

Direct Action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—The railmen strike
Middle East--people suffer
Death of the Citizen : Old
Bailey trial for 'rioters'

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

Vol.8 No.7 (73)

July 1967

Sixpence

THE BIG STEEL

ON JULY 28 the new National Steel Corporation takes over nine-tenths of British crude steelmaking capacity. This creates a giant State firm with annual sales of £1,000 million and ranking in size with the 20 largest firms in the world.

Steel renationalisation looks like the last big State takeover of industry in Britain for some time to come. As it is, it's hardly sending workers into raptures. Their own experience over the years has come to agree with Syndicalist teaching that if State ownership affects them at all it puts another obstacle in their path to freedom from wage slavery.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE—PROFIT

Confirming that State steel's just another dose of capitalism, Lord Melchett ("mel" is an obscure word meaning "big"), Chairman of the Corporation declared: "The primary objective of the new National Steel Corporation will be to make a profit . . . and the Corporation will guard against any outside intervention confusing this objective with such other concepts as providing a public service." (*Guardian*, 4.5.67.)

Nationalisation's been the policy of most British political parties some time or other. This is only natural, as deep down every politico thinks that Government will solve any problem. Nationalisation of railways was first legalised (thought not carried out) through the efforts of Gladstone, then a Tory, in 1844. More recently, George Clown pointed

out on TV just before the 1964 General Election that the Tories have nationalised more than the Labour Party.

In keeping with good capitalist practice, the old steelowners are to be bought out with £580 million worth of guaranteed-interest Government bonds. The Corporation's Board of Directors is well paid. It is true that Milord himself cops only a modest £16,000 a year, but remember, this is still £4,000 over what Lord Robens gets for sacking the miners and burying their children alive. And also, it doesn't look like Lord M.'ll be around much anyway; he's lined up three Vice-Chairmen, each on £20,000 to £24,000.

Then there are two fulltime members on £15,000 to £19,000. One is Mr. Ron Smith. Three years ago he had to get police protection from angry members of "his" Postmen's Union because of his leadership of their strike. Now he's moved on, to "personnel and social policy" in steel. Steelworkers—you have been warned!

BOSSES BACK STATE INDUSTRY

Among part-time members of the Board is Alderman Sidney Harris, a stalwart with recent experience on the shop-floor. He gets £2,500 a year—not bad for a part-time job. Let nobody say that with Ron and Sid on the Board the Labour Party don't believe in the emancipation of the working class. They just think it's got to come gradually—two at a time!

What's admitted less by the Labour Party is that the employing class can have sound reasons for nationalising—such as those summed up by ex-Tory Minister Lord Chandos in 1962: "Nationalisation of a fairly substantial sector of industry has come to stay . . . As an industrialist I want cheap fuel and reliable supplies and I believe that with a little more working together that is what [the National Coal Board] will secure for us."

Employers support nationalisation where private ownership can't cope. With coal it was true that private ownership hampered cheap supplies by preventing cheap, efficient working of seams divided among many pits. And with steel,

cont. on page 2, col. 1

FIJL five on trial

FIVE MEMBERS of the Spanish underground Federation of Libertarian Youth (FIJL), arrested last October in Spain under suspicion of planning to kidnap a "prominent foreign person", go on trial in Madrid on July 4. According to a New York press conference, given by a FIJL representative, the person was Rear Admiral Gillette, chief of US forces in Spain, and the aim to draw attention to the plight of Spanish political prisoners. Sentences of 15 years (for three), five and three years are being demanded by the Public Prosecutor. The prisoners are LUIS EDO, ANTONIO CANETE, ALICIA MUR, JESUS RODRIGUEZ and ALFREDO HERRERA. Legal observers from France, Britain, Belgium and Italy will attend the trial.

* * *
STUART CHRISTIE is 21 on July 10. Cards to be sent to him at Carabanchel Prison, Madrid. Parcels to British Consul at Calle Fernando el Santo 16, Madrid.

MOSLEY MISSED HIS CHANCE!

AS TO Sir Oswald Mosley. "If he'd played his cards well, if he had known anything of the political game at all, he could have been the leader of the Labour Party."—Manny Shinwell, Labour MP, 1.6.67.

THE BIG STEEL (cont.)

though the British industry's pioneered new techniques including automation it's been sluggish in meeting a climbing world demand. From 1959-65 its capacity went up only 3% compared with USA (10%) and Japan (25%). Steelmaking manuals are full of new techniques that mean bigger steel-plants. One thing an industry usually gets after nationalisation is a big injection of Government money.

LEFTIES OUT OF TOUCH

But what of State ownership as a party-political issue? After all, the Tories have promised to denationalise (again) when they get back. There are two reasons usually given by the Left for nationalisation. One's to stave off unemployment. This has been going the rounds since about 1848, when the unemployed of France were bought off their revolution with State workshops, and is still popular among the modern Labour Lieutenants of capitalism. "Nationalise! Nationalise!" the Labour Left shouted just a few months back when Chrysler's took over Rootes and, it was said, threatened workers' jobs. Before that it was "Save Fairfields", "Nationalise aircraft"—and many more.

