policy endorsed at the morning session.

AND ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN

Good Old Mr. Wilson, who had been crucified by the Scottish TUC the week before, when they threw out his PI policy, had been saying a few prayers himself. There can be little doubt that, had the AEU not supported him, it would only have been a matter of time before Harold was made redundant, he can now be assured of support both from the TUC and the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. Undaunted as ever, when Harold addressed the conference on April 30, he told delegates the next step in the betrayal, when he suggested that they scrap the rule book as part of his new industrial revolution. It is understood that many delegates told Harold to get stuffed.

As usual, only a matter of days had elapsed when someone was shouting "we've been conned". This time it was Stan Orme, AEU sponsored MP, and Mr. Norman Atkinson, MP. Their complaint was that Good Old Mr. Wilson hadn't told them he would be giving the Doctors a 30 per cent. increase under a separate PIB. Both said that, had their members at the National Committee been aware of these facts, they would never have supported the Bill.

Although Harold is usually the star of any show, there can be little doubt that Sir William was the star of this one and it leaves Good Old Mr. Wilson with yet another problem: that of giving him his reward and, with all the titles he has already, it's a bit difficult. I know what most of the AEU members call him, but Harold doesn't use that language now, so what about Little Sir Echo?

E. STANTON

Direct Action

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On the dole: 1966 style

MAY 3, 1966 will go down as the date of one of the most reactionary Budgets in the history of Parliamentary Government. When you realize the amount of strokes pulled in the Gasworks, this is some statement, so let's see what justification there is for it.

What should the working class expect from a Labour Government, whose election promise was a programme of Social Reform? I should imagine maintaining full employment and lowering living costs would be high on the list. It would appear that Callaghan, Chancellor Extraordinary, doesn't think so. His Payroll Tax would be better described as a Sack-all Tax.

When this piece of Social Reform comes into effect on September 5, every worker in industries not classified as manufacturing—i.e. construction, civil and mechanical, the retail trade and all employed in giving service to others—will be penalised by a fine on his employer of 25/- per man, 12/6 for women and boys and girls 7/6 (we aren't worth much are we?)

Grinning Cavalier Callaghan justifies this Tax by the need for redeployment of labour into the manufacturing industries. If it has that effect (which it won't) it will mean uprooting many thousands of families from one area to another, to obtain work which is not penalised. To bring this about it will also mean retraining thousands of men, if they are not going to spend months or even years out of work. How can they turn a bricklayer into a lathe operator overnight? (Wilson and his magic pipe will come in handy here, no doubt.) Where are all the training centres capable of retraining thousands of men? Of course this is not feasible and well the Government and employing class know it.

Under this system of taxation the employer gets a multiple-

'Left' has blunt teeth

LABOUR MP Stan Orme's Trafalgar Square promise, on Easter Monday, that Wilson's Vietnam policy was due to come under heavy fire from the Parliamentary "left" fizzled out like a damp squib only a fortnight later. The story of yet another exhibition by these rebels without claws is told graphically by a series of *Daily Telegraph* headlines.

"LABOUR MP'S ATTACK ON VIETNAM POLICY. Wilson faces his critics" proclaimed the front page on April 22. Four days later the battle was apparently joined: "LEFT WING BARES ITS TEETH ON VIETNAM. 'Censure' amendment is signed by 32 MP's." On April 27, under an ominous "THREAT TO MAJORITY" WARNING, we were told that "If British troops were sent to Vietnam, the Government would 'tear to pieces' even the secure majority it has in the Commons, Mr. Michael Foot (Labour Ebbw Vale) said in the House last night."

Wilson need not worry. The cardboard teeth of Labour's "left" MP's did not bury themselves in his rump. The "Censure amendment" was never put and on April 28 the *Telegraph* headline had become: "LABOUR LEFT SPLIT ON TACTICS."

purpose bonus. He can use the tax to push up the price of his goods, as he does at any slight excuse even now, with the resulting increases in the cost of living. He can and will use it as a threat to sack his employees, thereby keeping down demands for better wages and conditions. Where it is possible to cut down his labour force he will do so; this will mainly apply to workers not actually engaged in producing a profit—maintenance, canteen workers, etc. Capitalists in the past have openly admitted that to make their economy run efficiently they must have a pool of unemployment, which enables them to keep costs (as they put it) at a competitive level. Callaghan's Payroll Tax gives them this pool.

