Direct action

For workers' direct control of industry

Inside—Memphis and after
Labour's Wage Freeze
Irish 'sparks' on strike
Young Liberal Conference

MONTHLY PAPER OF THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION (IWMA)

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Against all exploitation . . .

BLACK AND WHITE—UNITE!

WE'D OVER three million unemployed in Britain in 1931, including 60·5% of workers in one industry (shipbuilding). In June 1938 there were still 1,885,000 out of work. A black face was a rare sight in those days in most places.

In 1931, only 37% of London families had a house or flat to themselves, the rest shared undivided houses. In 1936 800,000 Londoners lived two or more to a room—the official definition of overcrowding. Where were the immigrants?

Unemployment and slums are as old as city life, go back to the days when people thought the earth was tiny and flat. And so do the tricks that society's rulers use to stay on top. Then, as now, "Divide and rule" was a first principle—keep the poor fighting for scraps while the rich get on with the feast. More recently, Hitler convinced the German workers the Jews were behind their troubles. He murdered the Jews by the million—and left the German workers (those still alive) starving, homeless and in rags.

Divide and rule's not the only old trick. Another is to foster a leadership among the oppressed, to be "bought out" when the time comes. But the workers are beginning to see through the most recent example of this, as the polls show. It's not black men who freeze wages, up taxes and prices and close down factories—it's deliberate Labour policy.

This last we all know—so out comes divide and rule again. Don't fall for it. Workers and employers both come in all colours and shades, and the two classes have nothing in common. All workers have one central problem, though, exploitation under the wage system. We can only fight this together, black and white. United, we can't be beaten—as the bosses and their fascist cohorts know.

Don't fall for divide and rule—or the phoney racial "science" they use to back it up. There is no clear dividing line between races, and physical anthropologists, who study such things all their lives, have mostly given up using the term to describe human physical types. Nor is there one shred of evidence that skin colour is related to the superority of one man over another.

Many workers know racialism is false, but fall for an even more destructive creed—nationalism. Wars are so old they regard them as permanent and inevitable, and come to hate workers of other nations. But wars stem directly from class rule. A greedy and power-hungry ruling class in each land tries to extend its sway beyond the national boundaries. In a classless society based on workers' control and common ownership, and the abolition of the wage system, nationalism will evaporate.

Workers must fight together for their own goals. These can't be legislated for them, least of all by a Government that panders to racialism in its immigration policy and in reality jumps at any chance to increase State power, the power that will have to be chucked out with class rule.

The fight for class goals means defending and extending the right of all workers to seek work where they will.

Colour and country are not the only lines of division. Trade unions themselves reflect the employer-created division of labour, not the unity of class interest. The answer lies, here and the world over, in a real industrial organisation. Not the "streamlined" trade union amalgamations some employers seek, with an army of bureaucratic officials to shunt the workers around and stamp on "troublemakers" even more efficiently than at present, but a union organised and run *in* industry by the wage slaves on the shop floor. Run, that is, by men and women whose only country is their class, and to whom the only colour of importance is the single one on their union cards.

The facts of race

IN ORDER to combat Sunken Glands, Eunoch Foul, and their Mosleyite mates, decent workers need to know the facts. Here are some. Swot them up, use them at work, throw them at the saloon bar fascist, at your union branch.

Fact No. 1. There are 800,000 Commonwealth immigrants in England and Wales. They comprise 1·7% out of a population of 47,000,000. By 1981, at present rates, they will be only 3·7%, by the year 2000, just over 4% of the total population. And Powell talks of us being taken over by "blacks".

Fact No. 2. The birth rate of coloured immigrants is not nearly as high as the fascists would have you believe. The average number of pregnancies at age 45 are: English 3·5; Commonwealth immigrants 5·75; the Irish 7·75. But we

● contd page 2 column 1

Young Liberals discuss Syndicalist aims

"DIRECT ACTION", "Anarcho-Syndicalism", "Workers' Control", "Take Over the Banks", "Abolish the Monarchy". Slogans at a rally of revolutionary Socialists, Syndicalists or Anarchists? Not a bit of it. These were the most overworked phrases heard at the Young Liberals' Conference here in this staid Victorian Yorkshire spa over this Easter Weekend. Among other items on the Agenda, ranging from tyranny in South Africa to noise nuisance in suburbia, there was a resolution calling for "Workers' Control" and a return to the ideals of Anarcho-Syndicalism. This last phrase was deleted on the ground that it was a very big mouthful and would be difficult for Young Liberals to explain at shop-floor level. The more erudite University Liberal Society passed a similar resolution retaining the reference to Anarcho-Syndicalism.

Many speakers and individuals to whom I spoke agreed entirely with SWF views expressed in our pamphlets WORKERS' CONTROL and WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE UNIONS. Two speakers in particular, Tony Greaves and Dave Mumford, might have taken their words direct from Rudolf Rocker.