However, the unemployment gag's worn a bit thin. Any-one who still thinks State ownership's the answer can't have heard of the Beeching Axe on 150,000 railwaymen (no wonder Grunter didn't want to stay a booking clerk) or the pit closures. Just how out of touch they are was summed up in the retirement speech of Charles Pick, a militant among Durham miners during the great struggles against the coal-owners in the 1920s and later President of Durham area miners' union:

"If I had to choose between the continuing rundown of the collieries and the Labour Government, I would not hesitate to topple the Party . . . Nationalisation has not been what the old pioneers fought for. It has, in policy matters, become just a change of ownership . . . In Durham we have co-operated to the full with the NCB and differences and stoppages have been kept to a minimum. Now it seems the Government are taking the pitmen for granted. The squeaking gate, it seems, gets most oil." (15.6.67.)

NEW SHACKLES

And even if they don't "co-operate to the full", workers in State industries still find new shackles worse than the old, as for example the group of London construction workers threatened last month with prosecution if they sent a member

'The best of capitalism'

"MAY I congratulate Mr. Michael Cannock on his illuminating article on the use of profits in Russian industry in your issue of June 15.

"Those of us who believe in capitalism and have read this article will be wondering whether Great Britain is moving fast enough in this same direction. Let me quote:

"By the end of April this year, 3,600 factories had gone over to the new system with its incentive funds linked to profits and turnover."

"Here is Communism taking the best out of the capitalist system . . .

"No British Government has given much encouragement to profit-sharing schemes and now we find Russia doing in a big way capitalistically something that we could have been doing for ourselves. Surely that is the shortest possible cut to an increase in output and an end to unofficial strikes." (Letter in the *Financial Times*, 20.6.67.)

of their unofficial strike committee onto another Government site to bring the men there out with them.

The other reason the Left give for nationalisation is that it's a step to ownership of the whole economy—the worst idea of the lot. This too's a hangover from the past, when Marx wrote in the Communist Manifesto of "centralising all instruments of production in the hands of the State". Experience of Marx's Dictatorship of the Prowling Terriers in Russia, her satellites and China has made the workers of the world, particularly Hungary, think again.

PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER

State bosses are no solution to the worker's problem—a boss is a boss whether he rides round in a Rolls (Government or private), a Cadillac or a Ziz limousine. He's still the man who controls the machine to which the worker is enslaved. The worker must give up the greater part of what he produces and be kicked around from clocking-on to clocking-off for the doubtful privilege of keeping himself and his family alive amid capitalist social chaos and the threat of nuclear war.

Who are the bosses in State industry? Not the politicians. Marsh, Minister of Power, has assured Melchett, "Steel won't be run from Whitehall" because no State industry is so run. True, the Minister *may* issue directives, but he never *does*. Awkward questions in Parliament get the brush-off—"we mustn't meddle."

State ownership's just part of a bigger tendency in capitalism, East or West. Techniques get more and more complicated, forcing profit-hungry industry into bigger and bigger units. These have more and more independence from shareholders (in the West) or politicians (in the East). Political differences on nationalisation are really just arguments about the speed this process ought to happen at, and how much and in what way Government ought to push it along.

"To change the master is not to be free." While class society lasts industrial organisation and struggle is the only hope, and in that fight we have to prepare not to change the boss and get nowhere once again but to lock out all bosses for good. So that we can run the world not by their crazy system of power, profit and politics but to meet the economic, moral and artistic needs of free human beings.

MARK HENDY

THE SALE of British Rail houses which had not first been offered to sitting tenants was termed "Rachmanism of the worst kind" by Mr. Ridsdale (Tory, Harwich) in a Commons adjournment debate . . .

Mr. Morris, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Transport, said these questions were essentially matters of managerial responsibility for the Railways Board, in which the Government should not interfere. (*Daily Telegraph*, 11.2.67.)

SYNDICALISTS in the RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

by G.P. MAXIMOFF

Direct Action Pamphlet—6d.

(9d. postpaid; bulk orders 6s. a dozen)

Subscribers who are about to change their addresses are asked to notify us of the new one in advance. This way, we keep track of our subscribers and they go on getting "Direct Action" without any interruption.

SPARE OUR BLUSHES

LONDON RAILWAYMEN are struggling to protect their jobs, and as an NUR Executive member put it, the men at Stratford Terminal have been "battling for their jobs for two years".

British Rail have opened a new Terminal at Stratford with the specific aim of speeding up the movement of freight exported and imported through Harwich. The dispute arose over the question of who should be employed to do the loading and unloading. The NUR Executive ordered its members not to work the Terminal until the management agreed that only railwaymen would carry out the work. One would have thought that the choice of labour would have been automatic, and settled early in the negotiations. Obviously this was not the case, hence the dispute.

