

# Direct Action

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

Vol.8 No.5 (71)

May 1967

Sixpence

For workers' direct  
control of industry

Inside—Railmen must ACT  
On the Lump : The angry  
ballot : Indecency in church  
Irish anti-TU law threat

## ANTI-FREEZE MOVEMENT GROWS

**THROUGH** the Wage Freeze the Government is singling out organised workers for special attack, while it turns a blind eye on payrises gained other than by militant union action. The Enemy so far as Stewart's concerned is workers who stick together and uphold their class principles.

In the Fleet Street news agencies over 300 trade-unionists had a payrise frozen by Government Order, after they'd won it through a strike threat. The money—over £2 p.w.—was actually cut from their paypackets after a fortnight, while the employers saw to it that workers, together with union members who'd withdrawn strike notice, got "looked after."

There are three print trade unions with Chapels (shop-organisation) in the British News Agencies. Two of them, the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and National

Graphical Association (NGA), got payrises just before the Freeze began in July 20 last—the NUJ on the day before the Freeze. Outside these unions there are about 550 agency staff—organised, except for some non-union departments, in the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (SOGAT).

The SOGAT workers are copytakers, typists, clerks, cleaners and maintenance staff. They've always been paid well under the other unions' rates and on July 20 SOGAT clerical members were frozen on £14 12s 6d p.w. plus 18s cost-of-living bonus. Their old agreement ran out on September 30. After a lot of to-ing and fro-ing and a lot of rank-and-file pressure SOGAT negotiated a new agreement, approved by ballot of the membership, for a rise of just over £2 including bonus and shift allowance.

Union officials asked the management to implement the agreement as from January 1 this year—no backdating to October 1. The employers went to the Government who of course said no, so the employers said no too. SOGAT pro-

cont. on page 2, col. 1

## Robens' Communist ally

**L**ORD ALF ROBENS, boss of the National Coal Board, has found a new ally in his attacks on South Wales miners. For many months now Lord Robens, when he has not been displaying his deadly incompetence on TV, has been denouncing miners who stay away from work. (The miners do this for a number of reasons, not least because they don't like risking their necks in the bowels of the earth more than economic necessity forces them to.) For this duty, among others, Milord receives £12,500 per year plus allowances.

Robens's new pal is Mr. Will Paynter, General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, and a prominent member of the Communist Party. A year ago, we're told, Mr. Paynter left the Absentees Committee of the coal industry in protest against Robens's attacks on the miners.

Now, since his hero Kosygin has dined with Her Majesty, he's evidently seen the error of his ways. On April 7 Mr. Paynter told a meeting of South Wales miners that their absenteeism was "irresponsible anti-social behaviour" (*Financial Times*, 8.4.67); the fact that, on yearly average, one miner in five stayed away each day threatened not only the future of the local pits, but also the jobs of other workers. Such a figure would, he said, put off all the kind, nice bosses who were considering siting factories in the South Wales area.

The *Financial Times* reporter describes Paynter as "a Communist with an independent outlook." The victims of his attack will doubtless have other, less polite names for him.

## International Libertarian camp

**THIS YEAR'S** International Libertarian Summer Camp will be situated on the upper reaches of Lake Como, in Northern Italy. There is a beach and the locality is called "Boschatto Rossell" (Pian di Spagno). The organising committee intend to hold the camp from July 1 to August 31.

Everyone is welcome—there were over 300 anarchists and syndicalists last year: Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, German and 40 from Britain. You should take your own tent and camping equipment, though in past years one large tent has been provided for sleeping and some Butagas for cooking. There is a camp shop where most food can be cheaply bought.

What you do is up to you. Often, in the evenings, there are discussions; if enough people are interested coach trips can be organised; last year a camp football team heavily beat a nearby village.

A small charge, about 1s 6d per day, is made to cover site costs.

We have been unable to obtain more information as yet, and groups and individuals who are interested in further details are asked to write to: "Il Comitato del Campeggio", Circolo Sacco e Vanzetti, v. le Murillo I, Milan, Italy.



## ANTI-FREEZE (cont.)

tested but wouldn't call a strike—they didn't discourage one either. The three SOGAT chapels at the three agencies—Exchange Telegraph (Extel), Press Association (PA) and Reuters—passed strike resolutions and gave strike notice.

Extel management tried to set up a scab service in retaliation, but the Chapel stopped it. Reuters threatened strikers with the sack and let it be known that scabs would get their rises under a cooked-up deal; at this, Reuters Chapel withdrew strike notice.

However, PA and Extel got their payrises—including non-union workers at Extel. Then on February 22 the Government slapped on an Order cutting the wages of the SOGAT members, and *the Order applied to union departments and union departments alone and only at Extel and PA*. Extel can pay their non-union employees what the hell they like. Reuters can do the same, union or non-union. Both employers have gone ahead and dished out substantial rises to those who weren't going to strike. Reuters have rewarded their non-striking Chapel with a complete pay review backdated to October 1. Quite a few workers at Extel have handed in their union cards—to get a payrise!