DISCONTENT WITH LEADERSHIP

They wanted political and industrial decentralisation. For a start, decentralise the big monolithic groups into area and commodity units. Have industrial unions as opposed to craft unions, loosely federated, the country be divided similarly, politically. They would have the banks nationalised without capital compensation, only dividend compensation for 20 years. They want a "participatory society" and they feel this to be impossible because of organisational and economic pressures. Technology must be maintained and furthered, but as a means of bettering life and not as an end in itself or for profit. We must be efficient and they believe that "Labour employing Capital" is more efficient than *vice versa*. Efficiency must not overstep those limits within which rest all those ideas and feelings, those aspirations, dreams and hope which we sum up in the term Human Dignity.

They advocated not one big revolution but hundreds of small ones. Worming into the system. There was great discontent with "leadership", and "Liberal leadership" in particular.

Of course, all this would be achieved by "democratic parliamentary and constitutional means". Ah well! They're young—isn't everyone an Anarchist when young? They'll grow out of it, said their elders. I most sincerely hope they don't. The only thing I hope they'll grow out of is parliamentarianism. I hope they grow up to see that they cannot achieve their ends within the framework of Capitalism, or by voting for it. I could write as many words again pulling their ideas to pieces. I could make constructive criticism. I did so—at the Conference, but one thing is for sure—they were an impressive—yes, and a hope-inspiring lot, these Young Liberals. Never once was the head of opportunism raised—never once did they flog the party line—the whole feeling permeating this Conference was a genuine desire to help others and bring about what they sincerely believe and hope will be a better world.

DESMOND MACDONALD

Facts of race (cont.)

don't hear Powell squawk about being overrun with Paddies, do we? Of course not, he only hates *black* people. Don't get conned.

Fact No. 3. Immigrants get more than their share of social benefits? Rubbish! In every single field of benefit, except education (and that only includes those immigrants unable to speak English) immigrants draw considerably *less* than the white population. Example, National Assistance. in 1966, immigrants *per head* drew £14 8s. The white population drew £34 11s per head. Who is bleeding who? (Source: The National Institute of Economic and Social Research, August 1967.) The same body reported that immigrant communities have a principle that the young support the old, avoiding official aid. The result, the insured immigrant workers, paying taxes, are actually putting in more than the immigrant community takes out.

Fact No. 4. In 1965, the last year for which the Registrar General has figures, over 122,000 people came to Britain from Commonwealth countries (including Australia, New Zealand and Canada). *More than* 193,000 *people left Britain in the same year to settle in the Commonwealth.* Somewhere we lost 71,000 people. Yet Powell claims the immigrants are taking away our homes. Crap. In such circumstances it is impossible to see how immigrants can be blamed for the housing shortage. The reason for that lies with the bankers, the bosses and the whole capitalist system.

Powell has, in his own words, "Put a match to the fire". Don't, brother, let the smoke get in *your* eyes.

ABERDEEN WORKER

Scanlon said it!

THE MAJOR efforts of a sizable section of the "revolutionary left" during the last two years has been channelled through the Voice Group of industrial papers, which has held conferences on workers' control and which was largely responsible for getting Hugh Scanlon elected General Secretary of the AEU to reverse the policies of the Carrion. Scanlon is widely reported as having made the most worthwhile speech of any trade unionist at the recent Conference on workers' control; and is credited with being the most significant opponent of the Wage Freeze.

Recently Scanlon was interviewed by John Torode for the *Guardian*. Asked if he would accept no incomes policy in a capitalist Society, he replied: "We would need a National Plan with real production targets, and the authority to achieve them; we would need total price control, including the power to say how the undistributed profits were to be invested." (He had earlier pointed out that whereas a wage freeze means that workers lose money permanently, a dividend freeze merely postpones payment and moreover increases the value of the shares.) "Then there is direction of labour, and when you have gone that far you have reached socialism."

Nazi Germany had a national plan, with production targets —mainly militarist—and it enforced these. It had price control and ended inflation, and on occasions it stamped on dissident capitalists. It certainly had direction of labour. But Nazi Germany was not what any internationalist means by a socialist society, and the working class would be very foolish to accept such reforms in return for a wage freeze. But it is interesting, not merely that Scanlon thinks these reforms constitute socialism, but also obviously considers all of them desirable—including the direction of labour, which is control *of* rather than *by* workers. The comrades who have worked through the Voice Group ought to take another look at their idol.

LAURENS OTTER

BEFORE MEMPHIS--AND AFTER

WANDERING in Des Moines, Iowa, one summer evening, I chanced upon a small park with a bathing pool, for "coloureds only". The attendant, an old man, and his two friends, men about 30, all coloured, spoke to me and we drifted easily into a long conversation. The young men had been in England and France while serving the US Army. Both told the same story. Before leaving America they believed that the good old USA was the free-est country, the only democracy in the world. True, the Negroes did not get a fair deal, but they were a deal better off than the people of Europe—and Britain.

Off to war, they were amazed at the social conditions in England and France, where the working people were free, friendly, cheerful and where no colour bar existed. Returning home they found the old conditions, only low-paid jobs, the unwritten law of "no coloured" or "Whites only", even in Lincoln's North, the same hostility.