Trains have been prevented by the NUR from entering the Terminal, and pickets have persuaded most of the drivers (to their credit) not to take their vehicles in.

At a meeting at Euston attended by London NUR branch officials it was decided to endeavour to spread the strike. The railwaymen felt that this issue could not be dragged out, even if it meant an all-out collision on a national scale with

the Railways Board. Evidence was produced proving the forwarding agents were advertising for labour through the local press. This can be termed provocation in any one's language. Railwaymen all over the country continually have the spectre of the sack hanging over their heads, so one can appreciate their apprehension and disgust. British Rail appear to adopt policies which they must realise will antagonise the railwaymen.

The policy of the NUR Executive was to contain the dispute to Stratford, irrespective of the knowledge that members of the NUR from smaller freight depots in the Stratford area, affected by the centralization, appealed for an official strike.

The decision at the Euston meeting to spread the strike has received support from several London goods depots. This means the dispute is in the hands of lay officials of the NUR elected by NUR branches in the London area, in other words **CONTROL FROM THE BOTTOM**. If this position is maintained it will prevent any form of compromise being effected, unless it is the wishes of the rank and file. It is reported that the official negotiating committee was prepared to accept the Board's terms for running the Stratford Terminal, but the executive member for the Stratford area persuaded the executive to continue its official blacking of the Terminal. Obviously he knew the feelings of the members he represents and they haven't let him down.

Railwaymen can now expect abuse from all sides for "damaging the export trade" or, as the *Daily Telegraph*, the virgin of Fleet Street, put it (20.6.67) "rearguard action against the modernisation of the railways". The issue is very clear-cut. No man is going to idly stand by and watch the sack approaching, or at best transfer to some other job, when there is work available for him to do and which he is quite capable of doing. To expect any different one must be living in another world.

WHAT, AGAIN?

THE National Economic Development Office announced that the "little Neddy" for the newspaper printing and publishing industry has decided to launch a survey into the industry.

What a fair old racket this survey lark must be. Everyone wants to get in on it.

Printworkers should refuse to co-operate on the grounds that they have been done twice before, and do not wish to join in this futile and expensive game—apart from the fact that the outcome is a foregone conclusion: the workers come out second best.

WHAT A HOPE!

THE Roberts-Arundel dispute was raised at the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. Robert Wright the Confed's Manchester District Secretary asked for continued support for the seven-month dispute. He reported that the dockers in Liverpool had "tied up" more than fifty cases of machinery destined for Roberts-Arundel. He criticised the Ministry of Labour who were directly involved in the dispute for allowing imported labour without work permits to work on the shop floor. He criticised the Government for failure to support the unions in their efforts to obtain union recognition at Roberts-Arundel.

The Government is not concerned with union recognition. Only in "Opposition" does the hierarchy of the Labour Party pay lip service to trade-unionism and that is for two reasons: one, a stick to beat the Government of the day, and two, cash support to get back into office.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

Our Aims and Principles

THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION seeks to establish a free society which will render impossible the growth of a privileged class and the exploitation of man by man. The SWF therefore advocates common ownership and workers' control of the land, industry and all means of production and distribution on the basis of voluntary co-operation. In such a society, the wage system, finance and money shall be abolished and goods produced and distributed not for profit, but according to human needs.

THE STATE: The State in all its forms, embodying authority and privilege, is the enemy of the workers and cannot exist in a free, classless society. The SWF does not therefore hope to use the State to achieve a free society; it does not seek to obtain seats in the Cabinet or in Parliament. It aims at the abolition of the State. It actively opposes all war and militarism.

CLASS STRUGGLE: The interests of the working class and those of the ruling class are directly opposed. The SWF is based on the inevitable day-to-day struggle of the workers against those who own and control the means of production and distribution, and will continue that struggle until common ownership and workers' control are achieved.

DIRECT ACTION: Victory in the fight against class domination can be achieved only by the direct action and solidarity of the workers themselves. The SWF rejects all Parliamentary and similar activity as deflecting the workers from the class struggle into paths of class collaboration.

ORGANISATION: To achieve a free, classless society the workers must organise. They must replace the hundreds of craft and general trade unions by syndicalist industrial unions. As an immediate step to that end, the SWF aids the formation of workers' committees in all factories, mines, offices, shipyards, mills and other places of work and their development into syndicates, federated nationally. Such syndicates will be under direct rank-and-file control, with all delegates subject to immediate recall.

INTERNATIONALISM: The SWF, as a section of the International Working Men's Association, stands firm for international working class solidarity.

Direct Action

Published monthly by the Syndicalist Workers' Federation,
British section of the International Working Men's Association

Middle East: only the the people suffer

THE MIDDLE EAST presents a picture of all that is wrong in the world today, religious fanaticism, arrogant nationalism, poverty, disease alongside wealth and privilege.

