

Direct Action

For Workers'
Control of Industry

New Series, incorporating
WORKERS' VOICE

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MAY DAY '62

Next Sunday, May 6th will see Hyde Park filled with working class banners, many of which will have been in real May Day demonstrations on MAY 1st

Nowadays when we are enlightened and progressive we ask permission from the establishment to hold our May Day demonstrations on Sundays so that we do not embarrass the employing class.

We all make many fine and fiery speeches about working class unity, international solidarity, these words should stick in in our throats, because basically we lie in our teeth.

At the risk of being labelled old fashioned on the one hand, and too far in front on the other, should we not take the pains to remember what May Day should really mean to the working class. It is the day when workers raise their left hands, palm inwards, and thrust the first and second fingers into the face of the employing class. It is workers' independence day!

What happens in the so-called Mecca of Socialism, the Soviet Union? It is true they hold their demonstration on May Day, but it is sickening to watch instruments of death so prominently displayed on a May Day march. To perfect such weapons is not a working class achievement, but sterile thinking, proof of a policy of bankrupt ideas.

Lets get back to basics, and prepare for May Day demonstrations on May Day next year. Keep the following Sunday for a knees up or a day in the garden (perish the thought). We the workers will decide when we will hold our demonstration, not go cap in hand to the establishment.

COMMITTEE OF 100

INDUSTRIAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Public Meeting

INDUSTRIAL ACTION AND THE BOMB

Thursday, 1st May, 8.0 p.m. Anson Hall, Chichele Road, N.W.2
(nearest Tube: Willesden Green)

Speakers: Pat Arrowsmith (Merseyside CND T.U. organiser) Alan Sillitoe,
Jimmy Jewers, TGWU, Sec. Docks Committee of 100,
Karl Dunbar, A.E.U. Engineers Group, Committee of 100

Chairman: Bill Christopher, NATSOPA

WOT, NO SOVIET COMMISSARS?

Seamen Force NUS Clique to
Accept Ships' Delegates Demand!!

In the February (Vol 2. No.2) "Direct Action" an article of mine mentioned that the death of Scott (then NUS General Secretary) might leave the way open for a rank and file break through on various points. The rank and file pressure for Ships' Delegates, plus the influence of a few E.C. members who had the temerity to defend Paddy Neary's case against expulsion (thus causing Scott to 'do his nut'), led me to particularise the Ships' Delegates claim as having some slight chance of success this year.

It looks as if I was right. I've received what is alleged to be a copy of a circular from Hogarth, Acting NUS Gen. Secretary, to all District and Branch Secretaries. The copy is issued by the Espionage Division of the National Seamen's Reform Movement.

According to this circular, Hogarth admits 1. that rank and file pressure since 1960 has forced a 'new approach' to the question of Ships' Delegates by the E.C., and that the NUS should review its policy on the question. He admits 2. That he has recommended to the E.C. that a set of rules should be drawn up governing Ships' Reps. with regard to the Merchant Shipping Act. As this is Rules Revision Year, the rules if approved at the A.G.M. would be all ready for operation if the Ships' Delegates motion is carried at any A.G.M. in the future.

Hogarth (allegedly) remarked somewhat plaintively that by some mysterious means the Press had got to hear of the volte-face of himself and the other E.C. crowd re. Ships' Delegates. He adds that there seemed no point in denying the fact.

The alleged circular ends: This Circular is not intended for reading to Branch Meetings but merely to acquaint you with the position etc. Yours faithfully (not of course, fraternally.) W. Hogarth, Acting Gen. Sec.

The fact that there is a rank and file candidate for the General Secretary's post in the present election no doubt has played a part here. Never mind how or why, the thing is that it looks as if we're getting Ships' Delegates - this year. What did I tell yer? Three months back? May I mention that I gave the names of the Winners of this years Derby and the St. Leger, for all the lucky readers sending for my 5/- Win Double?

Hogarth and Co. may try, in drafting the rules governing Ships' Delegates, to hamstring rank and file militancy. Personally I doubt it, and I hope for their own sakes that they don't try it. It might lead to them working for a living.

N.B. Seamen's Voice (May Day Issue 1962) will be on sale on May 1st. Copies can be obtained for 3d apiece 5d post free, from Bill Christopher 34, Cumberland Rd., E.17.

George Foulser A.B.

IRISH NEWS Continued from back page.

him and his like, can the working class approach their problems in a way that will solve them in their own interests.

Industrial News

Peter Arden

THE RANK & FILE DECIDE

Solidarity of rank and file dockers has defeated union bureaucracy in Liverpool. It is now almost certain that 'blue Union' (NASDU) men will be recognised as bona fide union workers when they apply for a job. The 'white Union' (T & GWU) has been attempting to make Liverpool docks a closed shop, with the support of the employers, but, the discrimination in the main has been against members of the 'blue Union'. To put it bluntly, T & GWU wants to kill the 'blue Union' in Liverpool once and for all. Due to the dockers solidarity, - 'white Union' men refusing to work whilst their 'blue' colleagues were refused work the T & GWU - employer "set up" has failed.

At this stage the 'blue Union' proposal is the only sensible one, "a man should join the Union of his choice". What ever happens, unity is essential even more so at this particular time.

SHADOW OF 1926

A national dock strike has been called for May 14th in an attempt to obtain a 40 hr. week and a substantial wage increase. As was to be expected, the patriots are screaming their heads off. "Export or die", "overseas markets endangered" and all that bilge, the fact of the matter is, that most of the screamers are not working for a basic £9.7s a week. According to the Financial Times (28.4.62) average earnings for dockers last October were £15.2.5d. about £2. less than 12 months before.

Employers have offered to discuss "full back pay" which at present stands at £7.8.6d for a full unemployed week.