Down at the Westminster Gasworks, no Labour MP could be found who'd touch a motion condemning the Order. It was left to a Tory ex-Minister, Macleod, to move a "prayer to the Queen". To his credit, though not because he's on the side of the workers, Macleod did a good job on exposing the Labour Government's barefaced victimisation of union members. Only one MP could be found to defend the Order—Stewart, who'd made it, apparently wouldn't. This was the Government mouthpiece and Grunter's Joint Parliamentary Piglet, Roy Hattersley. Of course, when the Division Bells rang "every boozer in Westminster emptied" (in the words of a spectator) and the lobbies were packed. The Labour-left MPs sat on the fence as usual and abstained.

SOGAT members in the news agencies haven't seen much of the union leadership since mid-February—in fact a lot of them are saying that R. Briginshaw, SOGAT secretary, doesn't really exist! However, this hasn't stopped the SOGAT leadership doing an about-face on the Freeze so that they now support the TUC's Freeze policy. Obviously, when it came to the crunch, they couldn't refuse to back their members and still pretend to be against the Wage Freeze.

### MAY DAY CALL

On March 29, the Press Association Chapel called a Protest Meeting against the Freeze. The SOGAT Executive declared this unconstitutional and boycotted the meeting—as did a Labour-left MP who'd agreed to speak.

However nearly 100 rank and file printworkers decided to press on by themselves. They called for a May 1 demonstration against the Freeze during working hours. Support from other sections of industry has been given—notably building and engineering.

The "official" Labour Movement of Britain has never celebrated May Day. (It has always chosen merely to echo the world-wide demonstrations the following Sunday! Capitalist production must not stop!) In calling the demonstration the printworkers have taken an historic step. They have the complete support of all Syndicalists.

MARK HENDY

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## Who owns the wealth in Britain?

LESS THAN ONE-SEVENTEENTH of the population of Britain owns more than two-thirds of the wealth. This is revealed by recent tables published by the Inland Revenue Commissioners.

In 1965, 17,937,000 persons owned a total of £70,700 million net wealth (net because mortgages, etc. have been deducted). Of these, the very richest 12,000 individuals (0.035% of the population of the country—about 52 million) owned £4,800 million (6.8 per cent of all wealth).

The richest 386,000 individuals in the country (including the very richest 12,000 and making up 0.75%) owned £24,200m. (34 per cent).

The group immediately below the top 0.75% was made up of 2,298,000 individuals (5%) owning £24,300m. (another 34% of net wealth).

Taking the last two together, you can't escape the conclusion that less than 6% (one-seventeenth) of the population owns 68% (more than two-thirds) of the wealth.

## ANTI-TU LAW (cont.)

dumped: witness the decision not to allow a Radio Televis Eireann film unit to visit Vietnam as "it would not be in the best interests of the nation".

Fianna Fail is slowly tightening its grip on voluntary organisations in Irish society. Twenty Special Branch detectives have been designated to investigate the farmers' refusal to pay rates. Cultural organisations such as Sceim na gCeardeanna are now politically dangerous extremist groups. It has been a regrettable feature of the controversy over these proposals that though the Labour movement opposed the proposals it left the job of informing the rank and file of their implications to smaller organisations like the National Civil Liberties League.

The ICTU should immediately cease these futile talks with a government who have shown that they will not stop without smashing a free labour movement. The ICTU should draw up its own proposals for putting industry into the hands of the workers on a co-operative basis and creating what Connolly termed a Co-operative Commonwealth. This can be done, but not by playing around with such a determinably anti-worker rump as Fianna Fail.

DAVE PICKETT

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# ACTION PAYS DIVIDENDS

REMEMBER February 1966? I bet the railwaymen do. It was then that Wilson "bought off" a national railway stoppage. He must have used all his syrupy charm because Greene and the NUR Executive stood for it. Since that date talks on structure and pay have gone around in ever-decreasing circles. The 3½% wage increase which was due on September 5, 1966, was not paid until March 1967.

The NUR submitted a new claim last month. It could be months *before talks get under way*. How long the actual wage negotiations will be is anyone's guess. One thing which is pretty obvious to all is that any increase the railwaymen receive is so small that by the time they have been through all the rigmarole in cold hard fact it is NOTHING.

On the other hand, when the rank-and-file railwaymen take action things start to move. Railway guards worked to rule to support their claim for a productivity bonus; the result—their full demand met, to be paid after productivity talks and backdated to April 3.

The other railway union, ASLEF had to threaten a work-to-rule before their short-haul freight drivers could even be considered for bonus payments. These negotiations had been going on for 17 months. Grunter was forced to intervene to avert the work-to-rule. He lectured British Rail and the unions on their sloppy handling of the whole situation. Addressing British Rail, Grunter pointed out that the longer negotiations of this character dragged on, the sourer men became. This made TU leadership very difficult and in the end resulted in the membership taking over from the leadership. We would remind Bro. Grunter of a fact he has probably forgotten; the membership are the union, and the leaders are elected to do their bidding. It appears pretty obvious that if the rank and file want action, they have to initiate it themselves, usually despite union leadership, not with it. And if the NUR want their increase before the decimal system takes over they will have to take action. British Railways are prepared to talk for months—it's no skin off their nose, as while they are chatting it's not costing them anything, but to railwaymen time is money and the way this Government is carrying on, time is bloody expensive.