En passant, a year later in New York I met a young Russian from a displaced persons' camp, who had been a lieutenant in the Red Army. I asked him why he had deserted. He replied he had been born into Bolshevism and became a YCLer; he had been taught, and having no contact with the outside world, believed, that though times were hard for most people in Russia, nevertheless, it was paradise compared with the horrifying conditions in Europe and the rest of the capitalist world. In 1939 his regiment took part in the conquest of Poland. There he was so astonished at, what was to him, the very high standard of living of the Polish workers and farmers, their food, clothes and homes, their possessions, watches, clocks, bicycles, radios, that he decided that he would desert at the first chance. Perhaps it would have been wiser for politicians, East or West, to keep their soldiers at home.

CONDITION WORSE THAN SLAVERY

By the Des Moines bathing pool I suddenly realised that one young man had become silent. As I looked to him he said, "I hate all white men, you may be a good man, I believe you are a good man, but I hate you because you are white." His statement was more chilling because he spoke without apparent anger. He turned to go, each of us in turn called Good Night to him, he turned not, nor replied. The others apologised to me and we became friends for the rest of my residence in Iowa, a friendship I still value. I felt no hurt or anger, only sadness, because I understood the depth of the history of serfdom and injustice which may erupt anywhere at any time.

After the Civil War, for a while it seemed that conditions would continually improve for the ex-slaves, who were beginning to take part in public affairs and business, but the reaction soon came, to a large extent aided by resentment against the greed and cruelty of Yankee capitalism invading the South. What had seemed a hard but promising start to better things soon passed and the South's own cruel men had full power and the Negro found himself in a condition even worse than slavery.

The years brought little advancement. The worst form of serfdom was share cropping. The owner leased his land, provided seed and fertiliser, perhaps food, and at harvest divided the profit "fifty-fifty" with the farmer, who was supposed to get his share after deduction for "drawing upon", that is food, tools, etc., on credit. But the owner did the book-keeping and education for Negroes was discouraged.

Consider the sharecropper James. After a year of hard toil and poor living the "reckoning" showed him to be in debt to the owner. The next year he was further in debt. Year after year, deeper in debt, but at one divide he took his son, who had had some education at a Baptist school. It had been a good year, but the reckoning showed the farmer had only broken even—he owed nothing and had gained nothing. But his 12-year-old son had also reckoned. "Papa", he said "What about the cotton seed?" Both men had overlooked the seed, worth $1,000.

OUTBID APARTHEID MERCHANTS

"Keep your big mouth out of this," cried the angry owner, making to kick the boy. James intervened and promised to "take care" of the boy, and left without his seed money. This encounter shaped the boy's life; soon he left home, got a job 20 miles away after walking bare-footed, studied and became a Baptist minister, married and raised a family. But the cropper's son never forgot and seems to have waged a one-man anti-segregation campaign, for the rest of his life. Undoubtedly, this influenced his son who too became a Baptist minister and is now known to the world as Martin Luther King, junior.

The War ripened Negro resistance. Coloured labour recruited in Trinidad for service in the US flatly refused all segregation in shops, saloons or any other place. Men from Dixie going North found freedom a myth there, returning soldiers were unwilling to accept the old conditions after a taste of liberty. But most were wary of politicians; the Republicans gave them a Civil War which Dixie lost and Negroes suffered most; the Democrats would not do much

● contd page 6 column 1

Anarchists in China

THE ANARCHISTS of China, with whom we were in regular contact until the Communist Party dictatorship made it advisable to cut off correspondence for security reasons, are still active. Two news items in the Bulletin of the Preparatory Commission for the International Congress of Anarchist Federations, make clear that their activity is widespread enough to worry the Mao Government. The first is a quotation from the Paris paper, *Le Figaro* (7.2.68):

> "Anarchy is gaining ground in Shanghai, the biggest city of China, according to an editorial in the local Maoist organ, *Wen Hui Pao*, which says the situation has reached serious proportions. The paper, quoted by Radio Shanghai, states that the Anarchists are in revolt against 'proletarian discipline', regarded by them as 'a shackle on their freedom'. They are mainly composed of workers, students and teachers, who openly disobey the party's orders. 'Anarchism', the paper adds 'threatens to destroy the power and authority of the Revolutionary Committee of Shanghai'."

A Chinese correspondent with the Mexican Anarchist paper, *Tierra y Libertad*, writes:

> "Violent clashes have taken place in several Chinese towns between Anarchists and Maoists. Chinese Anarchist workers, students and teachers have formed a strong libertarian organisation. The Maoists attempted its immediate destruction. There is a confused situation in the factories of Shanghai and other towns. The system of production is in chaos. Many schools are shut and street fighting is taking place almost everywhere."

Chinese comrades living outside their country have recently formed a Chinese Anarchist Federation.

Direct Action

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Labour's Wage Freeze

"IT MAY be for years, it may be for ever." So ran a once popular song. The Government's wage freeze is now certainly going on for years and it could turn into a permanent institution if a Tory government could find a use for it. One thing is sure—only the utter failure and collapse of the Labour Party's wage freeze machinery could make them give it up.

When this wage slavery law was introduced at the beginning of this Government's rule, trade unionists were kidded into believing it was a temporary measure, for once only. Only the fools who wanted to be taken for suckers could ignore the well-established principle that a man wishes you to accept something against your own interest he tells you, "It is only temporary," or "Try it once—if you don't like it you can drop it."