On reading the British national press throughout the war crisis, a stranger from Mars would have thought the United Arab Republic and Israel were two opposing football teams, and that for some strange reason the majority supported Israel. The news of the Israeli advance was reported with the detail of a military handbook. The reporting was in a style worthy of the World Cup. The Egyptians (better known as Wogs in this country, and still described as such) were Goliath, slain by David.

The first casualty, as in any war, was the truth. Both sides claimed the other had opened fire first (and for good measure U Thant was allocated a portion of the blame). Obviously both had God on their side; this goes without saying.

The war was short and sharp. This is only the third round unless something is done to prevent a fourth.

The history of the Middle East reeks with power struggle and all that goes with it, deceit, political intrigue and British expediency. Promises made which were never intended to be kept, deliberate misunderstandings which were deemed expedient at the time. The more one reads of the whole sordid story the more sickened one becomes. Every historian presents the facts, but none can hide the effects on the people, the Arab peasants and the early Jewish settlers.

Over their heads the religious and nationalist fanatics were stimulating hatred, lobbying the big powers for support for either Arab or Zionist policies. At that time Britain and France had a foot in the Middle East and wanted to keep it there; trouble was the last thing they wanted. Hence the policy of attempting to appease the Arabs and at the same time establish a National Home for the Jews (or a Jewish State).

Nationalism is the most destructive of any policy, and it

will destroy both Israel and the UAR if pursued to the bitter end. Politicians the world over subscribe to it because from its emotial power they gain their strength. Who gets killed in its name is of very little consequence; it is who wins that matters to them.

Needless to say the issue is not as simple as Arabs against Jews. Outside interests are projected through both sides. Two power blocs, Russia and America, have vested interests. While Russia is concerned with arms sales and spreading the doctrine, America, while she supports Israel, has oil interests in Arab countries which she doesn't want disturbed. The Middle East is the happy hunting ground for arms salesmen from all over the world. These vultures are not interested in sides except to stimulate sales one country against another.

One can argue about the rights and wrongs of the establishment of the State of Israel from now to eternity, and only time patience and understanding will heal the festering sore of its establishment (from the Arab point of view). The only people who can do this are the Jews and Arabs working together putting aside their political theories and the rantings of their respective leaders and governments.

War is the extension of politics and as such is no solution to the problems of ordinary people. Leaders will, as they did in the Arab-Israeli conflict, stimulate patriotic feelings, but war can only be fought with the permission of the people. In this instance both Jews and Arabs are being got at with the false premise that they have to fight for their existence. It is true they will have to fight, but together, to overcome their common problems, refugees, poverty and disease. There is wealth in the Middle East concentrated in the wrong hands, used to prop up despotic Kings and Sheiks, wasted in military budgets. Instead of being used for the benefit of the people. One wonders, will we go to the brink too often? If we topple over the brink there will be no turning back.

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.

* * *

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.

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

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

YOU CAN GET D.A. AT . . .

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GLASGOW: Clyde Bookshop, 292 High St., Glasgow.

LONDON: Collets, Charing Cross Road, WC2.

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.

CONTROL OF INDUSTRY

IN THIS CENTURY it has often happened that the working people of a country have had to take over the control and direction of the economy on a national scale, in war or the aftermath of war, in disaster or social conflict. In Russia during wars, breakdown and revolution, in Spain in order to fight Fascism, in Hungary in 1956 during the overthrow of the Communist puppet government and the massive return of the Russian Red Army. In Bulgaria in 1945 when the German armies retreated, sped on their way by attacks from the guerillas and before the Russian forces arrived *en masse*, the workers and farmers of that country were left in possession of a disjointed, battered economy, and it was a common experience of our comrades there to be approached by delegations of producers who asked them, "What do we do now? How shall we organise the social order?"

"INSTINCT" AND "SPONTANEITY"

The Bulgarian people found joy in reorganising the economy and social life, until the arrival of the main columns of Russian tanks and lorries to carry off to Russia the best fruits of their labour. We can be sure that these and similar situations, even on a greater scale, will be created by capitalist oppression and war. How do people act in such circumstances? People talk glibly of "instinct" and "spontaneity". We know little of instinct except that it is primeval; it may impel us to hide in a cave when thunder and lightning rend the sky, but it won't teach us to drive a locomotive or do bookkeeping.

As to spontaneity, I am reminded of the theologians' teaching on conscience. Conscience urges us to do what we believe to be right and when we refuse this direction conscience makes us uncomfortable and we resort to tobacco, alcohol, drugs, sophistry and plain bad temper. But conscience does not tell us what is right and what is wrong. That is the work of moral instruction and example. Thus to eat pork would stir a Muslim conscience but leave a Christian untroubled.

Or consider how we act in a sudden emergency. A friend of mine was walking with his aged father past some derelict property in Newcastle when they heard a loud crack. The son pushed his father to the ground *against* the wall and fell beside him. They were hurt but lived; the stub of the wall had protected them. Awarding them damages, the judge asked, "But how did you, so quickly, think of such a good idea?" "My friend replied, "I did not think of it. I worked in the mines when a boy and I was taught this by an old pitman."