## SOLIDARITY

THE MYTON dispute on the Barbican Scheme is now in its 26th week, despite management and, now, union-management attempts to break the strike.

Last October three steel fixers were dismissed; the site subsequently restarted work after being put on notice. On the expiring of this the men were locked out. On the advice of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives (NFBTO), the workers returned on November 3, only to be sacked *en bloc* on November 4.

Right up to February the TGWU and the AUBTW (bricklayers' union) blacked the site and insisted on full reinstatement of all men with no victimization. On February 14 the union officials agreed the site could be reopened with the old labour force but *without six members of the works committee*.

The building industry's disputes commission agreed Mytons need not re-employ the six stewards. The union officials were attempting to do two things, reopen Mytons and at the

same time smash the works committee but the lads on the site decided differently and caused George Lowthian, Gen. Sec. of the AUBTW to scream, "Anarchy!"

On April 4, Labour Exchange officials, together with the union officials and the management attempted to put scabs on the site to reopen it. The scabs didn't get to first base. In the first place the pickets visited the labour exchanges and explained the position to the potential Mytons workers. After hearing the strikers' case, some did not join the pickup coach laid on for the job of scab collecting. The fear of the workers from the Labour Exchange was that they would be victimised by the Labour Exchange for refusing work. Eventually a coach load of *fourteen* scabs arrived near the Myton site. They were met by a former union official who is now Labour Officer for Mytons. The picket line stood solid; it had been strengthened by workers from other sites including Turrieffs. The coach driver realising it wasn't going to get through backed out and pulled away. The picket line was not broken and the Myton workers had won their first battle.

On April 4 Mytons had to meet their clients, the City of London Corporation. Obviously, no work for over five months can work out a bit expensive. What transpired at the meeting has not been reported, but Mytons have a choice of two courses of action. Keep the site closed or re-engage the six men, terminate their contract, which they would be reluctant to do, or lose face (in their eyes), and agree to discuss the case of the six men. Myton's Federation steward is reported as suggesting a compromise that *some* of the six men should be reinstated and there would be no opposition, but Mytons want to prove who is boss, okay, so it has been proved, it's definitely the workers on this occasion.

On April 7, Mytons and the NFBTO met Richard March, the Ministry of Labour's chief conciliation officer, to try and break the deadlock. A report of the meeting will go to the Minister of Labour.

The Works Committee secretary has written to Grunter stating that they believe that the case for the men involved should be heard. The union cannot represent the strikers because they have joined forces with the management against the strikers.

The executive of the woodworkers' union (ASW) have removed three members of the London management committee for giving financial aid to the Myton and Sunley disputes. It should be noted that not even at the beginning did the ASW recognise the strike at Mytons. ASW is reported to be losing members rather rapidly—no bloody wonder! You could get more support from a tea club.

We all scream about lack of solidarity these days (I am one of the worst offenders) but this dispute is proving how wrong we can be.

Rank-and-file organisation is conducting this dispute, and the job is STOPPED and has STOPPED for 26 weeks. Joe Soap has said the site will not open and it ain't opened despite the combined might and power of the unions and Mytons.

The ball is at Grunter's feet, if he kicks it in the right direction all will be well. If he doesn't—well!?

**BILL CHRISTOPHER**

## How to run a railway!

"THE RAILWAY union leaders once broke into my office and held a stick of dynamite under my chair until I signed a pay increase. That's a hell of a way to run a railway."

George Wilson, Manager of British-owned Antafagusta (Bolivia) Railway Co. (8.4.67)

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# Direct Action

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

## On the Lump

I KIND OF like the idea of being self-employed. You can dodge income tax. The amount of money the faceless functionaries of the State steal from my wage packet to pay for *their* army, *their* air force, *their* police and *their* Polaris subs is disgusting.

In the building trade many workers are officially self-employed. In fact, they are wage slaves like the rest of us, usually working long hours without benefit of overtime rates, without holiday stamps, without safety agreements, without job security.

### UNION BOSSES USELESS

It's essentially a young man's game. 300,000 men, one-fifth of the industry, working for 40,000 employers, are "on the Lump". This whole business of labour-only sub-contracting has developed over the last 20 years or so. An expansion of the building industry, a shortage of labour, and, to quote Harry Weaver, Gen. Sec. of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, who ought to know, "The trade union rates negotiated between the NFBTO and the National Federation of Building Trades Employers bore no relation to the real price of building labour." Let's be quite clear about this. The reason for the rise of labour-only is the inability of union bureaucrats in national negotiations to gain realistic wages! The reason union organisation exists *at all* is the militancy of the rank-and-file in some parts of the industry, who have made their own agreements. What use are officials if, on their own admission, they can't even get the market price of labour?

The salaried officials of the building unions are obsessed by dues. Naturally—we pay their salaries. To this separate class with a vested interest in the *status quo*, loss of members means loss of income. One thing they've tried is advertising on the London tube. All sorts of "Friendly Societies" do it, after all.