PRODUCTIVITY DEALS

From the start of this regime we warned the workers that State regulation of wages, once accepted, would last a long time, and even be permanent. At that time, to my workmates I used, as illustration, an old parable. The horse was once a free, proud animal, roaming where he liked and enjoying his life and liberty. How, then, did he become a slave, harnessed to a laden wagon or plough? One day a man took a harness to a wild horse saying, "Let me put this on you." The answer was a horse-laugh. "But you don't know what it's like," said the man. "Just try it on, see what you think of it, then if you don't like it, we'll take it off."

The horse thought this a fair suggestion, allowed the man to put the harness on him and ever since the horse has been pulling somebody's wagon. And the reason horses have never developed speech is, that if they did they would have to shout "Coal" as well.

Yet at the TUC when Wilson outlined his wage freeze policy in words too dull and clumsy to be cunning, the delegates jumped to their feet and cheered him. Whom Wilson would destroy he first drives mad.

Wilson is now trying a new bait for his wage worker bear-trap. At the Scottish TUC last month he stressed this point several times: "Without productivity, wage settlements this year and next would have to be held down VERY TIGHTLY indeed," is a typical sentence from this speech. This time they did not jump up to cheer themselves hoarse at the good news of more economic winters; neither did they sling him out. They just sat like good little boys and ate their porridge.

Of course, there have been a few cases of productivity deals included in wage agreements where men have been given a real rise in money wages, but in all these cases a substantial advance would have had to be given anyway—the employers just tried to get something out of it too. And the agreements were freely entered into by the unions, without State intervention or compulsion.

This is *not* the sort of deal Wilson means; he is quite clear about that. The workers must pay with their sweat for any rise (even to meet the cost of living) they may get—and still produce more than enough to leave a surplus for State and boss. That is his productivity *at its best*. More work from fewer men—some of your mates will have to go and you'll have to work harder before the Government will permit you to have a small rise. "We'll take it out of your skins."

Of course, few will get even that small rise, by and large. It's mostly man bait. In any case it is, in the vast majority of cases, impossible to devise an honest wage agreement based on increased productivity.

Those faced with no wage increase for several years, those given the ultimatum, "no blood, no sweat—no money," might take heart when they realise dividends have been rising, shares are increasing in money value and the big investors, stockbrokers and financiers are optimistic. But they are going to insist that the Government gives the wage workers the full dose of Labour's own medicine—without any sugar.

These same persons, better qualified than politicians to know the ups and downs of economics, are looking for prices in the short and long future. For example, the *Financial Times*, in one of its usually reliable forecasts (16.4.68) tells the true intention of price increases.

"The much-quoted official forecast of a 5% price increase is only meant to apply to two items—rather more than 3% from devaluation and over 1½% from the Budget. Cost inflation could well bring the total percentage to 7% or *even higher*."

"1968 is going to be a year of *exceptionally* rapid price inflation." "Barbara Castle will have to face the fact that the most important aspect of the incomes policy at the present time is the hard slogging job of saying 'No'."

That sounds like an order—in fact it is the instruction, not of the *Financial Times*, but of the persons for whom the paper exists.

THE LAST HOPE

It is useless workers expecting resistance from the trade unions. They will advise public meetings, visits to the Commons, interviews with Wilson, but they, with a few tiny exceptions, will not fight. The leaders (great and small) of trade unions are tied up firmly with the Labour Party, nationally and locally, emotionally and economically, by habit and cold self-interest.

Only rank-and-file action will be enough to bring down the greatest anti-working class, anti-trade union action of more than a century.

GEORDIE

GROUP NOTICES

ABERDEEN: Contact Russell Knight, 42 Mathews Road, Aberdeen.
BELFAST—Contact Tony Rosato, 103 Deer Park Road, Belfast 14.
BRISTOL: Contact Adam Nicholson, 10 Bellevue, Bristol 8.
CROYDON: Contact Laurens Otter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath.
GLASGOW: Contact R. Lynn, 16 Ross Street, C.1.
HULL—Contact Jim & Shelagh Young, 3 Fredericks Crescent, Hawthorn Avenue, Hessle Road, Hull, Yorks.
LONDON: Open meetings every other Wednesday at 8.30 p.m. at Lucas Arms, 245 Grays Inn Road, WC1 (5 min Kings Cross). Correspondence to 34 Cumberland Road, E.17.
Next meetings:
May 8 and 22.
MANCHESTER & DISTRICT: Contact Jim Pinkerton, 12 Alt Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.
POTTERIES: Contact Bob Blakeman, 52 Weldon Ave., Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent.

BULLETIN RECEIVED—Movement of Revolutionary Solidarity (1st May Group): International Bulletin No. 4—March 1968. Also enclosed, manifesto "For a Genuine and Practical Anarchist International".

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IRELAND: A BLOW AGAINST FASCISM

IN IRELAND, at the end of March, came the first great shock to the ruling Fianna Fail party's plans to strangle freedom of organisation and activity of the TU movement. 2,000 unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the semi-State owned Electricity Supply Board (ESB) staged an unofficial five-day strike in support of their demand for an incremental wage scale. They were called out by the unofficial ESB Generating Stations Day Workers' Committee which stretches across the demarcation lines of 22 different trade unions.

