

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Greek fascism and the Labour Government
Workers' Control and the new society : May Day

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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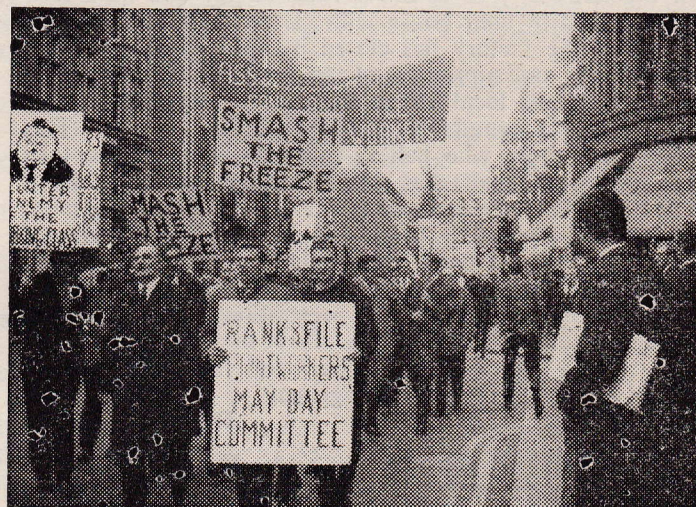
THAW NOWHERE IN SIGHT

THE Government's Prices and Incomes Policy for after June 30, 1967, presents a rather sordid picture. They are to implement Part II of the Prices and Incomes Act, which means workers can expect to receive little or nothing. The Government can see no justification for returning to the norm of 3-3½% which prevailed up to July 1966. Below 3% is nothing, particularly if you have to wait six months to get it.

Implementation of Part II of the Prices and Incomes Act means vetting of wage and price increases by the Prices and Incomes Board (PIB), if the Minister so desires. If the Minister doesn't desire you can be the happy recipient of a wage decrease. First the Minister has to be notified of an intended wage claim within seven days of submitting it to the employers. He then decides whether to place the proposed increase before the PIB. The award cannot be implemented until after a period of four months except if the Minister decides not to refer the settlement to the Board, which fact is then published in the Gazette and the award can be implemented from that date. If the proposed award does go before the PIB it cannot be implemented until the date of publication of the Board's report. In which case, brother, you have a long wait—even supposing the PIB is going to agree to your award in full. By the time the increase is in your wage packet the cost of living has gone up and you are money out.

In theory, intended price increases will be treated in the same way, except the loopholes are pretty wide. Goods for export are exempt, seasonal rises in prices are exempt, in fact food prices can continue to rise as they have done over the past 12 months. The Government may point to the "cost of living index" and suggest it has only risen slightly but what they don't point out is the fact that the weighting is well out of context. Pennies and twopences might not notice on £200 a week but they do on £15 per week.

Increase in company profits are notifiable but as is well known this is the biggest giggle of the lot: what you don't give out today—well, tomorrow is another day! In any case, Fred Lee, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, told the AEU leaders in April not to condemn price increases out of



MAY 1 IN LONDON—SEE PAGE 6

hand, and that there was nothing wrong in increasing profitability.

Rates and rents can go up; local authorities are urged to economise. Of course, rates and rent are not part of the cost of living, workers pay those bills out of their unearned income!

cont. on page 2, col. 2

'Trade unionism gone mad'

ENGINEERS AND ELECTRICIANS at the power station at Roosegate, Barrow-in-Furness, have decided to work to rule in protest at the dismissal of a woman clerk.

Mr. John Carney, an Electrical Trades Union shop steward, said, "The woman was tried and convicted in her absence and sacked." He added that although the case was no concern of manual workers, "we are concerned when it is a matter of British justice." Mr. F. Signey, North-west organiser of NALGO, which represented the woman, said: "It's trade unionism gone mad. It is fantastic for people to work to rule on behalf of somebody who is not even a member of their own union." (*Guardian* 27.4.67).

AND ALL TO SPEND A PENNY

AN ANTIQUE-STYLE COMMODE fetched \$4,000 (£1,400) at a recent New York sale.

Roberts-Arundel: a partial victory

THE FACTORY of Roberts-Arundel in Stockport is to be closed down after a long struggle. The strike began in November last year, when the workers protested about the employment of women in place of men previously made redundant. When 145 workers went on strike the company sacked them.

The latest move is the announcement by the bosses of their intention to close down the factory except for a small clerical staff, and to sack the scabs over a short period of time. The work carried out at Stockport will possibly be transferred to their factory at Bruges in Belgium. The reason given for the closure is the damage done to the factory by pickets and the blacking of Roberts-Arundel goods by workers at the airport, the docks and other places. The factory is still being picketed and will be until all the scabs have gone.