Some months ago I read of a building collapsing and killing three men in the street. Witnesses said they heard a loud noise and saw two men run away. The men were killed when the *upper* part of the wall struck them. In crisis, in social crisis, it is what we know, what we have been taught, what we have thought out that comes to our aid. Often the teaching, propaganda, even the slogans of small groups of revolutionaries faithfully plodding away at their thankless task are recalled and put to use, though some organisation must be there too.

Unfortunately, there are occasions when the idea is not there and it may seem to the oppressed that the only act possible is destruction, firing buildings and cars, even as in the Middle East, unhappy refugees destroying the stores of food meant for their relief. It has taken time, thought and teaching to pass from revolt by destruction and burning to revolt by taking, holding and collectively using the means of production and distribution.

Unfortunately, social conflict does not allow a great deal of time for argument, experiment or indecision. The idea,

the organisation, however rudimentary, must be there for the success of a social and economic takeover. It will not be "all right on the night". It never is if you don't know your lines. Nor will it do just to say, "Oh, I'll be there when the day comes." You probably won't be there and wouldn't be much use if you were. And spontaneity is not enough. We must have knowledge.

What form of organisation would help the takeover of industry by the producers? Firstly, it would need to be an organisation of producers, then those producers who worked in each factory or each service, miners to the mines, seamen to the ships, railmen to the railways. This must seem just common sense; it would be idiocy to put the seamen in the cotton mills, the miners on board ships and textile workers down the coal pits, and even worse to pick one of each kind, like liquorice allsorts. Each would want the industry to run like the one he understood. Yet schemes to run industry far more fantastic than this are devised.

Of course, it follows that it would be necessary for each economic unit to be taken over, not only by workers in that industry, but by the workers in that particular unit, factory, office, garage and so on. Each would know his job in that place of work and something of the general running and problems of the unit. What one did not know, another would, and the total of their knowledge and experience would become the collective knowledge of the group.

It is my experience of factories employing several thousands, and of other workplaces, that the sum of such knowledge and experience would be enormous, infinitely more than most realise.

PAPIER-MACHE DICTATORS

All this makes sense. No other viable method has been put forward. But it is based on Revolutionary Industrial Unionism—Syndicalism, once you mention that phrase you arouse the anger and opposition of dealers in mini-politics, papier-mache dictators, Soho back-to-the-landers, communal lettuce eaters and the aspirants after the thousands of bureaucrats' jobs the craft and general unions provide.

Yet no other form of organisation capable of providing the transition from economic despotism to a free society has ever been created, or even thought out. The nascent social organs of a new society must arise, however primitively, in the old, decadent society. They cannot be created overnight from brand new brilliant ideas. We have now in our environment the first stage, widely spread and generally accepted, of the revolutionary industrial union. Now we must carry that movement to its second and third stages. The shop steward and job committee movement is an excellent start that has proven its efficacy, but it will suffer decay if the next organic steps are not taken.

Whether or not we like it the social conflict is with us every day. Syndicalism offers not only a means of taking and holding the means of production, but its principles are daily proven as not only the best but often the only means of winning the struggle to solve our day to day problems.

But this phase of the social war becomes only part of the daily round, without ultimate meaning, unless we fight in the knowledge that it is but a step to a greater end, the solution of the social problem. Alpha has no meaning unless it is followed by Beta and Gamma—even to Omega.

TOM BROWN

HARLOW, ESSEX: July 19 Bob Barltrop speaks on "The Decline of the Socialist Ideal"; Moot House, The Stow, Harlow, 7.30. All welcome. July 22 Public Meeting Town Centre 1.30; evening Social (Harlow Anarchist Federation).

What's wrong at Reyrolles?

JUNE DIRECT ACTION reported the unanimous decision of 6,000 Reyrolles workers to press for a third week's holiday by using lightning strikes in key departments. What has happened since is very different.

On Monday of the week the new campaign was to start, 500 testers and inspectors of the 3,000 AEU and ETU men came out on *official* strike over differentials. Now an official strike on Tyneside, like everywhere else, is an event: in the past two years apart from the draughtsmen's and seamen's strikes there have been two—demarcation disputes (which union officials get the subs?) at Tyne Dock, North Shields, and Jarrow Steel Mill. How strange that this strike should be called that very week when talks have been going on nearly two years without a strike and how convenient for the management to have on its hands a dispute which could cost it just a few thousand a year compared with a total loss of 2% production and £6,000 wage packets if the holiday claim is won.

The management have been taking a hard line on the claim so that the strike has not been suspended in the usual way

Z. Henriksen

IT IS WITH great regret that I have to tell you that our comrade Zernikow Henriksen, for many years secretary of the Norwegian Syndicalist Federation, died in Oslo on May 26, 79 years old.