The Government invoked the Electricity Supply (Special Provisions) Act (1966), which provides for £25 fines for ESB strikers. By the fourth day of the strike, 50 men were in prison on three-month sentences for refusing to pay the fines, while many more were on a 14–day waiting period to pay or else join their imprisoned comrades, and more still had yet to have their cases heard.

On the fifth day, the first part of the strike settlement *was immediate release of the imprisoned men and the ESB to pay the fines of all convicted strikers.* Taxis were sent to Mountjoy Jail, Dublin, to take home the strikers, many of whom were asleep in their bunks. The strikers' Committee decided to celebrate the victory by holding a testimonial dinner for their imprisoned fellow strikers—31 in Dublin and 19 in Cork.

The strikers had remained adamant despite appeals by their officials to go back to work, hostility of the press and in fact all organs of labour "officialdom".

STRIKE CALL

The dispute goes back to last August, when a claim was served on the ESB for an incremental scale for semi- and unskilled workers similar to that granted to fitters in August 1966 and later granted to electricians. Since then the differential between mechanical fitters and labourers had grown from £3 12s 8d to £7 18s 5d; the wages of fitters being £21 5s 11d, those of labourers £13 7s 6d. The workers grew impatient as negotiations were dragging on without apparent progress.

The ESB Generating Stations Day Workers' Committee called out the workers from Tuesday 26 March. As D-Day drew near, employers, State and TU bureaucrats became more and more uneasy and this was reflected in the daily press. The Labour Court was called upon by the Manual Workers' Tribunal, an internal conciliation body within the ESB, and fixed Monday April 1 for hearing.

However, events had gone too far; the workers were justifiably certain that tthe ESB was merely buying time, confident the Government's repressive laws would deter any strike action. In addition they were impatient with the TU bureaucrats of Congress and the Group who piddled about with useless negotiations.

They wanted something tangible and they got it—in five days.

By Saturday March 3 the whole army of bourgeois authority was in alarm. Despite calls by both the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Congress Executive to return to work, the strikers remained determined and united.

SOLIDARITY STRUGGLE

The news, on Thursday afternoon, that 24 of their comrades had been imprisoned while the Strike Committee was considering the Congress appeal to return to work closed the matter for the strikers. The strike had now become a "de facto" political one against Fianna Fail repression. From being a protest against their employers' intransigence, and their leaders' procrastination, it became a massive solidarity struggle with their imprisoned fellow strikers.

Hence, the first part of the settlement on Saturday night was the release of those in jail and a guarantee of no further jailings. The return-to-work agreement also provided for the setting up of a public enquiry into industrial relations in the ESB.

At this stage, however, the strikers' Committee should be on their guard. The ESB and in fact Fianna Fail have lost the battle—the war continues. Fianna Fail are waging a war on several fronts to gain as much absolute authority as they dare within the context of a democracy. Brute force by the military may now be crossing the minds of many in the leadership of Fianna Fail.

This strike has demonstrated a number of points. First, solidarity of the rank and file is indispensable and virtually impregnable, excepting the use of sheer brute force by the State.

Second, the hostile attitude of both Labour Party and TU Congress Executives: statements they issued have the same theme; "Get back to work." The workers remained united against employers and State despite being stabbed in the back during this crucial struggle by so-called leaders. Some weeks ago Sean Treacy, a Labour deputy, told the Dail [Parliament] that the workers would fight Fianna Fail's plans for Fascist-style TU legislation "in the streets", as he put it. This strike was far from "in the streets", but where were Deputy Treacy and company?

Third is the myth of nationalisation, raised by many as the panacea, the first step to the socialist society, etc. Clearly it is nothing of the sort. While the electricity workers would not be better off under a private employer, it is only nonsense to suggest electricity is run in the interests of the people under nationalisation. While if the electrification of Ireland had been left to private enterprise, only a small part of the country would today be electrified. Now the primary function of the ESB has been completed it should *be administered by a council truly representative of workers and consumers. Socialisation* should be the cry of all "progressives", "radicals" and "lefts" in Ireland today.

To achieve socialisation the workers "own" organisations must mirror the ultimate ideal of full participation in the democratic process. However, that the 22 unions in the ESB find themselves at loggerheads with the "unofficial" ESB Generating Stations Day Workers' Committee suggests that the workers' "own" organisations do not do this. In this case it must be quite clear to all concerned that the ESB Workers' Committee should continue its struggle until such time as the unions do mirror their desires. While it appears that the sympathies of some officials were with the strikers, these officials were a small minority. Workers in the front line of the class struggle can ill afford to have so-called leaders stabbing them in the back while they struggle against a would-be Fascist organisation.

DAVE PICKETT

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, 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,

AFTER MEMPHIS (cont.)

for them—their party rested on the "Solid South", that is, the white supremists. The Communist Party at one time gained some support from Negroes with the "Scotsboro Boys" case and found it a money spinner with big collections. But no account of these funds was ever made public by the Communists and support fell off.

More recently, the Communists proposed that Alabama be made a 100% Negro state, the whites be shipped out and other Negroes shipped into the state. What would happen to the whites who did not want to leave and the Negroes who did not want to move to Alabama was not revealed. One thing is certain: they outbid the South African apartheid merchants. In 1939 the Communists tried to recruit Negro support by an anti-war and freedom drive, but when Russia entered the War then all Negro agitation for freedom and equality must be dropped, they said, and Negroes should concentrate on "defence of the Soviet Union."