If press reports of Mr O'Leary's (national docks secretary T & GWU) statements are correct it would appear that his negotiating team would be prepared to accept the government sponsored 2½%, whether the rank and file will agree is another matter. As far as reduction in hours are concerned, the employers are forced to drop, at least, from 44 to 42 hrs. to keep in line with the B.T.C. award to dockers last week.

POSSIBLE 'NEW POWER' FOR P.L.A. POLICE

There is a Bill before Parliament which would give P.L.A. Police powers to deal with political and industrial demonstrations. The Bill proposes to amend the 1920 Act to give the P.L.A. power over the private life of an employee.

Martin Ennals, Secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties points out that such a Bill would set a precedent by which other private police forces, even bank security guards might ask for similar powers.

Another section of the Bill would allow port police to deal with political and industrial demonstrations and strikes.

The NCCL should be congratulated for being 'on the ball' on this issue, up to now it has been a deep dark secret.

FORDS OF LIVERPOOL

Two years ago AEU and NUMEW negotiated rates for workers in the Ford plant in Liverpool. They did a wonderful job, the rate negotiated was 1/- per hour below Dagenham. It was left to the T & GWU National Joint Negotiating Committee to improve the rate, and even then it will be three years before it is up to the Ford National Rate, which is enjoyed at Dagenham and Doncaster.

Ford workers at Dagenham asked the Dagenham Trades Council to contact Liverpool T.C. but realising that the TUC would be on their neck, Dagenham TC refused to do so. (Trades Councils are not allowed to contact each other). Walthamstow Trades Council was asked, and has been able to arrange a meeting between Ford workers and Liverpool TC to discuss pay and conditions.

The TUC is 'choked', a letter from them to the Walthamstow TC suggests that the action of the Trades Council in sponsoring this deputation shows a lack of confidence in the Trade Union District Committees.

*The S.E. Essex AEU District Committee and Liverpool District were willing to discuss, but the AEU Executive Committee cracked down on them.

Rank and file action was needed to get something done. These boys at the top really fear fermentation at work shop level.

IRISH NEWS

C.I.E. Electricians Strike Against Work Study Pat Kelly

On Tuesday 27th March, 86 Electricians, members of the Electrical Trades Union (Ireland) employed by C.I.E. at its Inchicore works struck over the dismissal of a fellow worker who refused to co-operate in a Work Study Scheme and the dismissal of a further eight men on that morning for the same reason. They were supported by the Irish Engineering Industrial and Electrical Trades Union.

Members of Unions catering for other grades at the depot were informed by their Union officials that as the strike did not involve them, they were to pass the picket. Thus was seen once again the pathetic situation, so much a sad product of today's trade Unionism of one category of workers scabbing on their fellow workers. On Monday 2nd April, Electricians employed by C.I.E. struck in depots throughout the provinces. The total number of men out on strike is 128 and the Labour Court has now been asked to intervene in the dispute. C.I.E. has threatened to bring back into use the old steam locomotives, which are used in shunting should there be a complete breakdown of the diesels due to the dispute.

Accustomed as we are to the arbitrary dictatorial attitude of inefficient bureaucrats in the semi-nationalised concerns, it is however even worse to see the weak manner in which the workers' Trade Union representatives betray one issue after another, that their representatives reflect the workers themselves is even more pathetic. It is sad indeed that workers should be duped sufficiently to allow bureaucrats to trample down their rights without taking any effective action to remove them.

This strike is another illustration of the complete degeneracy of trade union officialdom and several points arise from this dispute which stand out like a sore thumb to show this trend. On many occasions, the Government and the management have declared their intention to make C.I.E. pay its way. Having been subsidised for several years now by the Government, it is now to make a profit. This goal is to be achieved through several means; by raising fares, by taking off uneconomic rail routes, by reducing the number of bus runs and by Work Study. The aim of Work Study - to reduce labour costs leads to redundancy. Despite this fact, the Trade Unions had previously agreed to the introduction of Work Study methods without consulting the Electricians whom it involved and thus are responsible for the situation created last week.

When the workers reacted to it in an unco-operative manner, the management flung the sacred agreement in their faces. This is the dilemma of the Trade Union officials. The very same thing happened in Cork last November when members of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union struck unofficially against C.I.E. in support of a victimised fellow worker. Although it seems certain that the smaller Unions involved were prepared to make "concessions" to their members and negotiate on their behalf or perhaps even make it official - they were prevented from doing so because of an agreement with C.I.E. that in the event of unofficial strikes no negotiations would take place until the strikers returned to work. The second point is the complete lack of the fundamental principle of Trade Unionism - solidarity with workers in dispute.

If the Trade Union officials cared more for the real interests of their dues payers and worried less about the problems of the management, these kind of situations would not arise. Instead of trade union officials doing the job for which they are too well paid by their members, we have a clique of labour relation officers worrying about productivity - problems of the management. Instead of solidarity, we have the Labour Court. What more is wanted to show the utter bankruptcy of collaborationist tactics?

There is only one solution to these problems and that is by the workers standing on their own two feet rejecting high salaried officials, rejecting the dictates of the Union bosses and organising themselves by themselves and for themselves at the point of production. When workers abdicate their role to bureaucratic bosses they are lying down under a steamroller that does not care two damns what happens to them just as long as they pay up and shut up.

Some months ago John Conroy, President Irish Transport and General Workers Union, summed up the bureaucrats' conception of workers in the correspondence column of a local periodical when he spoke about "well behaved working men" and that is what he meant - the fodder. Naturally when he was challenged by a conscious worker, he did not dare explain himself. We know what he meant and only when the mass of the workers understand what he meant and take action to remove