The experience should teach the scabs a lesson. They took the strikers' jobs at lower rates of pay and have now been rewarded by their bosses with the sack. It is also worth noting that the factory has closed because of direct action by the pickets and supporters of the strike. The intervention of the Mayor and local MP in the talks between unions and management has not affected the bosses in the slightest. This should show those who believe in asking your MP to take action on your behalf that this is an ineffective course of action. The Roberts-Arundel factory is to be closed because they found it impossible to run it, due to various forms of action taken against them. Although the sacked men have not been reinstated, the bosses have been given a good run for their money and have not been allowed to succeed in pushing around the workers as they thought they could. While this is not a 100% victory for the workers, it is obviously a defeat for the management.

RON MARSDEN

Guerilla strikes at Hebburn

SIX THOUSAND "manual" workers at Reyrolle's Hebburn have now changed their tactics in pursuit of longer holidays (DIRECT ACTION, February)—from token total stoppages to guerilla lightning strikes at key points in the plant *without warning* to the management. The new campaign started on May 16 when all met in Hebburn Park to unanimously approve the decision, to agree to a general levy to make up the wages of those involved, to call a district conference on "the Third Week" for all Tyneside convenors, and to take the afternoon off!

Another aspect of life at Reyrolle's is job control. The management got an IBM computer to run Critical Path Analysis programmes, work out the wages, keep up with the Parsons and so on; this kind of thing involves redundancies and the breaking up of work groups. The computer is there, but what happened to that CPA programme and why is its only function to check the sums the wages clerks have already done . . . ?

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, 7×4 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,

BRITISH WAGES LAG BEHIND IN EUROPE

A RECENT TUC report, based on figures collected by the Swedish Employers' Confederation, shows that British wages are nearly the lowest in Western Europe. The figures actually measure the cost to an employer of hiring a worker and so include both the total average paid for the working hour and an average of holiday pay, social security contributions, training costs and other payments.

Workers' wages in Britain average 7s to 8s 4d an hour. The figures for Belgium are 5s 4d-9s 1d, Denmark 9s-10s 6d, Finland 6s-8s 9d, France 5s 7d-9s 1d, Italy 4s 8d-9s 1d, Holland 6s 4d-9s 4d, Norway 8s 4d-10s 8d, Sweden 10s 8d-13s, W. Germany 6s 6d-10s 8d, Austria 4s 9d-7s 10d. Outside Europe are USA 18s-22s, Japan 2s 8d-3s 4d.

It is stressed that the figures are not adjusted for international differences in prices. It's also useful to note that in Britain employers pay a much lower percentage of social security costs than in, say, France and Italy, where the boss pays the family allowances direct.

An industry-by-industry comparison shows British wages bottom or near the bottom in every list.

BLACK MEAKERS!

ALL MAINTENANCE ELECTRICIANS employed by Meaker's Ltd., Gents Outfitters, have come out on strike. They are protesting against the victimisation of one of their members, Gery Lawless. Bro. Lawless was sacked when he refused to co-operate with the management in the sacking of another worker.

The men involved in the dispute have organised pickets of certain Meaker's stores. The employers have obtained a court order against the men to prevent them picketing, however the men had already appealed to all sections of the labour movement to join them in picketing stores throughout London and the Home Counties.

Further details from E. Boyhan, 22 Duncan Terrace, London, N.1. (Phone 01-TER 1714).

STILL FROZEN (cont.)

The punchline is left until last. If a trade union or a person takes or threatens to take strike action in an endeavour to implement an award he is liable to £100 fine on summary conviction and £500 on conviction on indictment.

Don't let any one kid us the freeze is thawing; it ain't. Don't get carried away with the TUC voluntary vetting and freeze; they are attempting the hatchet job for the Government and if their hatchet wears blunt the Government have a sharper one ready in stock.

That is the score, hogtied for 12 months if we stand for it. The freeze has been broken by industrial action, one concerted action could well and truly knock it back to Westminster where the MPs can put the paper to its natural use.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

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.

GREEK FASCISM AND THE LABOUR GOVT.

AGAIN we've all learned to our cost, and to the terrible cost of our Greek brothers, that constitutions and parliaments are luxuries. Luxuries for the boss class, who'll do away with them whenever the time arises.

Within hours on April 21 Greece went from a parliamentary system with a constitutional monarchy (based on the British example) to direct, totalitarian rule by the military and police.

The generals who seized power tore up all laws protecting freedom of speech and movement. They declared martial law and suppressed all dissent and all organisations independent of the State, in particular working-class organisations.

General Patakos, the army strong man, has admitted the arrest and jailing on the Isle of Yioura of 6,138 persons hostile to the new regime. This was carried out with the classic "knock in the night" of all dictators.

There were the usual barefaced lies in the speeches of the new rulers of blood and iron. "Youth must support radical change" broadcast Athens Radio on April 21—"radical change" meaning back to the army rule and mass repression of only recent years. "Distribution of wealth fairly in all provinces"—trying to buy the peasants' support with a 70% boost in pensions.