### BIG BROTHER

Apart from their own salaries, what do the officials do with union funds? Well, they invest in capitalism. They buy stocks and shares. And they pay money to the Labour Party, both a fixed levy and special amounts for electoral purposes. They try to keep fairly quiet about it. The rank-and-file trade unionist hardly realises *he* is keeping the party of Wage Freeze and Price Rise in business. Even if we opt out of the Political Levy, there's still the money paid from union funds—*our* funds—at Election time. One thing the

funds are not used for is strike pay. Officials boast of keeping this form of "expenditure" down.

Under the circumstances it's not surprising TU organisation has declined, and the shadow of the Lump falls over more and more sections of the industry. To combat it, building union "leaders" and various "left-wing" groups have advocated government intervention of one sort or another. It is typical of their thinking that they should ask Big Brother to solve their problems.

Another possibility that has been raised is that of unofficial strikes against labour only. What would be the attitude of the State to his? Well, all governments oppose strikes as a general rule. However, there is £8½ million in unpaid taxes to consider. And what if the existing unions *should* go under and leave a "vacuum"? Of such stuff are nightmares made!

### SYNDICALISM

Labour only is dog-eat-dog, the working class divided against itself in the most savage manner. It encourages speed at the expense of safety and workmanship. It must be fought. However, any "solution" made by salaried officials, employers and the State will be at the expense of the workers. The real struggle lies with the rank and file. The question arises—Why should we mourn the passing of bodies which have had their day? What building workers need is a militant industrial union. Not an amalgamation made by bureaucrats, but a completely new movement growing from the rank and file, based on site organisation, entirely under the control of the members and tied to no political party. In a word—Syndicalism.

BRICKIE

## GROUP NOTICES

ABERDEEN: Contact Ian Macdonald, 15 Cotton Street, Aberdeen.

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

BRISTOL: Contact Adam Nicholson, 10 Bellvue, Bristol 8.

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.

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

May 3: Ken Hawkes—Songs of Struggle (records)

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: Contact Adrian Derbyshire, 2 Oakley House, Oakley Ave., London, W5.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS: Contact J. D. Gilbert Rolfe, 4 Mount Zion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

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

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Housmans, 5 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, WC1.

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# THE ANGRY BALLOT

"It is singular how long the rotten will hold together provided you do not handle it roughly."

—Thomas Carlyle

\* \* \*

WHEN men revolt they pick up whatever weapons are nearest and which may seem the easiest to wield, not always the most deadly and rarely the weapons ordered by the sociological doctors. The massacre of the Labour Party at the Greater London Council election is due to the action—and inaction—of the workers who have, after patiently "giving Labour a chance", realised that they had fallen for the three card trick and struck out with a hearty thump.

No one expected such a strong revulsion of feelings, least of all the public opinion poll experts with their costly outfits. The Conservative *Daily Telegraph* said on the morning of the election, "The Conservatives are favourites by the narrowest possible margin to win the GLC. The figures show a swing to the Conservatives of 3.7% since 1964. A uniform swing of this order in the actual votes cast today would still leave Labour in control, but with a reduced majority." *The Telegraph* employs Dr. Gallup and his dubious prophets. In fact the average swing was 11.5%.

## "WE WAS ROBBED"

A soccer fanatic may be heard to express the notion that his team, though beaten, really won, even saying something like this, "We didn't lose because we scored less goals than the other side, if we had scored more goals than they, we should have won." To this tune Mr. Mellish, MP, Chairman of the London Labour Party, went on ITV to say that, while Labour had the most supporters, the Tories won because many Labour supporters did not turn up to vote. Some supporters!

A long careful look at the poll results will reveal a very different picture. It wasn't laziness or watching Buffalo Bill on the telly which swung Labour's massive majority of 33 years into an 82-to-18 defeat. In 1964, 44.1% of the London electorate voted, in 1967, 41.1%. The 3% less still leaves the 1967 figure higher than that of some years which gave Labour a majority at County Hall. In fact the Tories polled more votes in 1967 than they did in 1964; Labour polled less this year than in 1964. If the Labour Party had polled as many votes this year as they did in 1964 (1,095,351) they would still have been below the Tories even on this year's reduced aggregate poll.

As to the absentee Labour supporters, they doubtless felt they had a good reason to stay at home or go to the pictures; they didn't want to vote Tory. That wily Social Democrat Lenin once said that certain people had "voted with their feet", that is walked away. Perhaps, Mr. Mellish, your absent comrades voted with their backsides.

A low poll and absenteeism of loyal Labour voters affected the issue but little. The poll fell most heavily in safe Tory seats. The lowest swingover of votes was in these Tory seats such as Sutton (7%) and Richmond (5%). Some boroughs had a higher poll than in 1964, but that did not help Labour. The heaviest swing of votes came in very "safe" Labour

seats, e.g., Waltham Forest, where Tories took all Labour's seats with a 17.2 swing. Hackney had a swing of 17.5%, Islington (100% Labour Council for many years) a 22.5% swing to Tories, plus 11,350 votes to Liberals, Independents, Communists and Tenants. It is worth noting that council house tenants, angry at Labour's high rents, have resisted a strong CP attempt to capture their vote, formed the Islington Tenants' and Ratepayers' Political Association and, with 3 candidates, gained 3,733 votes.