Workers already employed in manufacturing industries might be led to believe that this Tax does not endanger their earning potential. Not so. Whenever a dispute arises over pay or conditions, they will be bluntly told by the management that there are a few hundred ex-shop assistants and construction workers outside the gate, only too pleased to accept the employers' terms.

TURNING DOWN CLAIMS

I fail to see Callaghan's logic in trying to cut men from the construction industry when there such a great need for homes and buildings of all types. The Government pays lip service to the need for more power stations, to cut our annual winter blackouts and increase the amount of electricity to meet the demands of expanding industries—and at the same time levies a tax against these workers, which will result only in large-scale redundancies. This proves Callaghan and his Cronies are not only bent, but incompetent.

The effect of the Payroll Tax on other aspects of Government Policy, such as the Prices and Incomes Board, also deserves comment. By creating this pool of unemployed, it will make Brother Brown's job comparatively easy: he will have no trouble turning down wage claims, knowing the fear of mass unemployment is just around the corner.

From all this we can draw only one conclusion: this latest Labour Government adventure—on behalf of the ruling class—is yet another attack to reduce the standard of living of the British working class.

D. REARDON

GROUP NOTICES

LONDON: Weekly meetings at Lucas Arms, 245 Grays Inn Road, WC1 (5 min. Kings Cross Station). Wednesdays at 8.0 p.m. (Note: change of day and time).

- June 1 Business meeting
- 8 Organising in Industry—Opened by Ernie Stanton
- 15 Struggle in the Docks
- 22 Railways—Joe Thomas
- 29 Internationalism and Vietnam—Digger Walsh

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.

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

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

BELFAST—Contact Tony Rosato, 103 Deer Park Road, Belfast 14. 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.

HULL—Contact Jim & Shelagh Young, 3 Fredericks Crescent, Hawthorn Avenue, Hessle Road, Hull, Yorks.

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.

POVERTY ON INCREASE IN BRITAIN

IF we had the misfortune to read only the *Express* or *Mirror*, we might indeed believe class war to be a thing of the past. We would concur with "Brother" George Brown who declares, "The class war is over." However, really to believe this we would have to be daft or blind. Every day we hear of new or proposed laws threatening the gains, future and present, of working people. We are told that pay demands must not outstrip production, that we must all be fitted into a nice and natural economic plan.

As a syndicalist I view such a plan with great suspicion. Most of the people who advocate it hardly seem to be on the headline. The plan will come about, too—if the *Express* is against them they're bound to! Those of us who, as workers, knock this plan are attacked as agitators, etc., a title we are proud to bear.

In the past capitalists wouldn't give their employees a sniff of the barmaid's apron if they could avoid it. While, for the moment, the proposed Prices and Incomes Act would act as a wage pause, this is not the final idea. Intelligent capitalists now speak of "planned wage growth" and are willing to concede even regular annual wage increases. However, to do this, they have to know how high or low production figures will be. This is not as original an idea as it may sound. Those three lovers of freedom, Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini, all had similar ideas. The only real difference is that in this country our betters have added "British" and "liberal" sounding phrases to make the thing more acceptable to us mugs.

One of the reasons given for the "ending" of the class struggle is the relative wealth of the working class today. While our conditions have improved, the major improvements had to be fought for tooth and nail. Many of the agreements could have almost been signed in working-class blood, so bloody were the battles.

POVERTY ON INCREASE

It is also a fact that contrary to popular belief, real poverty is on the increase in Great Britain. A recent report, "The Poor and the Poorest", based upon Ministry of Labour statistics 1953—60, seems to indicate the rapid growth of poverty in this country. In 1953 4 million people, or 7.8% of the populace, were *officially* classified as being poor. Yet, in 1960, this group had grown to 7½ million or 14% of the populace—a rise of 7% in seven short years! About 2 million were children, 1 in 6 of the population. 3 million were poor because their wages remained low while prices rose. Larger families, low state benefits, and an increase in numbers of aged persons and the chronically sick are factors blamed by the report for the increase in poverty.

