

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—China's workers against Mao : 'Mirror' and industrial future All froth at Guinness?

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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Sixpence

STOP THE POLITICAL LEVY!

PAYING to be robbed, ruled and exploited. That's what the vast majority of this country's trade unionists, who contribute the political levy to Labour Party funds, are doing. And the time is overdue to cry halt.

The Labour Party was founded in the early years of this century by the trade union movement to look after the workers' interests in Parliament. In practice, it has consistently proved the utter fallacy of parliamentary activity, so far as the working class is concerned. And never more so than under a Labour Government.

This Government, like its Ramsay MacDonald and Clem Attlee forerunners, has one overriding concern: to make capitalism work more efficiently. They are not particularly good even at that, but so far as industrial workers are concerned they have proved a dead loss.

Wages are frozen stiff in a new Ice Age of State interference with collective bargaining, unemployment is booming, prices and profits rising. When strike action is taken, as by Britain's seamen last year, Wilson and Co. are found solidly backing

the employers against the workers.

It's YOUR money, that of rank-and-file union men paying the political levy, that helps them to do so.

No wonder that the editorial article in *Seamen's Voice*, the rank-and-file seafarers' paper, for January says: "It is time we seamen got wise to ourselves and stopped paying the political levy. Wilson and Co. seem to want to run the capitalist system more efficiently than the Tories—OK, let them go ahead, but not on *our* money."

In other industries, too, the lesson seems to have been taken. Reports are growing of union branches where members have voted to "contract out." Last month it was London busmen and Croydon railwaymen; now we hear that SOGAT branches in Fleet Street are running out of forms, as workers queue to stop paying the politicians.

The SWF wholeheartedly supports this mushrooming campaign. And we warn workers against those siren voices of the so-called "Left", which, while cribbing against almost everything Wilson and Co. do, still advocate "conditional support" of the Labour Party—and will be telling you to vote for its candidates again at the next Election. "We mustn't let the Tories get back," they cry.

With *Seamen's Voice*, we answer: "Why not? What difference to us? When we are taking action for our rights, we have to fight not only the owners but the Government, every time, whether Labour or Tory."

That's it in a nutshell. In fact, this Government has so far got away with strokes that the Tories would not have dared use, much as they would have liked to.

Why not raise this among your workmates, on the shopfloor or at the branch? There are better uses for our hard-earned wages than paying people to freeze them.

Madrid workers win solidarity strike

ON JANUARY 2, 13,000 workers at Madrid factories of Standard Electrica staged a sit-down strike and so forced the release of six of their fellow workers from the hands of the Fascist police.

Last September, management of the part-US-owned firm threatened several hundred sackings for redundancy. On December 31, 3,000 Standard workers demonstrated against the threat by holding a street march. This was broken up by Franco's uniformed thugs and the six were arrested.

Came Monday morning, and workers, including clerical staff, clocked in at the firm's works as usual—but refused to do a hand's turn till the men were released.

A shop-floor delegation saw a judge of the Public Order Court who agreed to order the release on the resumption of work and two hours after the resumption in the afternoon the police let the prisoners go.

After 27 years of Fascist oppression Spanish workers still know: "An Injury to One is an Injury to All." And that the way to get your demands is: "Hit the boss where it hurts—in the wallet."

CO-OPERATION PAYS

THE BOARD of the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS) has appointed a capitalist, Mr. Philip Thomas of C. Lindley Ltd. (a family firm of nut and bolt makers) as Chief Executive Officer at £17,000 p.a.

This must be the best paid job in the British Labour Movement. However, many other office-holders will no doubt do their best to catch up. After all, selling wage slaves to the class enemy should pay better than selling bread, tea and jam to the wage slaves—there's always the danger of the human commodity rebelling.

ALL FROTH AT GUINNESS?

THERE is no need to introduce Guinness's; it is a famous Dublin brewery. In 207 years of existence there has never been a strike. A recent agreement between unions and management, cautiously described as almost a milestone in Ireland's turbulent industrial relations, covers 520 tradesmen and 20 separate unions. There are two agreements: one caters for the Guinness's Skilled Group of unions (19) and the other for the Electrical Trades Union (Ireland), which is outside the Congress of Trade Unions and any of its sponsored "groups".

For the workers there is one concession; all tradesmen but printworkers will receive a basic £20 per week. This is an increase of £3 15s from £16 5s, however special allowances previously paid will be discontinued. In return for this "generous" increase unions have agreed to co-operate with management to increase efficiency and productivity. The agreement provides that in future management will deal directly with the tradesmen concerned. Disputes outside the brewery will not affect the tradesmen. Any disputes between unions and management will be referred to the labour court, whose findings will be accepted.

The important part of this agreement, however, covers demarcation lines which are for all practical purposes broken down completely. The agreement says every effort will be made towards flexible working where craft skills overlap.

Should they arise, demarcation disputes will go through negotiating machinery and meanwhile the workers will accept management's ruling. If required, tradesmen will work shifts and it has been agreed to limit overtime to essential tasks or emergencies.