PATRIOTISM FOR SALE

"From this moment, there is no Right, Centre or Left, only Greeks. There are only Greeks who believe in Greece and in the noble lofty and full ideal of genuine democracy," said Constantine Koliass the new Prime Minister and former State Prosecutor. He set the tone of his "democracy" when he added, "All opposition will be crushed." Noble? Lofty? The rebel generals' opponents are to have show trials for—plotting to overthrow the Government! (A fate preferable perhaps, though, to that awaiting anyone who writes a slogan on a wall. He'll be stood up against it promptly and shot.)

And it'll all be approved "democratically", "within months", by the favourite tool of the dictators, the referendum. Mind you don't get caught telling anyone to vote against, or worse still, to boycott the polls. That'll be treason.

"Only Greeks who believe in Greece"—the Greece of the bankers, bosses, landlords, police and generals. What kind of Greece is that? The answer came in an interview which

the Minister for Economic Co-ordination gave to the *Financial Times* (1.5.67): "The new Government was 'prepared to do anything' to encourage foreign investment." "The attraction of foreign investment is the first economic priority." The patriotism of the Greek Fascist generals is that of Franco—always available to the highest bidder.

Whether of the Left or Right Wing of the political vulture, all politicians turn out men of straw when they face the might of the executive arm of the State—police and armed forces. Only the greater might of an organised working class in arms can meet the naked State force, as in Spain and Hungary. And victory can only last when international support's given—as Spain and Hungary again showed.

AFTER THE BRICKS

Just to remind us, here in Britain, of the irrelevance of politicians to real matters of State is the reaction of the Labour Government. On the one hand, unashamed recognition of the new tyrants; on the other, the same hysterical persecution of demonstrators as the Tories used in Greek Week, 1963. During the Greek Royal Visit then, demonstrators demanding the release of Greek political prisoners and protesting the murder of Lambrakis, a progressive MP, were arrested by the wagonload—and Sgt. Challenor dropped his bricks.

When demonstrators non-violently occupied the Greek Embassy in London on April 28 this year they were beaten up, then charged with "causing an affray"; a charge dredged up from the law books some years back to deal with the Notting Hill racialists; or, more recently, gangland thugs. The 42, who include an SWF National Committee member, Roger Etherington, have now been charged with riotous assembly and forcible entry, even more serious. Compare this with the treatment of comrades who just after Greek Week occupied the Cuban Embassy against Castro's persecution of Cuban Syndicalists—they were invited to appear on TV!

Greece is a very tender spot for the British State—and an obvious link is the very close tie between the two royal houses. For constitutional or not, the monarch is still Head of State with, even here, a behind-the-scenes political pull that can sometimes only be glimpsed in such incidents as recently or in the memoirs of politicians and hangers-on. George Clown may refuse to wear tails to the Palace and hug Mrs. Jones, but his terms of office dictate that he recognise the Greek Government without a murmur and apologise for the Embassy "incident"; while discussion even at the Westminster Word Factory is confined to the safety of British nationals in Greece, at question time.

SWEDISH SEAMEN'S CALL

Workers the world over have nothing to gain by waiting on the well-paid utterances of such puppets—on Greece or on anything else. Their strength lies in direct action, which is the only hope against Fascism. Not political follow-my-leader, for "No government fights Fascism to the death."

Already, workers elsewhere are preparing to act. Swedish seamen have called for the world-wide blacking of Greek shipping. Their call has gone to the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and if taken up could cut off a very big slice of the wealth of the Greek ruling class and force them to make concessions. But even if the pro-boss leaders of many of the ITF unions refuse their backing (as they did to the British seamen last year), even if the leaders refuse to issue the call—do workers have to be ordered into the fight against Fascism?

MARK HENDY

Right man for the job?

THE DIVINE WISDOM that infallibly guides employers in picking the right man for the job is well known. Nevertheless it failed to stand up to a recent test carried out in the US, and reported in the *Financial Times* (28.4.67).

At the request of Careers, Inc., a national recruiting firm for specialised workers, a group of technical and science writers drew up summaries of education, interests and work history, of the kind sent by prospective employees to prospective employers, for a number of geniuses and near-geniuses. Only numbers were put on the documents which were then shown to a panel of 18 recruiting agents for science-orientated firms.

Einstein's career to the age of 26, when he'd already written his first important paper on relativity theory, interested only seven recruiters. The other 11 didn't want to interview him owing to his lack of formal education.

Faraday interested eight "experts", Sir William Henry Perkin, who invented the first coal-tar dye, six; other similarly brilliant minds fared worse still, and Norbert Weiner who defined and named cybernetics aroused no interest at all. Only one "prospect" was wanted by all 18 recruiters.