While the report is handy, it is also inadequate. It fails to mention that the vast majority of people have to struggle to live also. Many who *have* television sets, and the rest, fall asleep in front of them, as a result of enforced overtime to pay HP, etc. HP debts in the western world continue to soar. Much of this "prosperity" comes because Mum has to work. Kids are forced to stay at school for meals (ugh!) and tens of thousands cannot even pay for these.

Many workers, in particular young couples, have to live in slums. Mortgages are hard to get, and often mean more back-breaking overtime. In Liverpool alone, 80,000 dwellings are unfit to live in. If we take an average family as being four, this means 320,000 human beings forced to live in degrading and unhealthy conditions. Most other big cities have similar problems.

Capitalists and politicians speak of the "housing crisis". Yes, but who bears the brunt of the "crisis"? When politicians try and solve it, they do so with concrete concen-

tration camps like Kirkby ("Z-Car" country). Or massive "Tower of Babel" blocks of flats. Capitalism will eventually get rid, I expect, of harsh economic poverty. It appears to have done so in Sweden. The way it will do this will be with increasing bureaucracy, State planning and State capitalism: the ever-increasing tendency of monopoly.

Capitalism is forced to rid poverty from the world, as bitter experience has taught that the alternative is revolution. The great new thing is famine relief. This could, in the future, replace arms expenditure, which today acts as both spur and anchor to the general economy. If this happens, it will be because it both is more profitable and helps avert revolution in the underdeveloped countries. Yet another effect will be to satisfy "liberal" and progressive feelings at home. (It is ironic that "aid" which is at present given goes not to those who need most, but into the pockets of grasping administrators, arms racketeers and politicians.)

Another effect of such aid would be to make the receiving countries economically dependent on the donors. This is called "neo-colonialism". The so-called "new countries" have been forgiven political freedom, but are still dependent upon the metropolitan countries economically. Thus proving the syndicalist maxim that political freedom without economic democracy is little short of useless.

"ECONOMIC BLACKMAIL"

However, even if capitalists do manage to get rid of economic poverty, they can never get rid of their moral poverty. The poverty of the morality which sanctions profit from war, which accepts the exploitation of man by man. The dual morality which calls unofficial strikes "economic blackmail", when the entire relationship of worker to capitalist is based on economic blackmail. The blackmail of fear of the sack, or wage-slavery.

Those well-meaning people who would sugar capitalism with reforms always end up defending capitalism, defending the morally indefensible. These include the political parties, among them the so-called Labour and Communist Parties, which twist and turn and always betray. The trade unions which divide us, and union officials who suck up to the boss. The left-wing Fuehrers who would lead our class to socialism. Sham democracy in Parliament, the monarchy.

As Syndicalists, we believe that the producers should dispose of the wealth they produce. Capitalism denies us this right. We believe that Parliament will not help us reach this higher stage of society. We propose syndicalist or *democratic* industrial unions. For as James Connolly put it, "There is not a socialist in the world today who can indicate with any degree of clearness how we can bring about the co-operative commonwealth except along the lines suggested by industrial organisation of the workers."

"Political institutions are not adapted to the administration of the co-operative commonwealth we are working for. Only the industrial form of organisation offers us even a theoretical constructive socialist programme. There is no constructive socialist programme except on the industrial field."

What a classic statement of revolutionary syndicalism. The idea is as applicable to pit as to office, to factory as to shipyard.

As a firm step the Syndicalist Workers' Federation advocates the formation of yet more rank-and-file committees. Such committees will unite to become industrial unions, which will fight the day-to-day struggle and organise for the capture of power by our class. We are building the new society within the shell of the old.