The terms of the agreement were given at a lunch in Guinness's by the company's managing director. Other speakers included the chairman and secretary of the Guinness's Skilled Group of Unions and a spokesman for the ETU (Ireland). The attendance included brewery trades supervisors, shop stewards and signatories of the agreement. It appears that the lunch bore all evidence of the "management-labour co-operation" ideal.

Taking at face value what benefits accrue to the trade unionists, I am compelled to suggest very little indeed. In return for a real increase of what is an undisclosed amount, since they forfeit "certain special allowances" in return for a flat increase of £3 15s, the workers have abandoned solidarity. That is, if their own unions call upon them for support in an outside dispute they are forced by the agreement to refuse that support. Demarcation lines are thrown out the window in favour of management decisions. If the workers resist a management ruling they must put it through the negotiating procedure. They have agreed to shift work and overtime only when management deems it essential. All powers have been given to the group officials, so that plumbers might as well cease to be members of the PTU, carpenters of the ASW. The only exceptions are electricians in the ETU (Ireland); those in the IETU are included in the group agreement.

Not unnaturally, the agreement has been welcomed by both TU bureaucrats and management, by the Press, and by all who are interested in Ireland's "technical progress". This agreement may well prove to be a headline for those bureaucrats who are anxious for legislation to increase the powers of the "groups" at the expense of individual unions. Trade unionists should bear in mind that their dues are paid to their unions—not to the groups.

It is doubtful whether such agreements will spread. Guinness's have a reputation as benevolent employers, and as

such they are an isolated case. It should however be borne in mind that many bureaucrats in the ICTU are currently actively trying to assert these group agreements—with or without legislation. Already a similar agreement has been signed with the Aer Lingus Group of Unions last October and a third group agreement with CIE (Irish Transport) has been mooted, which would involve 20,000 members—of 33 unions. Trade unionists should be careful of these group agreements. The Corporate State, whether arrived at by "voluntary means" or by legislation, is certainly not what workers gave their lives for in the long struggle to establish trade unionism.

ICTU Conference

THE special consultative conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, called on December 16, 1966, to discuss the Congress executive's proposals for reforming TU law and the Labour Court, rejected the executive's report. The report emerged from talks between the Department of Labour and a working party of the Congress executive. This is one of the biggest developments in Irish trade unionism for many a long time.

The proposals dealing with reform of TU law were mostly concerned with a legal definition of groups of TUs in various industries and giving a group an authority greater than that of the individual unions constituting its membership. Another proposal was to make unofficial strikes virtually illegal. Making it extremely difficult to establish a new union was another proposal. Others dealt with balloting and the Labour Court. It was proposed to widen the latter's powers. By carrying these, the Congress would have virtually committed suicide as an authentic TU organisation. It is greatly to the credit of the delegates that they decided to reject these anti-free trade union proposals.

However, one must not be complacent; the Conference did decide to continue the talks with the Department of Labour. Another danger signal is that agreements similar to the proposals in the report have been signed with Aer Lingus and Guinness's brewery (see other article). These agreements have strengthened the hands of the group at the expense of individual unions.

I must be clear about these groups. Syndicalists should not fall into the trap of saying or thinking "Ah, one industry, one union; here is a step in this direction." These groups are nothing of this nature. They are conceived of by certain bureaucrats of the ICTU who wish to push through a Fianna Fail party policy for trade unions. This would mean a docile TU movement led by centralised officials whose only wish is to make private enterprise capitalism work smoothly—in the interests of the capitalist class economically and Fianna Fail politically. In other words: no strikes, no disputes; and if the employers want to cut down, want shift work, want mobile labour, want or do not want overtime, the TU official says, "All right, leave it to us!" By occasional wage increases, the same alliance of FUE (Federated Union of Employers)-Fianna Fail-ICTU will maintain a front and everyone will be "happy".

Troublemakers, agitators, that is, workers who ask questions, will be isolated first, expelled second, fired third, forced to emigrate fourth and the grand alliance will maintain the appearances of a happy land fit for the heroes whose fathers and uncles received IRA pensions.

It is important to bear in mind that the public, namely dues-paying trade unionists, do not know for certain the decisions of this Dec. 16 conference, who spoke for and against, etc., because the Conference was held in private. A statement was subsequently given to the press. So also "democratic" trade unionism for the 150,000 members of

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CHINA'S WORKERS AGAINST MAO

IT IS commonly supposed that a totalitarian State, by abolishing all parties but one, creates, a unified, harmonious government. In fact, the struggle for power that once was expressed through the strife of parties is now manifested in inner-party struggle and fratricidal back stabbing and plotting. When the party of dictatorship feels securely established without fear of revolt by the people, then the internecine war becomes bloodier. This is even truer of Communist than of Fascist States.

Attempts to explain the present crisis of Chinese Communism by explaining ideology and points of doctrine is the hobby of stupid persons who will come to stupid conclusions. In DIRECT ACTION a few years ago, while the China-Russia dispute was like a cloud the size of a man's hand, we expressed scorn of the clever persons who were seeking to make of the subject a sort of theologians seminary, and pointed to the real bases of the conflict; certain rivalries of power and economic wealth, factors which would deepen the conflict. Events since then have proven DIRECT ACTION correct, but where now are the ideologues?