Henriksen was born in Mo i Rana, Northern Norway, on November 27, 1887 and joined the Ormheim branch of the NSF in November, 1921. He spent most of his working life on building and construction work, but had also worked in mining and, as a boy, at sea.

During the first years of this century he sailed on ships loaded with pitprops to the north-eastern ports of England. He told me once how on the last of these trips he became friends with an English girl and her flock of younger sisters and brothers, all suffering from "English Sickness" (rickets). His last view of England was of these children waving to him from the jetty and holding the tins of milk which he had taken from the ship's pantry.

Henriksen avoided military service by travelling often from place to place. It was common at that time for Norwegian navvies to work in Sweden and Swedish navvies in Norway, for the same good reason, a tactic which is unfortunately not as easy to apply in our own time.

On the Nazi occupation of Norway in 1940, Henriksen was instrumental in hiding the Syndicalist Federation's archives and other evidence of members' activities and he took part in the underground movement against the occupation.

At the end of the occupation the organisation's papers reappeared from the chimney of the disused building where they had been hidden and Henriksen was again in the centre of our organisational work, which he also continued after his retirement from construction.

As late as 1964, Henriksen, then 76 years old, was arrested on May Day, while distributing leaflets against militarism and criticising unsafe conditions on State workplaces.

Henriksen was, for us of the younger generation, one of the few remaining links with the earlier Labour movement in this country; his activities and his travels had made him an authority on this subject. We will long mourn the loss of this good comrade.

P.G. London, W.14

for more talks and at the time of writing half the manual workers have been laid off despite work sharing, a petition against the strike by 500 of the AEU men not on strike, picketing of the strikers' meeting and a stormy mass meeting at Hebburn Park where many spoke against the strike.

This would never have happened if the strike had been unofficial and co-ordinated with the general holiday claim to which the strikers are a party; and they too would have been better off. Their wages would have been made up by all at Reyrolles rather than subsisting on paltry union strike money.

Though the management has been weakened by the strike as production grinds to a halt, it looks as though the mass of Reyrolles workers may be too weakened financially to press their claim for the time being even if the management does cave in to the testers' strike.

Let's hope not (Reyrolles may have to pay redundancy money if people are laid off six weeks, but doubtless the officials will see that doesn't happen). In the meantime, the three weeks' demand will have to be taken up elsewhere through the Tyneside convenor's conference and let's hope the officials are kept out of it next time.

CAPITALISM GOES KINKY

YOU don't have to be a psychologist to know that if you spend all day in an enormous factory with 4,200 others, you need a break occasionally and, the way production is run today, you cannot just tell your mates: "I'm away round the block for a few minutes to get some peace and quiet." So you go to the toilet for ten minutes instead—something they've not managed to "rationalise" out of us yet.

So, when the number of supervisors at Plessey's Sunderland telephone factory was increased and on May 24 they started following women into the toilets, and even ordering people out, 3,500 walked out, joined by 700 men in sympathy.

You don't have to be a solicitor (!) to know what the law does if someone starts following you into the toilets *outside* a factory.

And bus crews on the Newcastle-Seaton Sluice run (United) (NUR!) have added an unofficial stop at Hartley public conveniences after some fool complained they drink at the official Social Club stop. A driver commented that "to keep to the timetable you rarely get half the official six minutes which hardly leaves time to visit the toilet let alone play the fruit machine or drink."

DIRECT ACTION REPORTER

LETTER

CLOSE BANKS ON SATURDAYS— OR CLOSE THEM ALTOGETHER!

Few customers realise the burning resentment felt by Britain's 200,000 bank workers at being obliged to work a 5½-day week—being excluded from the generally (post-1940) accepted Monday-Friday clerical week.

In 80% of the world (France, Sweden, Latin America, etc.) a five-day banking week has been the rule for decades! The fact that Northern Ireland now has a five-day week makes the Bank Boards' arguments—that an Act of Parliament is necessary—a mockery. Ireland has set a precedent, so follow it.

The National Board of Prices and Incomes recommendations touch lightly on the sore, not mentioning the staff shortage problem, which might be solved by a five-day week. The "higher payments" mentioned from "excessive profits" would amount to compulsory overtime and are merely a sop.

The Union (NUBE) meanwhile appear to do practically nothing at all but collect fees.

JOHN EDMUNDS

DEATH OF THE CITIZEN

FOR the fifth time since the war a Sunday paper has been killed. *Sunday Chronicle*, *Sunday Graphic*, *Sunday Dispatch*, *Empire News*—and now *Sunday Citizen*, still better known to the Labour movement under its old name of *Reynolds News*.

Reynolds was born in 1850 as a supporter of the Chartist movement, was Republican in outlook during Victoria's reign, played an active and useful part in the free speech fights in the last century, topped a million circulation before the first world war, was still second only to the *News of the World* in readership during the mid-1920's. At a time when the Rothermere newspaper empire supported Franco's revolt in Spain and offered tickets to Mosley rallies as competition prizes, *Reynolds* stood solid in support of anti-fascist struggle.