Fringe candidates were able to pick up a few fringe benefits from the confusion of rout on the battlefield. In recent elections a new development may be observed. Almost any candidate even a fictitious character, can hope to get 500 to a 1,000 votes. Most GLC ballot papers had 16 to 20 names. The conscientious Lab, Lib, or Tory voter takes a card with his favourite names to the poll and carefully picks them out with his Xs. The less careful are likely to drop one or two of their 4 or 5 votes anywhere on the flypaper. Of these accidentals any candidate, Tory, Communist or Independent may benefit. In the 1966 General Election a man handed in his nomination paper and £150 and announced himself an Independent Tory Trade Unionist candidate. After canvassing two persons he decided to give up, but it was too late to withdraw, so he appealed to the public not to vote for him. Nevertheless, without meetings, press or posters, he collected nearly 700 votes.

The GLC electorate was faced by 14 kinds of candidates, plus independents. Little wonder that some voters were confused. Westminster had two "Carnaby Street" candidates who between them collected 1,740 votes. In most boroughs voters had 3 or 4 votes each. The Socialist Party of Great Britain ran candidates in 4 boroughs, with varying results for each candidate. In Ealing (4 votes each voter) they had four candidates who each gained a different total of votes, 1,250; 1,107; 611 and 441.

## TO BREAK A FREEZE

According to the SPGB, they will get votes from persons who understand socialism and will vote for no other thing. Why then, the difference between 1,250 and 441? Did 441 give one vote each to socialism and three votes each to Tory or Labour? That British ballot papers do not have the names of the candidates' parties on them adds to the confusion and comedy. Here the State does not recognise parties, only persons and ministers of the Queen.

There is distinct unanimity in the workers' complaints against the Labour Government—wage freeze, higher prices, heavier rates, higher rents, the slow death of the unions, deliberate unemployment, heavier taxation. As to the latter, the Treasury has lately announced (13.4.67) that taxation has increased by £2,336 million a year since Wilson took office. From £6,649 million in 1963-64 to £8,985 million in 1966-67 (an increase of 35%).

But these ills cannot be fought either by voting Tory or staying at home. Some groups of workers are already gnawing holes in the wage freeze. Those who get a rise are those who are not timid and have least respect for State and Labour leaders, those who get the biggest rises are those who are the least timid. I know this from my own wage packet. Government is a bully, bullies like soft victims. Parliamentarism makes softies of trade union members. Their grandfathers would have been ashamed of today's cringing wretches muttering political incantations.

No rise in wages or reduction of the working week was ever won except by a strike in one form or another, or the

cont. on page 8, col. 2

## Things don't change

"THE ENGLISH deceive themselves if they think they are free, the only freedom they exercise is during the actual election of deputies to parliament. As soon as they have elected their representatives they lose this freedom entirely and become nothing more than slaves."

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)



# Indecency in church

*INDECENCY IN CHURCH (Published by seven defendants in the case against eight war resisters at Brighton, 6d).*

\* \* \* \*

THOSE who pick up this pamphlet, hoping to read lurid revelations about priestly pederasts and innocent choir-boys, in the celebrated old *News of the World* style, are in for a disappointment. The "indecency" which formed the basis of charges, on which all eight defendants were found guilty, was that of protesting against the hypocrisy of a Methodist Church service in Brighton, before the Labour Party Conference last October, at which Her Majesty's Socialist Ministers, Harold Wilson and George Brown, read the lessons.

Britain's magistrates are rightly notorious for their reactionary and stupid pronouncements. The recent motoring case, in which a young defendant was insolently asked if he slept with his girl friend, is a typical example. The Brighton case, before chairman Herbert ("Jack the") Ripper is another.

Six of the eight were given the maximum fine of £5; two others, Nicolas Walter and Jim Radford, the maximum prison sentence of two months, after a hearing that lasted seven days. An appeal to the High Court, on a point of law, is now pending in the cases of the two men sentenced to jail.

The legislation under which the verdict was given is the archaic Ecclesiastical Courts Jurisdiction Act of 1860, one more of the mildewed laws which can be produced, like rabbits from a hat, to suit the State's pleasure in virtually any given situation.

Some pertinent questions are asked magistrate Ripper in the pamphlet.

"Why," for instance, "did you fail to investigate or comment in any way on the complaints made by several of us, that we were being treated violently by PC 335 on that occasion? If you yourself were unable to see that some of us were being kicked and punched down the stairs leading from the dock, you must have heard the shouted protests. Everyone else in court did . . ."

"The inaccuracy and inconsistency of the police evidence had been one of the most remarkable features of the hearing . . . You ignored this completely. Why?"