VINCENT JOHNSON

May Day reports

SPAIN, May 1—On the call of the TU Alliance (CNT-UGT-STV), thousands of demonstrating workers thronged the streets of Bilbao. There were clashes with armed police, trying to smash the demonstration, and many people were taken to hospital. Some workers sought refuge in churches, chased by police, who found their way barred by several priests. Twenty people, including a Roman Catholic priest and a soldier, were arrested at San Sebastian, when police used their truncheons to break up a May Day demonstration, attended by more than 3,000 workers. In Barcelona, police broke up a street demonstration by several thousand workers, demanding free trade unions, the right to strike and higher wages. Other demonstrations are reported from Pasajes and Trinchерpe. In Madrid and Barcelona, students held mass demonstrations, demanding the right to organise a free students' union.

BRUSSELS, May 1—Thousands of Belgians shouted: "Down with South Africa and the armaments kings" in Liège today, as the women on strike at the FN rifle factory marched in the May Day parade. The company which makes arms for South Africa, has a factory in Johannesburg.

TEL AVIV, May 1—Hundreds of police poured into the port town of Ashdod tonight to restore order after rioters attacked the General Federation of Labour building, smashing windows and setting fire to a red flag. The rioters were said to be factory workers, some of whom had received dismissal notices last week. *The Times*.

ROME, May 1—All universities throughout Italy are to be closed tomorrow and Tuesday because of a strike of students called to support demands for the resignation of Professor Ugo Papi, Rector of Rome University. Several hundred students are still occupying eight of the faculty buildings at the university, where there had been serious political disorders . . . originally the occupation of the university building was intended as a protest against the death of a student after the disorders last week inspired by extreme right-wing elements. The details of his death have yet to be established, but he has already become an anti-fascist martyr . . . few of the May Day speeches today could avoid some mention of his tragic end. *The Times*.

Later: Papi's resignation was announced.

SAIGON, May 1—A crowd of about 5,000 South Vietnamese labourers, women and youths staged an anti-American May

Day demonstration about 100 yards from the US Embassy in Saigon this morning . . . The demonstrators said they were members of two organisations, called the Vietnam Labour Federation and the Vietnamese Youth Labour Force . . . the demonstrators were stopped by police carrying clubs, wicker shields and tear gas grenades.

BERLIN, May 1—May Day in East Berlin was again a demonstration of military strength, with units from all forces goose-stepping past Herr Ulbricht and other leaders of the regime. Several types of missile were displayed.

LIVERPOOL—May day this year had the Blackpool touch. Liverpool Trades Council & Labour Party staged a Rally and carnival at Kirkby Stadium. This seems to have been an attempt to avoid a repeat of last year's mini-riot by local militants, who marched despite attempts by local party officials and police to stop them.

They had a march this year, but what a sham. They also had Morris dancers, beauty queens, cycle races and lolly ices. However, proving that it is militant after all, the CP also marched. Jolly good show, "comrades"—Keep the Red Flag Flying!

Harold Wilson, the workers' friend and court jester, was the prize turn. After crowning the beauty queen he gave a speech in which he detailed legislation with which he intends to crown the workers. However, despite much heckling, people seemed more interested in ice-cream than in our Harold. It was a smashing day, but the heat was nothing to the heat that Wilson and his whiz-kids will soon turn on us.

MANCHESTER—The Labour Party did not march this year. However 300 people, including 40 syndicalists and anarchists, marched as usual.

Starting from Ardwick Green, they passed the Lesser Free Trade Hall, where 20 or so Labour supporters were holding their sectarian meeting. The march ended with a meeting near the "Old Shambles." A number of speakers on behalf of different organisations included Alan Barlow, who put the libertarian point of view.

He's their mate!

"GUNTER PLEASES THE TORIES"

Sir Keith Joseph, Shadow Minister of Labour, pressed the Government in the House of Commons . . . to say when the report of the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations could be expected . . .

"Mr. Gunter, Minister of Labour, said that he could not speculate about dates. The Trades Union Congress would probably have submitted its evidence by mid-summer.

"Meanwhile, said Mr. Gunter, the Government had been 'conducting experiments' in some industries which had been causing most worry in the past. These included the docks, railways, car and shipbuilding industries.