CO-OP TAKE-OVER

Even in post-war years, the circulation stood well over 700,000. The paper had been bought by Co-operative Press in 1936, moving from Tudor Street to Pioneer House, at the Kings Cross end of Grays Inn Road. It was TU throughout all departments, including editorial, and the closed shop was rigorously applied.

Fourteen of the 15 chapels in the building were affiliated to the Federated House Chapel, which ran a highly successful Welfare Fund, with good income from football and greyhound sweeps. Only chapel outside the FHC was SOGAT Machine, for political reasons of their own—but there were times when their solidarity was readily forthcoming, as three years ago, when the NUJ chapel called an official strike, in defence of a colleague dismissed without compensation after

some 30 years with the paper. The threat of a strike, backed by all chapels bar one—SLADE—was enough to win that particular struggle.

CIRCULATION FALLS

But in recent years, the circulation slid away, *Reynolds* was down near the 200,000 when the Board decided to drop the old title, move from broadsheet to tabloid and launch *Sunday Citizen* in 1961. Heavy publicity brought an early curiosity and figures went back over 600,000. But the *Citizen* looking like a poor man's *Sunday Mirror*, soon flopped between two stools. It provided neither serious Left reading, nor sensational stories. In recent years it has tail-ended the Labour Government, supporting the wage freeze and expressing only minor misgivings over such issues as the Vietnam War and spiralling prices at home. Militancy was out, the political image that of Wilson. Circulation steadily drained away (it was latterly below 200,000) and only the financial injections of the Collective Advertising scheme, by which local Co-op societies subsidised the paper, plus heavy CWS ads kept the leaking ship afloat.

A £50,000 cut in the CWS appropriation, together with the withdrawal of local society subsidies (to balance their own losses through the Selective Employment Tax) and the stony refusal of the Labour Government to give the *Citizen* a larger cut in its own advertising (milk, coal, power, railways, etc.) sounded the death knell. On June 18, the paper appeared for the last time. The only Sunday paper committed to the Labour movement is dead.

HORSE-DEALING WITH CHAPELS

Negotiations for redundancy agreements have, unhappily, exposed the Federated House Chapel for what it was. The management, through some shrewd horse-dealing, succeeded in cutting the facade of unity to shreds. Strong chapels got deals they were prepared to accept; weak chapels went to the wall. A proposal that the FHC should reform as a Defence Committee went out of the window, undiscussed, on the Saturday night when the NGA—confidently expected to stop the paper after the first edition—were bought over. The FHC met only once after the closure decision—to disband itself and split its funds among the members.

The NUJ Chapel had to fight hard in negotiation even to reach Square One: custom-of-the-trade notice, as laid down in the contracts of employment. Only the threat by the NUJ's NEC of legal action on behalf of each of the Chapel's 18 members, brought the management to heel on that one.

A small minority of employees stay on to operate Pioneer House as a general print shop doing contract work (*Coal News*, *Power News*, *Club & Institute Journal*, *Racing & Football Outlook*, etc.) Among them is general pessimism regarding the firm's future... three months, six months and a year are the generally accepted periods for survival.

The death of the *Citizen* is a defeat for printworkers generally.

REDUNDANT CITIZEN (NUJ)

* * *

PRINTWORKER—This article comes from the June issue of the *Printworker*, Journal of the Association of Rank and File Printworkers. Price 4d plus postage from 29 Love Walk, London, S.E.5. Other contents include: *Fighting Redundancy—When is a Freeze Not a Freeze—Printers March Against the Freeze—Labour Attacks Printworkers—London Book Centre Dispute*, etc.

The Irish language: a review

Irish: a Political Question—a working class view proposed by Sceim na gCeardchumann.

This pamphlet on the Irish language recently published by Sceim na gCeardchumann is the first written on the current controversy over the Irish language by any of the participants to give the social background to the present position of the Irish language and why it came to occupy this position. It makes a strong appeal to the traditional Irish language organisations to consider the language in its historical environment.

The history of the Irish language is seen as being at one with the history of the Irish people over the period of the expansion of British capitalism to become one of the foremost imperialist powers. As the independence of the people dwindled under the iron heel of the Act of Union, following the failure of '98, so the language succumbed to English.

Again, the failure and betrayal of the struggle of 1916–1921 has seen the half-hearted attempts of politicians to restore the language against the mighty currents of their social policies and finally the recent programme of Fianna Fail for economic integration with Gt. Britain has seen the emergence of a movement against the language.

The pamphlet thrashes the language enthusiasts who will propagate the restoration of the language in isolation from the social movement of the people. It quotes Connolly's view that the struggle for social emancipation and the restoration of the language are part of the one struggle against imperialism.

The pamphlet, price 6d plus 4d postage, is available from Sceim na gCeardchumann, 203 Clogher Rd, Dublin 12, Ireland.