Disillusioned with politicians, Negro people used their own organisations, mainly churches, which were becoming increasingly centres of resistance. Long before MLK (who was only 10 when the War started) many of their pastors were resistance organisers. This was one factor making the post-war movement pacifist, non-violent, direct actionist. Also, because the movement started in the South, non-violent methods of resistance, such as evasion, were better suited and understood; it is the natural weapon of the weak in defence against the strong.

AN INCIDENT IN MISSOURI

A third factor which was considered was the possibility of support from white people of good will. Here the churches were contacts unions and parties could not match. In fact, the amount of support from white people far exceeded expectations. The dignity, the courage, the rightness of the first demonstrations won many to their cause.

The "official" date of the resistance's birth is December 1, 1954, the Montgomery bus boycott; but of course it was in action long before. The first case I met was in Joplin, Missouri, late in 1947. A Negro minister, walking in Main Street one Sunday evening, looked in a shop window. A cop ordered him to keep walking; he refused and declared his citizen's rights and was arrested. From the opposite pavement two of the pastor's flock watched. Wisely, they did not intervene but hurried off to the Negro quarter and began knocking on doors; those with phones called three or four others, who also called a few more.

In 15 minutes the side street in which stood tthe police station was packed; soon the crowd, which now included many whites, overflowed and blocked Main Street, which is part of US Highway 66. There was no shouting, no violence, just thousands of people standing shoulder to shoulder, looking at the lock-up. At 2.00 a.m. the pastor was released —no charge. This incident was repeated in many places, many times.

NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

But it wasn't always so quiet; as action warmed it became grimmer. It took a lot of courage to protest and act in a pacifist manner. Martin Luther King was not a natural pacifist, quite the reverse, but he said that he turned to that point of view by studying the lives of Christ and Ghandi and applying their principles to the particular case of the American Negro. At times he went through agony of mind to make and keep the non-violent plans.

Dick Gregory, the Negro entertainer, wrote, "I was scared to death. Making speeches, giving money, even going down South for a night or two at a time, that was one thing, but getting out on those streets and marching against bullets and dogs and water hoses and electric cattle prods—." But Gregory did march—many times.

During the notorious Little Rock, Arkansas, riots when young Negroes asserted their legal right to enter college and were stopped by white rioters, a young coloured girl tried to enter and was threatened by young bullies. Shocked, the girl staggered to a bench and sat down and wept amid the shouting, angry crowd. A middle-aged white woman pushed through the crowd, sat on the bench and, putting her arm about the girl, comforted her. How many of us have such great courage?

I am not a pacifist, but I supported the non-violent direct action method in this case because it seemed the best, possibly the only, way of bringing success. There are other cases, a few, where small areas of Negro houses have been attacked by armed thugs and the householders have banded together and with guns combined in successful defence. This I applaud, but in the greater case, purely for its practicality, I supported the non-violent movement. For method it has justified itself since.

Now some are saying that the non-violent movement has been a failure for the things it has won are of insufficient value and the Negro's main problems remain unsolved. But any failure has not been due to lack of violence; it is due to too great emphasis on "legal rights". The coloured worker's main problem is economic, unemployment or low wages and poor jobs. Men are saying, "Of what use is the right to go in a snack bar if I haven't the price of a hamburger." This problem can be solved only by the combined efforts of coloured and white workers. Its solution is in the interest of both. An attempt to reach a violent solution will drive them further apart.

FAR-AWAY "RADICALS"

There are now many, Black Moslems and others, who desire complete separation from all whites, there are growing numbers who preach that only a most violent conflict will free them. Such a conflict would be disastrous, not least of all to the coloured minority.

As far away as Britain is, there are some brave "radicals" who welcome this stand. I wish they could hear some of the violent speeches against all white men—and the anti-semitism.

In many states in the Union I noticed that many shops and much property were owned by Jews and feared that this would be used as an excuse for anti-semitism. Alas, it is happening.

Louis Lomax, the Negro writer, tells of listening for the first time to one such speech in Harlem. The speaker was so violent against all white men that Lomax was astonished. But the orator was successful and switched to the Jews in particular. Lomax described the meeting in an Afro-American newspaper. (After many more such meetings he made a two-hour documentary for TV). Here is an extract from Lomax's report.

"You work for Mr. Eisenberg, while you make 44 dollars a week, he makes 44 hundred dollars."

"You buy your jewellery from Mr. Goldberg, your clothes from Mr. Gosenburg."

"You pay your rent to Mr. Fineberg. You borrow money from a finance company headed by Mr. Weinberg."

"They are all cousins, they got you working for nothing, then take back the little you make before you get home with it."

Before a man is led away by romantic notions of violence, let him look deeply into what he is supporting.

TOM BROWN

THE HOT AIR CRISIS

BRITAIN is facing a new crisis in our balance of payments. Said Harold Wilsundra, Managing Director of the Westminster Gasworks, "Britain is simply not exporting enough air". He did not say whether hot or cold, but we understand his organisation is planning to increase production of the former.