"Mr. Gunter saw no easy solution to these problems, because they were 'attached to human beings.' Contraction in the railways, for instance, caused insecurity, and 'insecurity always makes men less rational.'

"The longer you live as Minister of Labour,' Mr. Gunter concluded, 'the less political you become.' This is the kind of remark which endears him even to the Opposition.

"Mr. Mawby (C., Toynes) rose immediately to say that, if there had to be a Labour Government, Conservatives were glad that Mr. Gunter should be Minister of Labour. Mr. Gunter looked pleased."

Daily Telegraph, 23/4/66.

* * *

AMERICAN surgeons have cut a man in half and given him a false balsa-wood body from the ribs down. He is shortly to start work again as a full-time trade-union official.

(Sunday Mirror, 8.5.66.)

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

OPERATION HAT-TRICK. The first British Polaris base opens at Faslane on Thursday, June 30. During its period of construction members of the Scottish Committee of 100 and SYCND have held two large demos at the base. It cost us a few quid in fines; it cost the State hundreds in security precautions, and still we got in. This will be our third demo at the base. On Saturday, June 25 a two-day march will leave Glasgow, sleeping overnight in Dumbarton. Let's make this a demo the State wants to forget. Come along, preferably in busloads (we're all optimists here). Register your protest against British Polaris. Contact Alan Sinclair, Flat 3A, 34 Mallaig Road, Glasgow SW1. P.S.: Don't forget to bring your cameras.

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. Otter, 5 New Yatt Rd., North Leigh, Witney, Oxon.

ALTRINCHAM LIBERTARIAN YOUTH—Contact Stephen Richards, 25 N. Vale Road, Timperley, Altrincham, Chesh.

WANDSWORTH LIBERTARIAN YOUTH—Contact Adrian Morris, 26 Openview, Earlsfield, S.W.18.

WEST HAM ANARCHISTS—Contact Karl Taylor, 98 Clova Road, E.17 (MAR 0316).

AFTER THE GENERAL STRIKE

ON TUESDAY, May 11, 1926, the General Council of the TUC issued a message to the strikers: "Nothing could be more wonderful than the magnificent response of millions of workers to the call of their leaders. From every town and city in the country reports are pouring in to the GC headquarters, stating that all ranks are solid, that the working men and women are resolute in their determination to resist the unjust attack on the mining community."

The following day I attended a mass meeting, called by Coventry Trades Council to announce the "victorious termination of the General Strike." Assembled that afternoon on "the Meadows", we awaited the arrival of the TUC representative. Then a small car approached, a figure leaning from the window waved a large red flag. The car stopped and, to loud cheering, Ellen Wilkinson walked to the platform. After her message from the GC and the singing of the "Red Flag", we dispersed. As I walked home I met two of my fellow members of the Trades Council, who had been listening to the radio. They were tense and pale. With trembling voice one said to me, "Did you hear Baldwin? We've been betrayed." I found it hard to believe, but soon had to swallow the bitter truth.

Certainly there was no need to surrender. Spirits were high, improvised organisation of the strike committees was

becoming more effective and the "reserves"—building, shipyards, engineering and others—were just about to be brought into the struggle. Even the Government communique said, "While there are many individual cases of strikers in various trades returning to work the General Strike continues unabated throughout the country." *British Gazette*, 11.5.26. And next day, "There is as yet little sign of a general collapse of the strike." *British Gazette*, 12.5.26 (the day of betrayal).

The General Council of the TUC had called out the workers under their unified command and claimed the right to take the control of their struggle out of the miners' hands, for this unified command, they claimed, gave greater strength. Now, calling off the strike, they made no terms for the strikers' return, but left each union, each group, even individuals to return as best they could to plead for their jobs. They were scattered to the winds, deserted by their commanders and the world expected them to crawl, their organisation broken. But they did not crawl, they were not broken.

They had passed through a great experience, one which had stirred them more than years of propaganda, and they went back to work with heads held high. There they were faced by dismissals, victimisation, "open shops", demotion and, in some cases, wage cuts. At once the fight began anew, but one industry did not know what the others were doing; factories and groups fought on, apparently alone. Said H. N. Brailsford, "The great host was suddenly deprived of its formation, and in every corner of the battlefield regiments and companies were fighting unsupported against the counter-offensive of capital . . . the employers must have expected a rush back to work by a demoralised rabble, incapable of further resistance. They were soon disabused." *New Leader*, 21.5.26.