Direct Action

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

Feudal law still a threat to direct actionists

FOLLOWING the demonstration at the Greek Embassy, London, and after several remands and swapping of charges, 41 of those arrested were at Marylebone Court, on May 23, charged with taking part in a riotous assembly and forcible entry at the Embassy. The charge of forcible entry is under an Act of 1384.

The 42nd person, Terry Chandler, 27, was committed for trial on these charges and an additional one of assaulting a policeman. At previous hearings Chandler had been refused bail and was detained in prison.

On May 23 bail was permitted with extraordinary conditions; on Chandler's own recognisance of £200 and two £500 sureties. Three persons and £1,200. Still unsatisfied the magistrate insisted the sureties appear in court and be bound over for Chandler's good behaviour for the next year. This although the sureties are not accused of any offence.

For this archaic but potent weapon the lawyers have dug into the 14th-century archives, to procedure under the Justices of the Peace Act (1361). Better known in other times as the "Hostage Law", the Act went through Parliament during the Peasants' Revolt and was used in its suppression, receiving the royal signature of Edward III. Note that then Justices of the Peace were knights appointed to every shire by the king to more firmly establish his rule.

There are hundreds of such archaic laws, every one dangerous. None should be laughed at. They are retained by successive governments because they are useful to them, especially in political and social conflicts. Labour MPs, including the Left MPs, have refused to abrogate these laws made by the feudal ruling class. Some brush aside the issue saying, "We laugh at them." All Labour governments, supported by their Right and Left wings, have kept these laws in their armoury.

One should not laugh at feudal laws. They dealt, and still threaten, imprisonment and death.

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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.

PARIS: Librairie Publico, 3 rue Ternaux, Paris 11.

IS LORD ROBENS HUMAN?

THERE is dissension in pitmen's families at Easington Colliery, Durham, and there is one cause for it: His Lordship Alf Robens. He recently told housewives there, who have been campaigning for baths in their Coal Board houses for four years, that he would order them to be fitted if the union—their men—would pay up to 15s. a week rent for their rent-free houses and he added that they should start "a nagging campaign" to that effect. The wives picketed the lodge meeting recently but a miner who tried to raise the question was shouted down.

What a charming example of divide and rule! There is only one way to settle all these family disputes and that is by taking them where they belong, to the Coal Board. Pitmen and their wives have a mutual interest in living rent-free and having baths in their houses. How will the Coal Board take to a bit of nagging by the wives in their offices, and by their men at work.

Just to remind us how much the Coal Board cares about pitmen's families, it has just prosecuted two unemployed Burnhope miners for digging a drift by night in the middle of a wood last winter to get coal for their families.

Lord Robens recently addressed demonstrating Scottish miners (who transferred from closed pits to a Warwickshire pit, which is itself now closing) on the promise of "a secure and bright future":

"This is a human problem and I fully understand your problem." (*Guardian*, 27.4.67).

Coal Board spokesman, after a hundred tons of slurry fell from a tip across a path used by miners at Cortonwood Colliery, Yorkshire: "There is no danger."

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CORRECTION. The article last month by Brickie had a misprint in the last paragraph but one. This should have begun, "Another possibility that has been raised is that of official strikes against labour only . . ." Apologies to author and readers.

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.

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

MANCHESTER & DISTRICT: Contact Jim Pinkerton, 12 Alt Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

POTTERIES: Contact Bob Blakeman, 52 Weldon Ave., Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent.

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

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WORKERS' CONTROL AND SYNDICALISM

"What is proposed, of course, is far from being an instalment of Syndicalism."

—Daily Telegraph, 1.5.67.

* * *

THERE ARE SOME, not Syndicalists, who believe that radical, axe-to-the-root principles such as Workers' Control may be introduced gradually by infinitesimal stages, even, as Ernest Bevin in his clash with Morrison over London Transport, saying that union-nominated directors on boards of State industries were an advance to some sort of democratic socialism.

The present Labour Government in its National Steel Corporation scheme has thrown a sop to the false prophets. As many as three part-time directors recruited from employees may be included in each board. Note the *may*, not *shall*. The "directors" will not be elected by their fellow workers. The TUC will be invited to *suggest* names. The "directors" will not sit on the boards of their own areas. Boards will have 14 to 16 directors, only three or less will be workers and management, for the purpose of selection, will be deemed workers.

It is the lot of Syndicalism to have the appellations it has developed filched by unimaginative politicians—"Direct Action, Solidarity, Industrial Organisation, Workers' Control of Industry." These and others, developed by its founders and propagandists witness to certain principles of social struggle and reconstruction. Unfortunately those who, while sneering at Syndicalist loyalty to well-tried principles, have not hesitated to purloin its good image, have not adopted the principles and conduct which the titles imply.