The Chancellor said we were importing more air than we exported and that the British people had simply been using too much air. Curbs were to be introduced and a tax on air would be brought in forthwith. During 1968, consumption of air would not be allowed to increase more than 3½%. This, he said, would increase the confidence of the international bankers who had been pumping air into us for years. "We are in for two years hard gasp," he said, "Cutting down on air will prevent inflation."

The police would be issued with a new type of breath-alyser and any worker seen to take a deep breath would be asked to take a test.

Mr George Woodcock told a DIRECT ACTION reporter, "We, the TUC, are not happy about this . . . mind you, how much do you think I'll get if I keep my trap shut?" He then left for an audience with the Queen, muttering "Where's me knighthood, then?" Communist Party General Secretary, Comrade John Gollan, said, "This is Tory big business ramping the workers, what we need is nationalised air. The real Left must unite to act. We might even have to go as far as lobbying our MPs. Buy the *Morning Star*." A spokesman at the Tory Central Office said, "This shows the complete failure of Labour's hot air policy . . . vote Tory for free enterprise hot air". An SNP man said in their HQ in Auchtersporran, "The Sassenachs have been stealing Scottish air again." When asked if a Scottish government would restrict air, he said, "Well now, *that's* another matter."

At Bow Street today, Fred Bloggs, bus driver (32), was charged with breaking a wondow and stealing a quantity of air, the property of the Greater London Council. He said, "The landlord had just been round with his Alsatian to collect the rent. I had no money for the air meter and my wife and kids were just lying there going blue, so I broke the window." He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

Old Age Pensioners throughout the country were reported to be dying off in droves from lack of air. A spokesman at Buckingham palace said that Mr and Mrs Windsor were breathing normally. A Palace press release stated, "We express our sympathy with the suffocating, but you don't expect us to give up our lovely air just to help that unwashed mob, do you?"

The Confederation of British Industry said, "Just what we wanted, if the workers can't waste it, we can make a packet out of it."

STOP PRESS. The Scotland Yard Special Branch are investigating a leaflet, believed to have been issued by the Syndicalist Workers Federation, which urges the workers to grab as much air as they can, despite the alliance of unions, bosses and State to stop them.

IAN S. SUTHERLAND

Letter from Japan

DEAR COMRADES,

We are grateful to you for sending us DIRECT ACTION every month.

There have been a series of anti-war struggles in Japan: against the second proposed extension of the US Military Base at Sunagawa (July, 1967), against the visit to Viet Nam of Prime Minister Sato (October 8, 1967), against the visit to the USA of Sato (November 12, 1967), and against the entrance to Sasebo of the *Enterprise* (January 15–23, 1968).

In the struggle of Haneda of October 8 of last year, Mr Yamazaki, graduate of Kyoto University, was killed by the Police. Even compared with any other struggle, the Police, who exposed themselves as anti-people, gave abnormally brutal blows to workers and students.

In front of these severe attacks of the State, the Japanese Communist Party and followers went on preserving an expectant attitude and did nothing but lawful and "orderly" demonstrations. They denounced the Direct Action of Zengakuren ("under the control of Trotskyist groups"). But the people are standing for Zengakuren. The anti-people and anti-revolution attitude of the JCP are now laughed at by true militants and their supporters. We also fought with Zengakuren.

Advance together!

Japan **Osaka Syndicalist Federation**

The Aberdeen Militant

ABERDEEN Branch of the SWF are now producing regularly a lively duplicated bulletin, *The Aberdeen Militant*, as an aid to local propaganda work. The latest issue to reach us—No. 3—includes notes on a recent strike at the American-owned CPT factory at Fraserburgh. "Workers in each place", it sums up, "should strengthen their shop-floor organisation. In Aberdeen it is common practice for the management to buy out all the shop-stewards by promoting them on election to cushy jobs, *e.g.* stores, or gaffer or even personnel manager! It MUST become a condition of election to stewardship that any worker who accepts any of these jobs is IMMEDIATELY deposed from his position; only in this can a militant stewards' committee press for the genuine interests of the workers."

The *Militant* is distributed free, but readers wanting a copy by post should send a 3d stamp to Iain MacDonald, 15 Cotton Street, Aberdeen.

HELP HIT THE TARGET!

FOUR MONTHS since the start of the year, when we asked readers to donate £200 over the 12-month period to keep going.

A third of the year gone, £67 in—not bad. Our fraternal thanks. Please keep it up.

AND if you think "Direct Action" worth supporting, why not—

A—Place an order for a regular packet every month on sale or return; postage paid at this end, one-third discount on orders of 24 copies or more.

B—Order a stock of pamphlets on sale or return.

C—Send us names and addresses of likely subscribers to "Direct Action"—we'll send them a sample copy or two.