A LUST FOR POWER

One can only understand the nature of the Russian Communist State when one realises that it is the result of a demoniac lust for power. If one looks, as Marxists usually do, for some anthropomorphic "historic purpose" purpose in the development of society then one will find it in the more "efficient" development of the previous, Tsarist State and the development, at any cost, of Russia into a big, heavily industrialised country, even at the cost of that country's greatest treasure, its agriculture. But these are but conditions of the primary aim, to take and keep the power.

The same is true of Chinese Communism, except that Mao has leaned more heavily on the peasantry—the same method, the same age-old tactics of oppression, the same end. Now the ideologues are putting themselves up for auction; who pays the most, Moscow or Peking? And like the medieval Schoolmen they search for differences of doctrine. Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Mao—what's the difference, is one butcher better than another?

STRIKES AND STRUGGLES

We have heard much of the Chinese peasant, but what of the town worker? We may hear more of him now, for after all there are millions of his kind in China's cities, where now industry and transport are idle as these workers strike, demonstrate and struggle in the streets while Peking Radio appeals for the workers to return to their tasks, mentioning particularly Shanghai, Peking, Chengtu, Hangchow and Nanking, denouncing workers who had left their jobs in industrial Shenyang, Manchuria, the electrical factory and textile workers of Sian, the silk workers of Hangchow and tobacco workers of Tsinan. Industrial Canton, with its revo-

lutionary traditions, had a leading place in the denunciation.

There is an important difference in the development of the Russian and Chinese Communist Parties. Lenin always stressed the need to base his party on the towns, and the Bolsheviks have always treated the peasantry with hatred and contempt. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) at first obeyed this line then, seeing the success of widespread grass-root peasant revolts, Mao and the CCP switched from "proletarian revolution" to "landworkers' revolution". By circumstance and by choice the CCP lost interest in the town workers' struggle. Because the peasant, tied to his daily earthy tasks, did not create a nationwide organisation, the CCP with its large professional apparatus was able to force its leadership on the peasants' revolt. At the same time it commended itself to the landowners, merchants and money-lenders, restraining the peasants in their rent strikes and holding a balance between the contending classes.

ATTITUDE TO STRIKES

This does not mean that the CCP once had sympathy with the industrial workers in their struggle. It considered only their use in its climb to power. The acid test of any party is its attitude to the worker's strike weapon, his principle, almost only, means of defence.

The CCP once paid lip-service to this, as in the *First Manifesto of the CCP* (June 10, 1922), which demanded "freedom to strike". The *Manifesto of the Second National Congress of the CCP* (July 1922), called for "the unlimited right to strike", and the shortlived Canton Commune in December 1927 included "the right to organise and strike" in its programme. Later the CCP dropped this mask.

Chiang Kai Shek and his Kuomintang (KMT) government, in December 1937, decreed the death penalty for workers who went on strike or agitated for strike action. At this time the CCP was closely supporting Chiang and offered no protests against the executions—on the contrary, a CCP spokesman in an interview said that the Party was "fully satisfied" with Chiang's conduct of the war. (H. R. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, London, 1938; p.456.)

Wherever it conquered, the "People's Liberation Army" of Mao prohibited strikes. A few months after taking Shanghai its military Control Commission proclaimed, on July 19, 1949, a decree for the "Settlement of Labour-Capital Disputes in Private Enterprises", later applied to the whole country as *Settlement of Labour Disputes*, November 16, 1950. This decree prohibited strikes and established compulsory arbitration (Article 6).

Article 1 sets the tone of the decree: "the principle of equal regard for private and public interests, mutual benefits for both labour and capital, development of production, the thriving of the economy." This law is an almost word-for-word copy of Chiang Kai Shek's *Act Concerning the Settlement of Labour Disputes*, June 1928.

RESISTANCE PUNISHED

When workers appeared to be using other methods of resistance, careless work, absenteeism, late to work, go-slow and other suspected traditional methods, more decrees were issued, stating punishments for these "crimes". After a few years these were collected in *Outline of Labour Relations for State-Operated Enterprises*. Punishments included fines, dismissal, transfer to jobs with lower wages and compensation payments to the management—the latter could be spread over a long period, for payment could not exceed 35% of a worker's wage at any one time (Article 17).

The managers were compelled to operate these punishments

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THE HUNGARIAN WORKERS' REVOLUTION

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Direct Action

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

Robbery under law

MILLIONS of workers now living in the grim Wilsonian shadow of the sack and unemployment have, undoubtedly, found comfort of thought in the Redundancy Payments Act. But acts of Parliament are, at the best, poor substitutes for organised working-class action from shop-floor level. Factory Acts laying down amounts of space per worker would in most cases offer more cramped conditions than those established without regard to the Acts. Wage scales established by State wages boards and such are usually much lower than the general trade union level, and lower yet compared with many workshop scales established by direct action from the shop floor.