MORE ON STRIKE AFTERWARDS

Years later, a legend that Baldwin reproved the employers for their vindictiveness, claiming they had let him down, was created. The truth is, the Government led the campaign of vengeance. The Admiralty said strikers must forfeit 2-4 years' service for pension purposes. The Army Victualling Department denied reinstatement to certain union men and replaced them by blacklegs.

Railmen, bus, tram men and dockers refused to start work. In Manchester, 30,000 railmen demonstrated with great spirit. In Hull, 150 tram men were sacked and railmen, other tram men and dockers stayed out on strike on their behalf. Two days *after* the strike, more workers were on strike than on any other day, by at least 100,000.

Thursday was to be the first day back to work, but rail terms were not agreed until Friday—and on Saturday the rail strike was still on.

Some had fallen, but the counter-offensive of the employers was defeated by the solidarity of the workers.

State and employers were taken by surprise by the sudden turn of events. A new spirit seemed to be developing. That spirit was manifested by the miners who refused to return and fought on against State and mineowners for several months. A new General Strike seemed about to break out.

This could have happened, but for one factor. There was no national revolutionary organisation to co-ordinate, to draw together, to inspire the nascent movement. What was needed was a Syndicalist movement on a national scale, even a small organisation, to be the necessary linkage. Such did not then exist, nothing else would have done, nothing less will do. Because of my experience in the General Strike and in the long, bitter, bloody struggle of the miners in 1926, I am a Syndicalist.

TOM BROWN

Letter

DEAR COMRADES,

Am I seeing things? What is this rubbish I read in May DIRECT ACTION about the Irish Republic?

The remarks about the strikes and Nelson Pillar are good. But what's this rubbish about Noel Browne? I always thought the SWF was anti-parliamentary.

However the remarks re the Catholic Church really top the lot. The Catholic Church (like all other churches) is the product of social forces. In Ireland the social forces are economic. Pat Kelly is wrong, in fact the reverse of what he says is true: until the working people get rid of class society, Gods will always be needed. It is very much beside the point if the boss class of the Irish Republic happens to be Catholic. We shouldn't give a damn if they are Jewish, Quaker, or what have you. To misquote, a boss is a boss for all that.

The so-called leaders are educated in a *capitalist* way at the Catholic Workers' College. Catholicism is just used as a means to this end. No, Pat, get rid of capitalism and you will break the grip of the Catholic hierarchy, not the other way round.

Fraternally,

V.J.

Liverpool.

ANOTHER TORY SEES THE LIGHT

COMPANY director and past Mayor of Whitley Bay, Frank Michaels has just joined the Labour Party. He said, "I consider the Socialists are the party of the future and have far more to offer than the Conservatives."

DIRECT ACTION PRESS FUND—May 1966

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IRISH FARMERS PICKET DAIL

THE ARREST of 453 farmers (to time of writing, 25.5.66) for picketting Dail Eireann (Parliament) indicates the jumpy nervousness gripping the Fianna Fail Party in recent months. Readers in Ireland will be aware of the tremendous effort Fianna Fail put into the Easter Week 1916 celebrations to build their Party's image as being the One True Party of Irish nationalism. Unfortunately for Fianna Fail's leadership, their mishandling of affairs have boomeranged on them: if they don't save face rapidly they may find themselves out and this, for a Party that equates itself with the Irish Republic, is a very humiliating prospect.

The small dairy farmers in Ireland are organised in the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers' Association (ICMSA) and in support of their demand for an increase on the 2½d. per pint for their milk and in frustration at the Government refusing to meet any of their claims they decided to picket the Dail on its resumption on April 27. The picketing began with four men, who were arrested and replaced by another four and so it went on, until at day's close the Guards had arrested 28 men and charged them under the Offences Against the State Act (1939). This Act was brought in by the Fianna Fail Government to meet the threat posed by the same IRA that Fianna Fail had defected from in their "maturity."