Once again, "Workers' Control" is having a tempting sound to the political cuckoos—to the general confusion of the political novice. With Socialists, Communists, Trotskyites, Liberals, Welsh and Scots Nationalists and journalists it has become a sociological In-term. Let us clear away a little of the confusion.

URGENT SOCIAL NECESSITY

Syndicalists desire a society in which the means of production and distribution are held in common—social ownership—where all are socially equal, with the guiding principle: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.

This projection of a future society is not, of course, the invention of Syndicalists. It was understood in England 600 years ago, it was practised in Biblical times more than 1,300 years before that. But while it was first desired as an ethical principle, it has now become an urgent economic and social necessity. The scientific and technical development of the means of production are in conflict with the property relations of capitalist society and its State.

From this conflict follows, not only the war of the classes, but the daily struggle of groups and persons to gain a fortune or a loaf of bread. A conflict which brings, in a condition of "permanent crisis", the confrontation of nations and groups of nations, the development of weapons of total destruction at the cost of the starvation of millions and even a tortured self-struggle within the individual, who is at once urged to be a moral citizen and yet grab all he can in the name of Success.

Not only the stones, but the machines cry out for social ownership. Many who are not of us will agree with this social principle. We ask them to face the issue, not only

who owns but who shall control. At present the vastly greater part of the means of production is owned by a quite small class of persons. They, by virtue of that ownership and not because of ability, knowledge or moral character control industry. In a society based upon common ownership, as in any other society, industry, the means of production would be controlled by people, by persons. Who must control? Obviously not the capitalist class; they would no longer exist as a class. The State? That is an organisation brought into being by the very social conflict and torture we are seeking to end, an armed force to keep the slaves in subjection and to keep within certain bounds the destructive struggles of the rulers themselves.

ONLY THE PEOPLE

The new society will not be one in which some men govern other men according to the territory in which they live. It will be concerned with the administration of things. Without deep, widespread social conflict the State is unnecessary; it will be broken. Who, then is left? Only the people. An economic process requires an economic organisation. Persons who work in industry (we include not only factories, but transport, offices, schools and all the complexus needed for production) find themselves in a certain occupational relationship to one another; they are, willy-nilly, organised. Why create another, an artificial organisation to control industry?

Social revolution does not wait upon the abstract schemes of intellectuals, like Carlyle's 18th century character who walked about Paris with a complete French Revolution within his head. It develops from the primary social struggle of the oppressed. Louis XVI was beheaded and the nobility fell because starving men went in search of bread.

Men and women economically organised in their work are, in their struggle with the employing class, turning to the true industrial union through their shop stewards, shop committees and shop mass meetings. From this widespread primary organisation should come the organisation of the working class which is already passing from the ineffective, orthodox strike to the manifold strike actions of Syndicalism, leading to the stay-in strike and the general lock-out of the capitalist class.

SPGB

The organisation created by and for struggle is capable, as no other form can, of taking, holding and working the means of production. As the IWW has said, "By organising industrially, we are building the framework of the new society within the shell of the old."

The Socialist Party of Great Britain (SPGB), while standing firm for a society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means of production, yet objects to Workers' Control. For example, an article in their *Socialist Standard*, Jan. 1965, repeats an old SPGB phrase, speaking of "the fact that there won't be any workers under Socialism." Who then will produce the goods and services which all societies need? Angels, demons, apes? Or will elves come out at night and produce the goods while we sleep? Of course, in such a society there will be no working CLASS, for there won't be any classes. But there will be workers, who may even be known by their chosen craft, woodworker, metal worker, smith, teacher, clerk. Man lives by the fruit of work, his own or another's, and work is performed by workers in any society.

cont. on page 7, col. 2

MAY DAY IS MAY 1

WORKERS DEMONSTRATE IN LONDON—AND SPAIN

WITH placards proclaiming slogans such as "Trade Unions—Born to be free", "Smash the Freeze", "Gunter—Enemy of the Working Class", "Wilson, King Rat No. 1", some 200 workers demonstrated on Monday, May 1 in London. The march, from SOGAT headquarters across Blackfriars Bridge, along the Embankment, round Aldwych, down Fleet Street to Ludgate Circus and the meeting at Memorial Hall, Farringdon Road that followed, were organised by the Rank and File Printworkers May Day Committee.

Among the banners were those of workers on the Mytons and Sunleys construction sites, who have been on strike more than six months, and that of the London Shop Stewards Defence Committee.

At Memorial Hall, speakers from a number of industries—printing, engineering, building, railways—stressed that the only way the Wage Freeze could be fought was by direct action. The significance of May Day, as one of working class struggle and international solidarity, was a recurring theme. The fact that 200 workers had downed tools on that day was a significant start, from which something far bigger could be built. After the meeting, the march went back up Fleet Street and on to Television House, Kingsway, despite attempts to hinder it leaving the City boundary at Temple Bar by police.