A recent case has shown the folly of relying on the Redundancy Payments Act for justice or mercy. Alex Butterworth of Whitby worked for nearly 30 years for North Riding Garages Ltd. His employers were satisfied with his work; he was made workshop manager.

The firm changed hands and for nine months Alex continued his work. Then, at the age of 57, he was told that his work was unsatisfactory and he was sacked. Last May the industrial tribunal awarded him a redundancy payment of £490. The firm objected to the award, claiming that, in their opinion, Butterworth had been unable to adapt himself to new methods they had introduced.

Three High Court judges held that Parliament had not meant redundancy payment to be made in such cases, and that Butterworth must lose the £490. Redundancy payments could be paid to a man if new methods altered his work so much that there was no need for him to be there any longer. But if dismissal was due to age, physical disability or inability to meet employers' new standards, he was not entitled to redundancy pay.

Every employer is now invited to drive something wider, longer and higher than a coach and horses through the Redundancy Payments Act. Any boss can introduce new

methods which, in his opinion, will be beyond the satisfactory performance of anyone he wants to fire.

Fellow worker, put not your trust in Acts of Parliament. Now shop stewards and all workers should be pushing hard and at once for copper-riveted, watertight agreements with individual employers ensuring proper redundancy payments—above, beyond and a lot more certain than those promised by the Act. The trade unions at national level won't do it; they refer you to the Act. It can be done from the shop floor.

Offhand, we know of two cases where this is now being pushed by SWF members. As most of you don't seem to want a rise enough to make you fight for it, and as many of you will soon be sacked, it is up to you to ensure decent redundancy payments—without depending on the High Court judges.

That'll scare the bosses, Frank!

Interviewer: Your proposals for a £15 minimum, with a 40-hour week and three weeks' paid holiday—how is this going to be achieved?

Frank Cousins: First we have to accept that it is reasonable—and that cannot be denied. £15 is very little higher than a family man would get from National Assistance . . .

TGWU Record, Jan. 1967.

SITUATIONS VACANT. Foreign Secretary, Good wages. No previous experience necessary. Must be teetotaler.

SEAMAN'S VOICE

THERE are still some copies available of *Seaman's Voice*, by George Foulser (published by MacGibbon & Kee, 18s). This describes his life as a seafarer in quite a few ships and ports, particularly British, American and Australian. It concludes with an account of the successful seamen's strike of 1960.

Readers with any time at all for a rare tale of the life and struggles of fellow workers afloat are urged to give this worthy book a good home. In doing so they will also help our Press Fund. Each copy has been signed by the author and will be sent post-free for the above price.

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LONDON: Weekly meetings at Lucas Arms, 245 Grays Inn Road, WC1 (5 min. Kings Cross). Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m.

Feb. 8 Crisis in Fleet St. Bill Christopher

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Wooden Shoe Bookshop, 42 New Compton St., W.C.1.

Freedom Bookshop, 17a Maxwell Road, Fulham, SW6.

ILP Bookshop, 197 Kings Cross Road, WC1.

Housmans, 5 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, WC1.

CHICAGO: IWW Headquarters, 2422 N Halsted Street.

Solidarity Bookshop, 1947 Larrabee, Chicago 14.

SAN FRANCISCO: City Lights Bookshop, 281 Columbus Avenue, SF 11.

THINGS TO COME: 'MIRROR' VERSION

THE COMIC of Fleet Street, the *Daily Mirror*, in its issue of January 17, has attempted for once in its life to take a serious vein. Industrial editor Roland Hurman asks the readers to take a "good hard look" at Australia's industrial policy.

He makes the valid point that ministers, industrialists and TU leaders have looked long and earnestly at the industrial systems of Sweden, Holland, W. Germany, France, the USA and Canada. Now it appears that the Australian system has caught their eye. Hurman proudly points out that it was a Labour Government in Australia in 1947 which set up Industrial Courts to fix and adjust wages. No Aussie worker can be paid less than £13 6s 0d p. w. This is great news; he points out that the vast majority of people get more. "Margins" are made for skill and job conditions; these are set by the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission made up of five Supreme Court judges and ten lay Commissioners drawn from ex-trade unionists, ex-employers and former Civil Servants.

The basic wage is fixed once a year by three of the judges, after hearing evidence from trade unionists, employers and economists. There is no appeal from the judges' decision. Legal representation is allowed from all parties including the Government. Margin awards can be determined by a judge or a Commissioner except in cases which are considered of "national importance", when two judges and two Commissioners sit. Marginal cases are heard every second year.

If workers reject a conciliation decision by the Commission they can eventually be taken before the Commonwealth Industrial Court for contempt of court. The union can be fined up to £400 a day for every day the strike continues, plus full court costs. Roland Hurman cites the case of how the Australian dockers were "pulled into line".

A "good hard look" is certainly what is needed but, at the British Labour Government, they are desperately looking for an industrial policy on similar lines, and some TU leaders would not be backward in lending their support.