DAVE PICKETT

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'RIOTERS' FACE OLD BAILEY TRIAL

ON June 5 the prosecution of the 42 Greek Embassy demonstrators reached a further stage when the magistrate at Marylebone Court committed 41 for trial at the Old Bailey on a charge of "riotous assembly".

They had peacefully occupied the Embassy on April 28 in solidarity with the people of Greece and drawn world attention to the widespread oppression by the military dictatorship there. Thousands are imprisoned, workers' organisations outlawed, meetings are forbidden, and press censorship has forced six newspapers to close. The woman secretary of Andreas Papandreou has been jailed for two years for "harbouring wanted communists."

Following submission by defence counsel, the magistrate agreed there was no *prima-facie* case for the second charge of "forcibly entering" the Embassy.

ANCIENT LAW RESURRECTED

Like many dug up to obtain severer sentences and restrictions on direct actionists, the statute of forcible entry is an old one, enacted in 1381 under Richard II.

Barons returning from the war in France found their lands seized by other barons and so they used private armies to regain possession. These armies, and the continual fighting, were a threat to the King, who was trying to increase his control over the country and assert his authority over the powerful lords.

The statute of forcible entry forbade anyone to take his land by force and made him use the king's courts to regain it, thereby increasing the king's power and authority.

This, then, was the law resurrected against people demonstrating against a foreign dictatorship.

THE SQUATTERS

Another example of the, again, political use of this law against peaceful direct actionists was in 1946. 400 homeless people with their furniture and belongings occupied an empty block of luxury flats in Weymouth Street, Marylebone, London, on September 8. This was one action among many when the squatters' movement swept the country after the war. The Labour Government, faced with the growing success and popularity of this movement, had to do something about it.

Aneurin Bevan, Minister of Health, ordered all local authorities to cut off gas and electricity supplies to the squatters. And the organisers of the Weymouth Street action were charged and convicted with forcible entry. They got, in effect, suspended sentences: if they took part, for example, in any further action within two years they could be recalled to court and given long jail terms. Thus the Government hoped to intimidate them and anyone else who might take any sort of leading role in future actions.

The 41 face possibly heavy penalties. Support, both financial and moral, is urgently needed. Legal aid has, so far, been denied to all but five defendants and costs will be very heavy.

Postal orders and cheques can be sent to "Save Greece Now Fund a/c", 13 Goodwin Street, London, N.4. Or by credit transfer from any bank to that account at Midland Bank Ltd., 138 Tottenham Court Rd., London, W.1.

Now is the time to show solidarity.

Greece and the Labour MP

POLITICIANS of all brands have a general tendency to admire, overtly or covertly, a dictatorship State. After all, if government be a good thing, strong government is a better. One of the few open admirers of the latest, the despised military dictatorship in Greece, is the well-known Francis Noel-Baker, Labour MP for Swindon. (Not to be confused with Philip Noel-Baker, member of the Labour Cabinet 1945-51. Francis is the successor of the business.)

Noel-Baker, when he recently returned from Greece where he is reported to have a 125-acre estate, said in a press release: "I am therefore better placed than the occasional political or journalistic visitor to assess the impact of the change of government and the reasons for it.

"I believe a large majority of Greeks are pleased by the change and will be very satisfied if the new Government can carry out the plans it has announced. It is inaccurate to call the new military leaders Fascists or to compare them with Franco or Salazar.

"On the contrary, they represent a protest against the old social and economic order as much as against Communism. They are modest, sincere men who want to clean up corruption and inefficiency and protect Greece from upheaval." (11.6.67.)

On the other hand, the conservative *Sunday Times* (11.6.67) sent writer Richard West and cartoonist Gerald Scarfe to report on the Greek military seizure of power. First the little things: if you're a chap who likes his hair long a policeman is likely to stop you, tug your locks, tell you to "get your hair cut" and take your name and address. If you're not a Greek citizen and wear a beard (this applies only to males) you may be deported, unless you happen to be Archbishop Makarios—and he can't be sure.

According to Education Minister Kalambokias students are not to be out late at night and are to be kept out of coffee bars. Like Nazi Germany and Russia, people do not like to talk politics. It seemed strange to find Greeks rigidly keeping from political discussion in coffee shops or anywhere else—"Let's talk about football."

"The attitude of the new rulers and the 15 to 20% who share their views is rather like that of the bloodthirsty and boring saloon-bar majors one so often meets in England... Such people, in England, go unrespected and unheard. In Greece they have seized power."

It seems the King, in public, is cool to the dictatorship; in private he is enthusiastic and cordial. It seems he, and they, are playing both ends, win or lose.

"The word democracy, we are told, was invented in Greece. But so was the word oligarchy."

"Only the rich and the rising colonels can mingle optimism with the memory of their past swindles."

Scarfe's pictures are up to his usual standard, true as ever, but one omission—where was Noel-Baker?

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