AGAINST FRANCO

IN the evening of May 1, a joint meeting of the Syndicalist Workers' Federation and London Federation of Anarchists was held at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park. John Rety spoke for the LFA, Ken Hawkes for the SWF. Following the meeting, a march took place to the Spanish Embassy, Belgrave Square, in solidarity with Franco's political prisoners. As the march was about to form up, one going to the Greek Embassy came past the Park, so we joined that, to make a slight detour in protest against Greek Fascism, before going on to the Spanish Embassy. Among the placards were demands for the release of Stuart Christie and the five members of the FIJL still awaiting trial in Spain.

IN Fascist Spain, May Day was marked by mass demonstrations in many cities. One of the largest was at San Sebastian, where armed police clubbed peaceful demonstrators, then opened fire, killing a 19-year-old student, Miguel Salazar Querejeta. Eighty arrests were made and many people—including a number of French tourists, present as onlookers—needed hospital treatment after being beaten up by the police.

In Barcelona, there were sixty arrests and forty people badly hurt by the police; at Sabadell, where a pitched battle took place between workers and police, the wounded included a police lieutenant and five constables. In Madrid, an

American journalist, O'Brien, representing Associated Press, was badly injured by police, when reporting clashes at a workers' demonstration. Reports of other May Day meetings, by militant Spanish workers, have come from Bilbao, Mieres, Seville, Malaga and Valencia.

The Bilbao demonstration followed one on April 4, in which workers shouting "Liberty, Liberty", vainly tried to charge across the Nervión river bridges and were beaten back by police violence. This demonstration was in solidarity with 564 workers from a nearby steel mill, who have been on strike since last December. Sympathetic action, in support of the Echevarri mill strikers, has been widespread and 20,000 Bilbao workers have staged token stoppages.

BACK in Britain, the "official" May Day parades, Labour and Communist, took place as usual on the first Sunday of the month. Wilson, however, did deign to issue a statement for May 1, in which he said the Government was "justified in asking for the sacrifices involved" for workers. He followed this at Leeds, on May 6, by stressing his Government's assistance to capitalist industry.

One Labour Council, that of London's Camden Borough, again declared May Day a public holiday for its employees—but even this one-day-a-year Socialism was too much for the Tories, whose spokesman said: "This is the action of a small number of arrogant doctrinaire men and women." Another added: "They ought to put up a sign outside the public library, saying they were under orders from Moscow."

Moscow? Well, May 1 there again featured an army parade, in which the *Morning Star* (May 2) reported "there were no strikingly new weapons. Radio commentators singled out new tactical rockets and stressed the mobility and accuracy of medium-range and intercontinental missiles." But there was one surprise innovation: the three-hour demonstration included 100 horsemen in peaked caps and British hunting pink! Yoicks! Tally-ho!

Stoppage at Tyne yards

ON May 1, 13,000 shipyard workers held stop-work meetings outside the Tyne yards in support of the shipyard draughtsmen, locked out nationally because of an official strike at Swan Hunters.

Ten days before, 200 shop stewards, meeting under the aegis of the Tyne and Blyth Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, had unanimously decided on a full day's strike involving 6,000 workers. Three days later an emergency meeting of the Confederation—officials only—called off the strike, ostensibly because some stewards had no mandate from the shopfloor. If this was so, apart from stressing the necessity for democracy on the shopfloor, it shows how officials seize any pretext to interfere with rank and file decisions and militant action. As a matter of folklore, a May 1 holiday is official policy of the N.E. Federation of Trades Councils.

After the stop-work meetings, when it was abundantly clear that the vast majority of shipyard workers were intent on further support, the Confederation decided to reconsider an official stoppage—but such "drastic" action is no longer necessary as the ten-week lockout has now ended in a moderate victory for the draughtsmen.

Perhaps the scabbiest act of all was the launching of the *Amasone*, during the lockout, by Boilermakers' President, Dan McGarvey. This took place at Charlie Clore's Furness Yard on Teeside despite the fact that the only clash between police and draughtsmen throughout the lockout took place there when draughtsmen persuaded drivers not to deliver and despite a direct appeal to him by the DATA Branch at the yard. What an omen for the future: this was the first-ever launching by a union official in Britain!

DIRECT ACTION PRESS FUND—April-May, 1967

WE'RE never ashamed to admit poverty—moneywise, that is. The idea that workers should organise industrially to take, hold and run the means of wealth production is a world-beater. But to propagate it in this capitalist world cash we must have.

Stockport, Ches. B.B. 2s; Tadworth, N.W. 6s; London, W.10, M.M. 2s; London, W.10, B.M. 3s 6d; Hull, R.B. 10s; London, W.9, W.C. 1s; Windsor, W.N. 3s 6d; London, S.E.5, M.H. £1; Sales CNT "Spain Today" cards 6s; SWF London Group £7 11s 6d. Total £10 5s 6d.