Many union leaders have spoken out against Government interference, but they would not object to TUC control, particularly those leaders representing lower-paid workers. They advocate and support the holding back of the higher paid until the lower-paid close the gap, in an endeavour to equalise the workers' share of the national cake. Suggest for one moment that *all the cake belongs to all workers*, and they will shake with terror.

The IPC management (*Daily Mirror*) are not fools; one article like this in the *Mirror* is worth a million times more than all the intellectual articles in the more serious newspapers and political journals. Hundreds of thousands of people take the *Mirror*, if only for Garth and Useless Eustace, so many people will see such an article—particularly with a Vietnam war picture prominently displayed on the same page.

The value of such a paper to the employers cannot be under-estimated and by that I don't mean that every word printed by the *Mirror* is believed, but germs of reactionary ideas are sown.

Cecil King, IPC chairman, claims he supports the unions—

SMASH THE WAGE FREEZE !

by BILL CHRISTOPHER

New Direct Action pamphlet — 2d.

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Help fight Wilson's bid to hamstring the working class
by giving this pamphlet a big circulation.

but only if they are docile and jump to his tune. It was only recently that the printworkers' rank-and-file organisation and the Fathers of Chapels came under fire from IPC, being charged with "irresponsibility", etc.

Make no mistake: the Labour Government will continue to endeavour to shackle the industrial rank and file. For the moment they are just fencing; the softening-up process is on now. Legislation will follow; in this they will have the fullest support from the comic of Fleet Street the *Daily Mirror*.

NEVER TOO LATE

THE T & GWU has submitted proposals to the Board of Trade for a drastic revision of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, the section of the Act covering fishermen. It is only recently that many people have been made aware that fishermen have the highest industrial accident rate in the country.

The T & G also considered that crews should have the right to elect union representatives with the authority to take up any grievances the men might have with the captain. Such a demand is revolutionary in the eyes of the Trawler Employers. Nevertheless, it is well overdue, as are many demands made by all seamen.

One can appreciate the difficulties of rank and file organisation for any seamen but if the 1894 Act is going to be torn to shreds, it won't be done by resolutions. The 1894 Act has been going for a fair while so one can assume it is well entrenched. The only people who can break it wide open are seamen themselves, not an easy solution (as proved last year), but unfortunately it is still the only way.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

NORTH-EAST NOTES

Roll on, Reyrolles

AS REPORTED in DA (Aug. & Dec., 1966), draughtsmen, clerks and technicians at Reyrolles, Hebburn, have won a fourth week's holiday despite interference from the Prices and Incomes Act. The remaining 5,000 workers started negotiating for a third week's holiday last July. To date, the management have offered an extra day for ten and twenty years' service!

There have been two token strikes by all involved, with no apparent effect. It is worth pointing out that these massive, staged protests can often assist rather than worry the boss. When there is advance warning, a short strike of this kind can be used by replanning production schedules and putting those not affected, like the technicians, on important inspection and maintenance work that is usually done in production time.

This could be avoided, if action was taken on union (there are 15) or, preferably, a shop basis like the "white collars" did, for short periods without warning. Such action would also put initiative back on the shop floor, where control of the dispute should be rather than in the hands of the convenor, whose job should be limited to co-ordination.

THAT CUNNING MAN AGAIN

ALDERMAN Cunningham, National Executive member of the Hard Labour Party, Director of Fairfield Shipyard and Regional Secretary of the NUGMW, with his Committee took nine square inches of the local *Journal* to wish his members, or as the Alderman would prefer it "workers", a peaceful, Prosperous and Industrious 1967. Since this isn't in the Alderman's usual blunt style, we had better translate. Peaceful: no strikes. Prosperous: Wage Freeze. Industrious: work study and speed-up. The holly border round the advert certainly looked very prickly!

CHINA (cont.)

by threats of punishment to themselves (Article 18). Labour Books were introduced by the Ministry of Labour. If a worker suffered dismissal with a black mark in his book he would find it hard to get a new job.

Piecework in its worst form, Stakhanovism, was introduced. The old system was denounced: "The multi-grade system of KMT rule was confusing and the difference between the grades rather small. This resulted in serious egalitarianism and affected the labour ardour of workers and staff."—Li I-ching, Finance Committee, Military and Administrative Committee, 29 Sept. 1952.) Piecework, especially to such a degree as this, was a fundamental principle of Bolshevik Russian and German Nazi economics.

COURTING THE CAPITALISTS

The KMT government had been increasingly a regime of "State Socialism" or nationalisation, owning 89% of power plants, 75% of chemicals, 89% of electrical engineering, 73% of machine making, 90% of metalworking. Production of copper, antimony, mercury, tin, wolfram (tungsten) and zinc, as well as petroleum oils, were State monopolies. Following the Japanese withdrawal in 1945, the KMT continued to extend this policy, in accordance with the views of Chiang Kai Shek: "We must adopt a planned economy . . . it is imperative that we eventually accomplish the objective of transforming all capital into state capital." (Chiang Kai Shek, *China's Destiny*, London, 1947; p.173.)

When Mao came to power he continued the KMT policy of "State Socialism" but he also courted the Chinese capitalists, promising them a better deal than that of Chiang.