"Why did you not reply to our several protests at not being granted witness summons for Mr. Wilson and his family and for Margaret Herbison, the Minister of Pensions? . . . Do you consider it part of a Magistrate's job to protect influential people from being called upon to perform their public duty?"

"I should be failing in my duty if I did not send you to prison, you went on. Presumably you were referring to your duty to Harold Wilson . . ."

The pamphlet explains why the defendants "spoke in protest against the hypocrisy of politicians who, in the garb of Christian respectability, could utter words of peace and universal brotherhood, while continuing to support the American war of atrocity and genocide in Vietnam." If you agree with what they did and want to help, send a donation to: The Brighton Defence Fund, c/o Jeanne Smythe, 68 Hewitt Road, London, N.8.

**KEN HAWKES**

**SPELL INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY.** Ball pens, red-and-black case lettered "CNT. Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo" (National Confederation of Labour of Spain) in gold. Blue ink, refillable. Retractable point, strong metal clip and tip. 2s 6d postpaid (US & Canada 30 cents) or 27s a dozen. Money with orders, please, to SWF.

## LETTER

### The drug scene

DEAR EDITOR,

Fleet Street, always searching for stories to shock, intrigue and disgust its readership, has recently focused its attention on the drug scene. The impression given by the Press is that Britain has a vast population of "junkies" and that their ranks are increasing by the hundred every week. As usual with typical newspaper stories, however, a little research will show that this impression is false, and that newsmen know absolutely nothing about drugs or the people who take them.

The most common drug taken by drug takers is Indian Hemp alias "pot", alias about a dozen other names, and already quite a number of people have been to court for possessing this drug, the Press giving plenty of space to these cases. What is *not* publicised about "pot" is that it is less harmful and less addictive than alcohol and even beneficial when compared with cigarettes. Imagine the howl of protest there would be if the government outlawed cigarettes on the grounds that they are addictive and harmful to health!

The drugs which the government and police should be concerned with are the addictive, harmful types such as Heroin and Cocaine. But they should also take the size of Britain's drug "problem" into proportion. The Brain Committee report on drug addiction, which concerned itself mainly with Heroin, implies that Britain "leads the world in Heroin addiction." It is estimated that Hong Kong has 18,000 Heroin addicts, Canada 150,000, New York 50,000 and Britain 342 known cases!

Of these countries, only Britain's drugs are controlled by doctors and not by police. Between 1959 and 1964, the amount of Heroin manufactured in Britain dropped from 68 kilogrammes to 55 kilogrammes, and consumption rose from 45 kilogrammes to 50 kilogrammes. Why then, was there no concern about Heroin addiction in 1959?

Narcotic addiction is a serious illness despite the fact that it is one of the rarest in the country. Yet no research is done on it, and we don't know exactly what it does to its victims, or why young people start taking drugs, knowing the dangers involved. The Press have "blown up" the narcotic problem out of all proportion, and the only Government report on drugs tends to add to the hysteria.

In Britain today, 30,000 people die each year from lung cancer caused or aggravated by tobacco addiction, and 342 people are addicted to Heroin.

**IAIN MacDONALD**

ED. NOTE—US authorities have made drug addiction itself a crime for some years. Which seems to be the way things are moving here; under proposed laws it'll be possible to fine or imprison a doctor for healing or attempting to heal an addict without official permission.

As elsewhere, the Labour Government's "Law Reform" turns out to be just a rubber-stamping of what the police want—like we said some time ago, it's "bending the law to fit the coppers".

Meanwhile the Big Drug Scare also provides police with means to isolate and attack nonconforming youth—breaking up club gatherings, dances, etc. "If 'pot' did not exist it would be necessary to invent it" . . . or should we say "plant it"?

**AMERICAN READERS**—We urgently need your ZIP-Code number. Without this your copy of 'Direct Action' will soon not reach you, owing to new U.S. Mail regulations.



# ANTI-TU LAW THREAT IN IRELAND

MANY of the Minister of Industry and Commerce's proposed changes to Industrial Relations and Trades Union Law, will, if passed, cripple the trade union movement. They constitute a potential attack on the civil liberty of the individual and threaten every trades unionist with a serious curtailment of his freedom.

The E.S.B. (Special Provisions) Act, 1966, was passed into law before the public had grasped its meaning. Here, we set out some of the Minister's *further* intentions so that you may be forewarned about them. They may come before the Dáil in late September or October, 1966.

## **Industrial Relations Law (Labour Court, etc.)**

*Para. 5 of the Minister's proposals.* The system whereby the Irish Congress of Trades Unions nominated the workers' side will be abolished and members will be appointed by the Minister.

*Paras 6-14.* Individual "Industrial Relations Officers" will investigate and make recommendations during disputes. But if this fails and the parties agree to take their cases before the Court, the findings of the Court will be binding. (i.e. Compulsory Arbitration.)

*Para 28.* The Court will sit in private. (No public gallery or press.)

## **Trade Union Law**

*Para. 36.* Unofficial strikes will be illegal. (Many unofficial strikes are made official on investigation by union officers prompted into action by unofficial moves. Further, *official* strikes would have to be made legally watertight—otherwise they could be contested by a sharp lawyer with an eye for flaws, and possibly result in heavy penalties for erring unions.)