HEAT IS ON IN THE GAS PLANTS

A BATTLE is on in the gas plant construction industry where, once again, a union has joined forces with the bosses in a bid to put chains round the workers' wages and conditions.

This time, the alliance is between the Constructional Engineering Union (CEU) and Woodall Duckham Co. Ltd., who at the moment are erecting costly high-pressure oil gassification plant at a number of gasworks including Romford and Greenwich.

Union officials performed like proud peacocks in telling

the lads that a new pay-and-conditions agreement with the governors had beaten the Government's norm.

Bloody marvellous. This union-boss progress has just meant:

1. An end to wage-with-bonus which at times is up to £30 a week in an industry where big money has to be earned to offset long periods of unemployment.

2. "Flexibility of craft"—and we all know what that means to the working man. It means the sack and a permanent loss of jobs.

3. Poorer conditions—for instance, no afternoon tea-breaks.

4. A bigger breed of foremen to over-supervise the men and force greater and greater output—with no increase in pay on the basic rate.

5. No more locally negotiated rates.

6. Tedious, leisure-destroying overtime as the only way in which to earn a decent living.

But last Friday, May 26, the boys on the job were fighting back against the centralisation of negotiating power which the Wilson Government is encouraging to break the power of the rank and file.

Sixty men were in dispute at Greenwich, 140 at the £6,000,000 Romford contract.

Unfortunately, the CEU National Conference a few days earlier voted narrowly to approve the Woodall agreement.

Each of the sites had been conducting isolated struggles since the agreement came into operation on May 8.

But things hotted up when the Romford crew were sacked for taking an afternoon teabreak.

They had to sack the men because they were working efficiently and satisfactorily without any foremen.

The management had withdrawn the supervision when the lads defied the final warning and still took a teabreak.

They thought the workers wouldn't be able to cope without bosses. In actual fact, the work went more smoothly and the governors were forced to resort to a lockout the following morning.

While pickets stayed on the Romford site gate to ensure the bosses didn't move in scab labour, others went to Greenwich to get support. This was given.

Each site has also decided that no one will return to work while any of them is still in dispute. It's the best defence the working class has—an injury to one is an injury to all.

'DIRECT ACTION' REPORTER

Workers' Control (cont.)

Yet in spite of oft repeating its "no workers under Socialism" nostrum, the SPGB continues in each number of its paper to display its insignia, a picture of a globe with across it the slogan, "The World for the Workers."

These Socialists give no clue as to how they think industry will be controlled under Socialism, saying only that it will be controlled by "society as a whole", and that "society would be the unit." But society is not a unit—it is made up of numberless units of many kinds and is very complex. It is not as a mountain appearing as one big solid lump, and a relationship among the units has to be developed. The SPGB speaks only of democratic control", without ever telling us what are the principles and form of democracy in their prognosis. Some explanation is needed, after all. On Day One of the Revolution men will still need to eat.

On one issue we can agree with the SPGB. The overwhelming majority of those calling themselves Socialists are fascinated by the idea of the Super State that has to millions wrongly come to mean Socialism. The same *Socialist Standard* article says, "In the classless society of the future there would be no coercive machine . . . Unfortunately many, including some who called themselves socialists, overlooked the distinction between society and the state. In Germany, for example, 'this was the period of the cult of the state.' The state was Truth, Freedom and so on . . . Kropotkin correctly labelled the views of the German Social Democrats of this period as state capitalism."

"UNITED FRONT"

But, we must ask, if no capitalism and no State, what social organisation for industry other than Workers' Control?

There can be no Workers' Control of industry short of a change in the basis of society. It cannot come about, piecemeal or otherwise, within the framework of present property relations, State and capitalist ownership. Any "united front" to further the cause of Workers' Control could only come about if it was a front of those who believed thus. One may have a united front of diverse elements on a single issue general to many, a temporary arrangement to further a single point. But it would be folly for Syndicalists to be lured into a united front on basic, fundamental principles with those who were opposed to those principles.

Any person of understanding who favoured Workers' Control would already be a Syndicalist. Politicos cannot honestly support such a cause. Imagine a united front between Socialists and Tory capitalists to spread Socialism. Some or all would have to be lying. Or an alliance between Atheists and Christians to spread the Gospel. Or a united front of vegetarians and the Butchers' Federation to spread their common aims. One is as daft as the other.

TOM BROWN

LITERATURE

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LABOUR AND RACIAL PREJUDICE

WHEN Wilson and his group of tight, politically-motivated little nits decided to increase fees for overseas students earlier this year, people were shocked, equating Labour with the view of the delegate at last year's Party Conference who brought the sole spark of light to its unrelieved pointlessness by describing the ruling white-Rhodesians as the most savage tribe in Africa. But only confusion can result from such vague internationalism and the contrasting actions, dictated by the inexorable demands of running capitalism, of the same people in office.