Calling Manchester workers

THE PROSPECTS for socialism could hardly look bleaker than in Britain today. The Labour Government is outdoing the Tories in its attacks on the working class. At home it deliberately creates unemployment. In Vietnam it cravenly supports American aggression. We are told that the country is more prosperous than ever before, yet all around us slums and poverty are obvious to anyone who cares to look.

In this serious situation the left remains split, and in many cases impotent. "Unofficial" action by workers against the bosses are isolated and fragmented. We believe that the Government's attacks on the workers must be met with a united resistance if it is to be defeated. Workers must come together to discuss their problems with a view to developing joint action. We are trying to make a small contribution to this by holding a series of public meetings. Later we hope to produce a number of leaflets and pamphlets.

You will be welcome to any of our meetings, and you will be able to contribute your point of view. Meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays (8.00 p.m.) at the Wheatsheaf Hotel, High St., off Market St., Manchester.

February 7 Dick Nettleton on
"The Manchester Socialist Conference."

Further information from A. Barlow, 279, Cheetham Hall Rd., Manchester 8.

SUPPORT HUGO BLANCO!

Following the trial and imprisonment in Peru of Hugo Blanco and his comrades ("Direct Action", Jan.), there have been widespread protests and demonstrations. Hundreds more have been imprisoned by the Peruvian Government.

In London, the "Committee for Solidarity with the Victims of Repression in Peru" has been formed from representatives of many organisations and is holding a demonstration on Sunday, Feb. 19. Assemble Marble Arch, 3.00 p.m. march at 3.15 to the Peruvian Embassy. After the march there will be a meeting at Caxton Hall where it is hoped the widow of one of the guerillas will speak.

Every form of support is asked for: resolutions at your TU Branch, Trades Council, etc., protests and of course the Feb. 19 demonstration. Donations sent c/o 34 Cumberland Road will be forwarded to the Committee.

In another case he wrote: "Because the target of the revolution is not the bourgeoisie in general, but imperialist and feudal oppression, the programme of the revolution is not to abolish private property, but to protect private property in general; the results of this revolution will clear the way for the development of capitalism . . ." (Mao Tse Tung, *On Coalition Government*.)

Like many British capitalists, who welcome Wilson's "strong hand" disciplining of the workers, many Chinese capitalists, fearful of Chiang's "State Socialism", welcomed Mao. A British Hong Kong economic journal said: "The remaining foreigners in Shanghai are looking for an improvement when the Communist-appointed administration will assume control; as it has been for the last 3½ years, life has appeared to many as intolerable in Shanghai." (*North China Daily News*, Nov. 23, 1948.)

As reported in the *New York Times*, 5 Dec. 1945, Liu Shao Chi (CCP theoretician, second only to Mao) said to a foreign press conference: "The Communist Party's programme for China at present is one of democratic capitalist development, based on State, private and co-operative enterprise . . . The programme of the Chinese Communists is comparable to the political and economic concepts in the USA at the time of Jefferson and Lincoln."

Labour MP Desmond Donnelly travelled in China in 1952 and talked with some of the capitalists the CCP had boasted of. "Over a cocktail dinner, Mr Yung, owner of the Sung Sing Spinning and Weaving Co., offered me a cigarette from his gold case. His diamond tie pin sparkled as he leaned forward. 'I own the largest group of spinning and weaving companies in Shanghai,' he explained. 'It has 6 factories and employs 18,000 workers.'

THE WORKERS' CAUSE

"I stared and then asked: 'And what are you doing in a Communist State?' 'Making money, at last,' was the suave self-confident answer." ("The Communist Capitalist. What I Saw in Red China." *Daily Herald*, Sept. 30, 1952.)

Ta Kung Pao, the Hong Kong Communist daily, on Dec. 25, 1956, estimated Yung's capital to be the equal of £9 million. Recently BBC television and radio have relayed interviews with contented capitalists living under Mao's rule.

This was the primal, pure Communism of Mao, which his alleged enemies in the CCP, "in alliance with the bourgeoisie", are "striving to corrupt"—those party enemies who are seeking to bring back capitalism!

In all the confusion of inner-party fighting, some gleams of news of the workers may be glimpsed. Workers have been striking, for their own cause. Communism has no place for that cause. This Chinese workers know. In Shanghai, where railwaymen fought for possession of the railways, the old working class tradition is not forgotten.

Shanghai is a barometer of Chinese class struggle. On May 30, 1925, the Shanghai workers astonished the world with a general strike against capitalists and warlords. In March, 1927, as Chiang Kai Shek and the KMT armies marched northwards, the workers in a general strike and armed rising defeated the warlords and took the city. The CCP persuaded the victorious workers to hand over the city to Chiang and the workers lined the streets to welcome his army.

But when the Communist army of Mao entered the city in the spring of 1949, there was no workers' welcome for them and the wage workers of Shanghai had taken no part in the CCP victory.

We shall again, one day, hear of the Shanghai workers battling in their own cause.

TOM BROWN

NOTE: The last of the author's articles on the (English) Peasant's Revolt has been held over to the next issue.—EDS.