*Para. 37.* In ballots for strike-action "the decisive percentage must be at least 51% of those entitled to vote or at least two-thirds of those actually voting, whichever is the greater." (*This* from a government which is operating on a simple majority of two, in a Dáil which carries out most of its business with little more than a quorum! Applied to the presidential election we would not have elected a president last time!)

*Para. 38.* "Notwithstanding a ballot decision an executive of a trade union may decide not to issue strike notice!" (No need for comment!)

*Paras 41-42.* The Minister will determine what new unions may be formed—or what unions continue to exist. ("... probably contrary to the Constitution ... definitely contrary to Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organisation ..."—ICTU.)

*Para. 46.* Appeals for recognition can be made to the High Court. ("... dependent on the extent to which unions can expect to rely on objective judgments by the Court."—ICTU.)

*Para. 47.* A negotiation licence will cost £3,000 instead of £1,000.

*Para. 48.* A member expelled by a union "for disciplinary reasons" may not be admitted to another union for six months. (With right of appeal to law if his livelihood is threatened!)

This is a brief outline of the Minister's intentions. Close examination of the full proposals will reveal an audacious assault on the right of working people to withdraw their labour. This contemplated assault must be met with the full force of public opinion. Go to the organisations to which you belong and get them to condemn these provisions

outright. Whether the organisation in question be a football club, trade union, political party (government party included!) or students' group, this proposed legislation should be a matter of concern to the members.

*Issued by the National Civil Liberties League, 6, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2.*

\* \* \*

THIS leaflet was issued following the publication of proposals of the Minister for Industry and Commerce for reforming TU law and the Labour Court in the Irish Republic. After the proposals, a working party of representatives from the new Department of Labour held talks with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).

The proposals emerging from these talks were overwhelmingly rejected at a special conference of the ICTU in December. The same conference however decided to continue the talks for reforming TU law and the Labour Court with the Department of Labour. It would be absurd to suggest that any proposals emerging from these talks will favour the workers; if such proposals do emerge they will be dismissed at once by the Department.

The proposals, remember, are the truest reflection of Fianna Fail policies for the Labour movement ever to appear in public. If they become law it will in effect create a Fascist State, for the TU movement will become simply the labour arm of the Fianna Fail government. Unions that did not support the Fianna Fail government would have their negotiating licences withdrawn. Breakaway unions which threatened Fianna Fail policy would be refused a licence. People who in the past denounced Fianna Fail as a fascist party were accused of having a wild imagination. Now they need not be in doubt; here it is, straight out of the horse's mouth.

## **OVERALL POLICY**

The proposals on the Labour Court envisage setting up a National Arbitration Court that will be effectively in the hands of the Minister of Labour, who will appoint directly the Chairman and Deputies and will appoint the workers' representatives after consultation with "the appropriate representative bodies". Clearly the Labour Court will be constituted in such a way that only decisions suitable to Fianna Fail policy will be made, under the pseudonym of the "national interest". The "appropriate representative bodies" will of course more often than not be TU bureaucrats who do not disagree with Fianna Fail policy as the history of the busmen shows very clearly. The decisions of the Labour Court would be binding on both sides. Strikes would be allowed within three months of the Court's decision **ONLY** if the Employer refused to implement the Court's award, otherwise strikes would be illegal within the three-month period.

These proposals should be seen against the background of Fianna Fail's overall economic policy. This permits and encourages the takeover of smaller Irish industries by foreign monopolies, many dominated by American capital. This is not confined to privately-owned enterprises, as is shown by the recent deal between Erin Foods and the American-owned monopoly Heinz. This may well be the first sale of many more State-financed enterprises to foreign monopoly.

Allied to this policy is one of slow, gradual but firm integration with the American system of defence alliances. The former neutrality of Irish foreign policy is now being

*cont. on page 2, col. 2*



# SPANISH WORKERS' EPIC FIGHT

**R**IGHT across Spain, from Galicia to Andalucia, Spanish workers are putting up a terrific struggle against their Fascist bosses. We've reported some magnificent struggles before, but nothing like the present one in their sweep and duration.

Steelworkers at the Echeverri works, Bilbao, struck work on December 1 and at time of writing are still out. They struck to demand the rehiring of 24 workmates who were sacked and also for better wages. The local industrial districts are under siege by police. Two thousand workers at the Sestao naval construction plant, and at the Euskalduna and Echevarria factories, struck on January 27 in solidarity. That day there were mass demonstrations in Bilbao and 16 workers arrested. On February 7 workers held further demonstrations and police made further arrests. By the beginning of March strike collections totalling over one million pesetas had been made in the Basque country, and more collections in Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona.

## MINERS' STRIKE

In the Asturias, 17,000 miners struck on February 1 for higher wages and safer conditions; 15 militants were arrested by police. The strikers demanded their release, also protested against recent sackings and the way the authorities refuse to consult workers' representatives in framing new labour laws. Police have brutally crushed the demonstrations. It was in this area four years ago that the police and Civil Guard tried to break the miners' strike with particularly savage beatings and other atrocities including castration and the shaving of the heads of the strikers' wives, also kicking an expectant mother in the belly.