DIRECT ACTION FIGHTING FUND—April 1968

London, W.2, R.E. 10s; T.B. £2; New York, R.C. 16s; Glasgow SE, H.McI. 2s; London N.1, M.E. 6s; London W.C.1, D.B. 1s 6d; Huddersfield, A.L. £1 3s 6d; Ferryden, D.C. £1; Liverpool 17, M.T. £1 17s; Tadworth, N.W. 4s; Woodstock, Vt., E.S. 8s; Stranraer, T.N. 10s; London, W.11, I.D. 3s 6d; Bishops Stortford, D.K. 17s 10d; High Wycombe, R.S. 2s; Lancaster, A.C. 2s; Southampton, L.S. 5s; Anon £1; Birmingham 24, R.C. 1s; London E.17, D. & B. McD. £2 16s; London, N.W.3, K.H. £2; Greenford, J.O'H. £1 13s 6d; London, W.2, A.M. 13s 6d; London S.E.5, M.H. £1 10s; SWF London Group £1 5s 3d. Total for April £21 7s 7d.

Previously acknowledged £45 13s 3d. Total for year to date £67 0s 10d.

STAY-IN STRIKES THE ANSWER

SOME months have elapsed since the AEI decision to close all their London factories and it is time for the AEI workers to take stock of their efforts to stop the closures. In protesting they have marched, held mass meetings, had one-day token stoppages, signed petitions, lobbied MPs, in short they have gone through every constitutional means available to maintain their right to earn a living. The net result of all this campaigning has been a few half-baked promises by the authorities to consider their plight and a statement by the Woolwich MP, C. Mayhew, that they must accept change.

The futility of protesting in this manner can best be seen by the march to that well-known Gas Works at Westminster and the lobbying of those not-so-well-known MPs by 8,000 AEI workers on March 12. Special trains and coaches brought the "demonstrators" from all over London, the biggest contingent coming from Woolwich. They assembled at Waterloo Station and then proceeded to march carrying banners and placards towards Vauxhall Bridge, across the bridge and down the Embankment to the lobbying hall. This route got the demonstrators the name of the "back-door lobby". The police refused to let them use the more direct route across Westminster Bridge, so keeping the publicity of the demo to a minimum.

NO REPRIEVE FROM EXECUTIONER

On reaching Vauxhall Bridge the march was halted by the police who ordered every one to place their banners and placards into a waiting van which had been arranged by the organisers of the march. They were then allowed across the bridge in groups of ten. This led to a great amount of confusion, resulting in a large number of people leaving the march at this point. The rest lined up outside the lobbying hall in an orderly queue, two deep, which stretched right back along the Embankment. A couple of hundred were allowed to go inside to lobby MPs. The thousand left outside to stew in the queue were bullied by the organisers of the march to behave themselves, not to chant slogans and to remain quiet and orderly. A few individuals who got sick of this fiasco and tried to protest about it were told by their own stewards to keep quiet, get back in the queue or go home. An hour after the march reached Westminster the police ordered the stewards to tell everyone to disperse and go home. This they promptly did and the demo that never was thus dispersed in frustration and disillusionment. The police must have given their heartiest congratulations to the organisers of the protest for doing their job for them.

It cannot be over-emphasised that if the workers at AEI wish to save their jobs they must adopt different tactics from the ones they have been using. The condemned man cannot appeal to the executioner for a reprieve. The very people AEI workers have been appealing to *are* the executioners, as can be seen from a recent GLC Planning Committee report, which states their intentions, once these factories are shut down, to keep them closed.

On the credit side, AEI stewards have set up liaison groups between the North and South London factories and action committees to co-ordinate the struggles, combining Norton Villiers and BICC workers who are also faced with closures. They have also stated their intentions of not allowing the management to dismantle machinery or remove stock.

The way to save their jobs lies in the use of these measures and a word of advice is needed. When the management start sacking men for refusing to dismantle machinery the stewards will no doubt call a strike; by all means do so, but not the walk-out strike which would give the management the opportunity to sack all the workers in one go, and then bring in scab labour to do the dismantling.

A far more effective form of action is the stay-in strike. This kind of tactic undermines the very foundations of capitalist society because it asserts the right of the worker to control the means of production. The publicity created by such action is worth a thousand lobbies and only by getting the maximum publicity will you get the maximum support from fellow workers.

WHOLE COMMUNITY MUST FIGHT

I do not suggest that it is easy to organise such action, the problems in keeping hundreds of workers in a factory for any length of time are immense. The problem of feeding them, of keeping their families, has to be solved, but it can be done by organising the help of the community around the factory.

At Woolwich, the prospect of over 6,000 workers facing the sack, with no alternative employment and more closures forecast, means that tradesmen and shopkeepers face the same bleak outlook as the workers. They rely on the workers' custom for their living: no work, no customers. The workers must enlist the support of the shopkeeper into giving them credit while their struggle lasts.

If the whole community is threatened directly or indirectly by these closures then the whole community must fight to stop them by supporting in every way they can the workers who are actively fighting the closures.

DANNY REARDON

LITERATURE

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE UNIONS? by Tom Brown	**4d**
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Add 4d in the 1s for postage—minimum 3d

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WILSON OUT!

OFFICIALS of the NE district of the TGWU went to inspect their new premises in Barrack Road, Newcastle. There, above the door, they saw a sign board, Wilson House. That same day, down came the board and another bearing the title Transport House went up.

STOP THE POLITICAL LEVY. New leaflet asks "Would You Pay a Man to Pick Your Pocket?" Calls on trade unionists to stop financing the Labour Party—the Party of the Wage Cut. Plain words, concisely argued, backed by facts.
Price 2s per hundred, £1 per thousand, from SWF.