CUT-PRICE ROUBLES FOR SALE

THE SENTENCES on the two American young men accused of unlawful exchange of currency in Leningrad would horrify and make indignant most decent folk if the world was not already callous from repetition of such cruelty. For exchanging dollars equal to £14 for roubles other than through official channels, Craddock Gilmour was fined £400, Buel Worthman, his friend (charged also with the theft of a cast-iron bear) sentenced to three years in a prison camp.

From my own observations, such sales of currency are an established part of Russian city life. At the time of my visit there a few years ago the Russian official rate of exchange was 11.2 roubles to the £, but the Russian government made a concession to tourists, giving 26.3 to the £. Experience had long ago taught me that a government which gives such a concession is giving away nothing; the official currency is never worth its face value.

An example which springs to mind is that in 1939 the German mark was officially priced at 1s 10d British currency. The Nazi government gave British travellers an exchange rate of one mark to one shilling. One shilling was almost exactly was a mark was worth. One case in point. Any article priced at 6d in London Woolworth's was priced 50 pfennigs (half a mark) in German Woolworth stores. But the rouble certainly was not worth even the 26.3 to the £ granted to the tourist.

Wherever there is a fake valuation there is a black money market. We soon found it in Moscow. Hanging about hotels and railway stations in Moscow and Leningrad were the international story-book characters familiar to wartime Europe; while some sought to buy one's clothes, others specialised in foreign money and travellers' cheques. The first offer was always 100 roubles to the £. Some British visitors staying at the Ukraina Hotel upped the figure to 125 to the £. Two persons managed to raise the price to 150, but the bidder would, at this price, deal only in £5 units.

To some it may seem strange to relate that the British Communists at the Ukraina were the first persons to discover the secret agents of a crazy currency. They went to it with the eagerness of well-trained truffle hounds. I felt no temptation to indulge in such bargain hunting. There was little to buy, even food, with the ill-gotten roubles, and the little was mostly rubbish.

One Communist, an English schoolmaster, bought a great many roubles in a fond belief of a tale told by his fellow travellers (literal) that he could exchange them at the point of departure for the official rate. I told him of the man in Constitution Hill who tried to shake hands with the Duke of Wellington, saying, "Mr Smith, I believe," and the Duke's cold reply, "If you believe that, you will believe anything." But the point was lost—whatever he taught the poor youngsters, it wasn't history.

Arriving at Leningrad Dock he found he could not exchange his roubles, nor could he take them out of Russia. Rushing about cussing his "stupid idiot" advisers, he sought to buy rubbish such as glass jewellery and wooden dolls with his glorious Soviet paper. He seemed to be rehearsing the part of the usurer in *The Merchant of Venice* who lost his daughter in elopement and a deal of money besides, and went about the city crying, "Oh my daughter, Oh my ducats!"

A bargain in this capitalist world is likely to be a gin trap to the educated and uneducated alike, to the greedy and to the just plain foolish wayfarer.

GEORDIE

When MRA backed Hitler

Dear Comrades,

In the interest of greater accuracy may I make a few additions and a correction, to my comments on MRA, in my article on organised witch-hunting, in last month's *DIRECT ACTION*.

I mis-quoted Frank Buchman, MRA's founder; he actually said "I thank Heaven for a man like Adolph Hitler" (*World Telegraph*, Aug. 26, 1936).

I only correct myself as MRA claim, rightly so, (ha ha) to believe in absolute honesty.

In a speech at Interlaken (according to the *Journal de Genève*, Sept. 9, 1938), Buchman said "We need men who can appreciate with impartiality the viewpoint of others and who have the sincere desire and the strength to make the necessary concessions". This passage is omitted from the speech as published in MRA's collection of Buchman's speeches. *Absolute Honesty?*

In 1936, Buchman was in Berlin for the Olympic games. This visit is never mentioned in biographies published by MRA or *Who's Who*. *Absolute Honesty?* During his visit he met Kenneth Lindsay, independent MP, as the Adlon Hotel. Buchman said, "D'you know Heinrich Himmler?" "No? Say you ought to know Heinrich. He's a great lad." (Source William Hickey (Tom Driberg), *Daily Express*).

Himmler, of course, was the head of the dreaded Gestapo. According to Fritz Thyssen, in *I Pa'd Hitler*, Himmler was a member of the Oxford Group, which was the fore-runner of MRA. Christian Love?

On yet another occasion Buchman is reported as saying "Social problems can be solved . . . through a God-controlled fascist dictatorship."

Apart from blatantly Nazi or Fascist books, almost the only others allowed in Germany were those of the Oxford Group; *Was ist die Oxford Gruppe?* appeared in four editions in three years.

I hope this information will serve to add yet more to people's revulsion of the loathsome MRA. Before setting about doing the article I had no idea just how bad they are, these right wing groupings. If any reader has any further information whatsoever on these groups please send it to me c/o DA.

I would very much like information on Aims of Industry and the Christian Workers' Federation for a future article. Also on any other similar grouping, and the now mushrooming private-detective and other agencies which offer security services to industry. Information on phone tapping, letter opening, and actual cases of victimisation are also very handy.