In Madrid, workers at Standard Electrica struck and secured the release from prison of six fellow workers arrested on a demonstration against sackings on January 2. **DIRECT ACTION**, February). On January 26, 14,000 Standard workers again struck work, staying at their benches with folded arms till driven out by the police. The stay-in strikes were repeated by 7,000 workers at Barreiros motor and Getafe aircraft factories. The demand was higher wages. On January 27 a demonstration was held, to be brutally smashed by the police. In protest, 100,000 workers boycotted Madrid public transport. On January 30, 30 workers were arrested, whereupon 55,000 workers in 11 plants held a stay-in strike for their release.

## LITERATURE

- THE HUNGARIAN WORKERS' REVOLUTION** (2nd edition, revised) 6d.
- UNHOLY ALLIANCE. The 1966 Seamen's Strike:**  
an Analysis by George Foulser 6d.  
by Bill Christopher 2d
- SMASH THE WAGE FREEZE** 4d
- WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE UNIONS?** by Tom Brown 4d
- WORKERS' CONTROL** SWF Pamphlet (2nd printing) 6d
- HOW LABOUR GOVERNED, 1945-1951** 6d
- THE BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE** by Tom Brown 4d
- THE BOMB, DIRECT ACTION AND THE STATE** 6d
- LENIN AND WORKERS' CONTROL** by Tom Brown 4d
- THE SOCIAL GENERAL STRIKE** by Tom Brown 2d
- Seamen's Voice** by George Foulser postpaid 18s
- THE IWW'S LITTLE RED SONG BOOK** 2s 6d
- STRIKE STRATEGY** (National Rank & File Movement) 2d
- RESISTANCE SHALL GROW** (full implications of the Spies for Peace disclosures). Jointly with the ILP, FLA and Solidarity 6d
- INDUSTRIAL WORKER** (monthly paper of IWW) 4d.  
Add 4d in the 1s for postage

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION, 34 CUMBERLAND ROAD, LONDON, E.17.

In Barcelona, Tarrasa and Sabadell, 12,000 textile workers have struck against the present concave contract. There have been go-slow strikes in Barcelona at the Seat, Hispano-Olivetti and Maquiniste Terrestre y Maritima plants. At the Aiscondel plant women workers have banned overtime. A strike is also reported at the Azucarera de Aragon, in Saragoza.

Workers at Construcciones Aeronauticas, Seville (Andalucia), have been on a go-slow strike for higher wages.

## UNION FREEDOM

Spanish railway workers are demanding higher wages and a halt to sackings, which have totalled 11,000 in three years. The railways are nationalised. The State recognises that 40 per cent of its 104,000 railway workers don't even get the legal minimum wage of 84 pesetas (10s) per day. 13,000 workers earn 78.40 pesetas p.d., and over 29,000 earn only 70 pesetas. In Madrid 2,300 railway workers have been carrying out intermittent strike action.

All strikes and demonstrations, besides making particular demands, carry the general demands of union freedom and social justice. All workers who rebel against their Fascist masters run the risk of brutal reprisals. But while Fascism takes away the workers' right to strike it cannot take away their power to strike.

Despite the current "boom" in production, the Spanish bosses still rely heavily on the tourist trade to meet their trade deficit. Don't help to sabotage the workers' struggle by going on holiday to Spain this year.

**RUSSIAN AND SPANISH DICTATORS** have concluded a shipping agreement. This enables ships of both countries to carry goods directly from one to another.

The establishment of diplomatic (consular) relations between Rumania and Spain is also announced.

## HELP SPANISH TOURIST BOYCOTT

**FROM** the Spanish comrades of the exiled CNT in this country, the SWF has received the gift of 1,000 two-colour postcards, in aid of our Press Fund. These beautifully-produced cards, 7x4 in., with the CNT imprint, depict four aspects of Franco Spain that Costa Brava tourists usually miss: photographs of a Spanish prison gallery, political prisoners, slums in Madrid and armed Civil Guards on patrol. By using these cards, which have the normal spaces for greetings and addressing, readers can help both the Spanish Tourist Boycott campaign and the SWF Press Fund. They are 6d. each, 6s. for 12, plus postage (2½d for single copies, 6d for 12) from SWF.

## THE ANGRY BALLOT (cont.)

threat of a strike. Postmen, seamen and railwaymen have shown how to make this government give way. But most trade union leaders are intertwined in their whole existence with the political machine. The push must come from below. In the shop steward and shop committee organisation exist the ready made organs of struggle. Where these do not exist, they can readily be formed. The way you can break your new-forged chains of slavery. You cannot do it in County or Shire Hall.

Communists and Trotskyists believe that disgust with Labour and Socialist treachery will make the workers turn to Bolshevism. They cannot see that it is much more likely to make them turn to Toryism, or even Fascism, if they are still enchanted by politics.

The only safeguard against wholesale reaction is the industrial, self-confident action of the workers.

**TOM BROWN**