Such "betrayals" as the Rhodesian issue are not out of character, indeed they only appear as such to those who think one group of politicians in office are *able* to work basically differently from another group. It is not even true to say that this is a new tendency: readers may remember the kidnapping of Seretse Khama in London in 1950 by the Attlee government to placate the South African government because he married a white woman.

When Labour took office they failed to repeal the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, just as they had failed to oppose it in 1962, thus putting another nail in that hollow concept mockingly called Commonwealth. Instead they passed the largely ineffectual Race Relations Act. Let's face it prejudice is widespread in Britain and the Act has certainly not changed that, though it has affected the freedom of speech of the weirdies who actually express their racist views in public.

The government then set about creating the classical situation in which prejudice festers: large-scale—planned—unemployment. To date the Act has resulted in the fining of two workers for carrying posters stating "British Council for Peace in Vietnam", the acquittal of a lad who put virulent

leaflets through an MP's letter box, and the consignment of Colin Jordan and John Tyndail to the tender, therapeutic care of Her Majesty's Prison Service, thus making them martyrs to their supporters. Even on its own terms it is a failure as it does not cover prejudice in employment or insurance.

Then of course there is, or was, Rhodesia, where today a handful of white capitalists prepares the perpetual subjugation of the black workers under another system of Apartheid. Remember how sanctions were going to bring Smith down in three months? Remember how Wilson said He would never sit at the same table as a racist and how He flew a thousand miles to do just that? Remember how the Cabinet decided against using force against the "Kith my thKin" clique and how *in the same week* it sent a gunboat to the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean to help the colonial bosses put down a general strike there? Remember how the government decided to oppose linked sanctions by the UN against South Africa (which now has troops in Rhodesia as well as its oil), so as to safeguard the £1,000,000,000 our capitalists have stashed away there on the backs of the coloured workers. If figures baffle you, perhaps you can understand it this way: recently 15 South African building workers were gaoled for going slow in an attempt to raise their wages, which were 15s. above the legal minimum of £2. In the same week, Britain signed a treaty to protect South Africa from invasion by sea.

And what do our "till death do us part" Labour loyal Union bosses have to say about this? That Tory secret weapon in the Ministry of Labour, the Ray Gun, ex-boss of the Railway Clerks' Union, when asked about the decision not to boycott South Africa, said to the *Sunday Times*: "We weren't going to bankrupt ourselves for a lot of blacks." This is the man in charge of chairing discussions between the TUC and CBI over legislation against job discrimination! And we all heard of Jim Crow Carrion's presidential speech to the AEU about immigrants.

Unlike workers protesting about the government's two-faced policy over Vietnam, neither of these gentlemen will be prosecuted. Similarly, Suncan Glandys was protected by the police in Trafalgar Square while making a speech supporting the Smith regime, which if from you or me, would be called sedition or treason.

Postscript It would be interesting to obtain detailed statistics applying to the grand total of the ever increasing number of individuals whose parents were not born in this country, who have been accepted as apprentices by the AEU.

P.R.

French stay-in strikes

STAY-IN strikes, by French workers, have been fairly widespread since the end of last year. This action recalls that of June, 1936, when the working-class of France occupied hundreds of their workplaces—factories, shipyards, mills, even fashion boutiques in Paris.

Among the main places affected are the Dassault works (Bordeaux), the Rhodiaceta combine (Besançon, Lyons, etc.), shipyard workers at St. Nazaire.

Reporting the struggles, *L'Anarcho-Syndicaliste* (April) says: "Lyons, since the beginning of March, is the centre of bitter social struggle. On February 28, the workers of Rhodiaceta-Vaise downed tools, following the occupation of the factory by their mates at Rhodia-Besançon." . . . "Berliet works occupied by shock police on March 16-17 and workers locked out."

"Escaping the control of their trade union organisations," says *L'Anarcho-Syndicaliste*, "the workers have smashed hierarchical barriers and sacrosanct wage scales by demanding uniform increases . . . they control their struggles by permanent general assemblies at Dassault and among the fishermen of Lorient. Fighting spirit is strong: pickets and control over union officials . . . at Rhodiaceta, where rates are relatively high, working conditions are in question and the walls of the factories are whitewashed with such slogans as "No to unemployment," "Here ends freedom," "We want time to live in," "We don't want to be robots any more."

'People' hysteria exposed

A FEW MONTHS ago the *People* was leading the press hysteria against the 140 striking limb-fitters at Roehampton with such banner headlines as "The meanest men in Britain". Their work-to-rule, it was claimed, delayed the fitting of artificial limbs to more than 1,000 disabled people.

Since the £2 payrise they won by their action was frozen, the limb-fitters have resumed the work-to-rule. It is interesting to note that they have the backing of the recent Conference of the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association, a body with a membership of 23,000.