Thanking you in advance,

Faternally,

Liverpool, 8.

VINCE JOHNSON

UNHOLY ALLIANCE

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BLOOD ON THE SPANISH SANDS

THIS is "International Tourist Year." The slogan is, "Tourism—passport for peace." But spending your holidays in Spain means not only making peace with Franco's dictatorship of Fascism, death and torture. If you go to Spain you will directly support these things. In fact, deprived of the money brought in by holidaymakers from abroad, the country's rulers would be in grave difficulties. Only with the proceeds from this "invisible export" can they meet their vast trade deficit.

We have heard people say, in justification of taking one of the cut-price holidays that the regime makes possible, "Ah, but by spending money in Spain we'll be raising the living standards of the Spanish people." One may ask, "How?" Wages in Spain are low because they are fixed by law, Fascist law, which suppresses workers' attempts to raise them. Money spent on food, wine, souvenirs, travel, hotels, etc., is not pocketed by the producers of these commodities, the workers and peasants, but by the bosses and middlemen.

Far from increasing wages, tourist spending *reduces* them in real terms, by causing inflation—not only in the tourist centres but on the through-routes, too.

However, it is not the balance of payments which means most to the Franco gangsters. It is the balance of power. Franco was installed by Hitler and Mussolini, but since their unlamented deaths he needs his own army and police. Tourism provides cash for these. What the Spanish people want even more than economic betterment are basic freedoms we take as a matter of course in this country—freedom to speak, freedom to organise and act for our rights, and so on. They want to be rid of the whole heavy yoke of the Fascist police-State and are demanding this ever more loudly.

"But," we are sometimes told, "this is coming anyway. Franco's not so bad now. There's all that liberalisation . . ." What liberalisation? All history, and even, surely, our own experience in Britain, shows that liberty is never given by tyrants—it is forced from them, and in extreme cases like Fascist dictators usually over their dead bodies. Thousands of anti-Fascists are condemned to cell or torture-chamber or, often death, in Spanish jails. Recently Franco proclaimed an "amnesty"—how many prisoners were released? Recently, too, he held a referendum on a reform of the constitution—only there were glass-fronted ballot boxes, ballot papers were ready-marked with the "X" in the right place, and those who turned up for work next day, or only to draw their pension,

were sent home if they had no certificate saying they had "voted". Yet again, last month, a *pro-Fascist* paper (the only kind not banned altogether) was seized.

The final word on the subject if (as I hope you've not) any doubts left, is that an appeal for a tourist boycott has come continuously from genuine working-class organisations *inside* Spain. If you won't cross a picketline, then don't go to Spain—it's as simple as that, really. Fellow-workers in Sweden have run a highly successful campaign, reducing Spanish tourism from Sweden to a trickle, and are now linking up with others in Denmark and Norway.

On last year's figures, Britain accounts for no less than 8 per cent. of Spain's tourist income. Let's make it nought per cent.

SPANISH BEACHES HAVE BLOOD ON THEM!

MARK HENDY

Long arm of fascism

IN THE US, a scheduled CBS telecast Dec. 15 of the 1964 Gregory Peck-Anthony Quinn movie, "Behold a Pale Horse," was postponed today amid reported threats of economic reprisals by Franco Spain against Columbia Pictures, distributor of the film.

Network sources said the telecast was being delayed at the request of Columbia Pictures. Spanish authorities last week reportedly threatened to impose a new ban on all Columbia films in Spain unless the telecast was called off.

SPAIN is repored to be considering a request by Tass to open an office in Madrid. If granted, it would be a step toward the resumption of formal relations between both countries, informs *The New York Times*.

España Libre, 8.12.66.

SPANISH SHIPYARDS have asked Government permission to build ships for Red China, according to the Spanish Shipbuilders Association, reports the *Financial Times* (19.1.67).

Ship orders are already on the books from several other countries . . . including Cuba.

ICTU CONFERENCE (cont.)

Ireland's biggest Union, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, whose conferences are also held in private. What I know of the conference, I should not know. I can tell you that the famed tiger of Irish Trade Unionism did come out against the proposals and slashed the Executive. This is of course a welcome development, but one wonders whether the rejection of the proposals had anything to do with the breakdown of unity talks between the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union (Gen. Sec. Fintan Kennedy), the Workers Union of Ireland (Gen. Sec. Jim Larkin), the Marine Port and General Workers' Union and the Irish Women Workers' Union.

It is also regrettably clear that delegates were not too sure of what to do next, since they agreed to the talks continuing.

No compromise with such a proven anti-union government as Fianna Fail should be the order of the day. Sweep the collaborators from the TU movement; then, and not until then, will Irish trade unionism be able to achieve some degree of job security and conditions for members.

DAVE PICKETT

LITERATURE

THE HUNGARIAN WORKERS' REVOLUTION

(2nd edition, revised)

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UNHOLY ALLIANCE. The 1966 Seamen's Strike:

an Analysis by George Foulser

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