"SYMPATHETIC HEARING"

The next day, April 28, 72 arrests followed; the pickets were becoming more numerous and Mr. John Feely the ICMSA President, told newspapers that there were plenty more where they came from as they could count on 110,000 men. The next week the Dail met on Wednesday, and by day's close 80 more farmers had been arrested. The follow-

ing day, Charlie Haughey, Minister for Agriculture, gave the ICMSA "a sympathetic hearing" (as Mr. Feely described it). Mr. Feely was promised a reply. When this was not forthcoming, the pickets were replaced and on May 10-11, 273 arrests occurred. The case of the farmers comes up on May 31 by which time this paper will be in print. The other farmers' organisation, the National Farmers' Association, were not very enthusiastic in their support of the small farmers—naturally the NFA has been described as being bureaucratic, and it represents the big farmers who have a vested interest in the kind of "stable government" being provided by Fianna Fail.

This is a very brief account of the small farmers' struggle. They base their claim on the Labour Court's recommendation of £1 a week increase to industrial workers and the general improvement in industrial workers' incomes as compared to farmers and rural workers. Fianna Fail have been wise to meet the ICMSA and would be even wiser to placate these men, who have been described by one national newspaper (whose record could scarcely be worse than that of the *Irish Independent* or *Press*.) as being men with "an odd mentality".

That Irishmen should rise up against oppression has indeed always seemed odd to the poets and apologists of "the Establishment". However, Mr. Lemass may well take heed; among those arrested have been a brother of the Bishop of Limerick (and not one of the Ascendancy Churches either—Mr. O. Morain please note!), a brother of Tom O'Donnell, TD, the Fianna Fail TD, Andrew Clohessy and Commandant Patrick O'Brien, formerly second in Command to the late General Sean Moylan in the North Cork Flying Column, 1919-1921. Mr. Feely was himself an Intelligence Officer for the Mid-Limerick Brigade and served 18 months in HM Prisons Portland and Dartmoor. Most of the small farmers who have become suddenly a focus of anti-Fianna Fail feeling come from similar tough stock that bore the brunt of the War of Independence(?). Mr. Feely himself said that he did not fight for this type of State, nor did Pearse. It was Kerry, Cork and Tipperary that produced Liam Lynch, Tom Barry, Dan Breen and Sean Tracey, all famous local Column commanders.

FIRST STEP

The small farmers in Ireland have formed the backbone of the 26 Counties and are the inheritors of the successes gained in the "Land wars" against absentee British Landlords in the last century. Yet it could be easily said that no section of the community has been so ignored by successive Governments since 1922. It will be said, of course, that electricity, local housing grants, drainage schemes, roads, Irish Sugar Co., and Bord Na Nona have been provided. True—but the problem needs much more than that. Fr. McDyer comes to London and gets support for his co-operative from people who have left their homeland in economic disillusion.

The first step towards a solution to Ireland's problems would come if the producers of Ireland through their *own* economic organisations took control of their *own* affairs and administered them in their *own* interests. This would mean that instead of a Dail composed of Uncles, Widows and grandsons (Oh—and sons), local gombeen men and suave lawyers, we could have a national federation of the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Assoc., the National Farmers Assoc., the Congress of Trade Unions and the Co-operative Organisation in control of all the nation's resources and in turn rigidly controlled by an actively interested rank and file membership—that is, Sylicialism.

Twinkle, twinkle . . .

IN AN INTERVIEW, George Matthews, editor of the erstwhile *Daily Worker*, gave excuses for changing the paper's name to the neutral-sounding *Morning Star*. "Well, there's no *Daily Capitalist*, after all, and no *Daily Employer*; most newspaper names are neutral." (*Sunday Times*, 24.4.66.)

Seeking enlightenment on the choice, we went to the bookshelf and found—**Morning star**, the planet Venus: a kind of flail with a star-like ball of metal at the end of a chain, formerly used as a weapon of war." *Chambers' Twentieth Century Dictionary*.

Well, now we know!

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