

WORLD LABOUR NEWS

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SPAIN—JULY, 1936

The workers take control

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS have passed since the workers and peasants of Spain wrote the most glorious chapter in the history of the struggle towards a free society by their social revolutionary answer to the military-fascist revolt of Franco and his supporters.

In the mid-1930's fascism's brown plague was spreading across the map of Europe, engulfing one country after another, almost without resistance, apart from the heroic, but isolated action of the Viennese workers in 1934. And when, in mid-July of 1936, came news of insurrection by Spanish Army generals in Morocco and Spain itself, the world prepared to hear that yet another country had succumbed. But the world had forgotten the strength and revolutionary tradition of the Spanish workers, especially the million of them organised in the Syndicalist unions of the National Confederation of Labour (CNT).

It was these workers, primitive arms in hand, who gave fascism, that bastard child of the capitalist system, its only effective answer by storming the army barracks, putting the axe to the root by themselves taking over direct control of the country's economy and rebuilding society on the basis of libertarian communism.

In many places where the workers triumphed in the early battles, the problem of displacing the owners of industry did not exist. Like nomadic Arabs, they had quietly folded their tents and stolen away to fascist territory. In other cases the problem was easily solved because ownership was in the hands of foreign capital—as, for example, with the British-owned tramways of Barcelona.

But whatever the local conditions, the workers took over. Industry and transport came under the control of freely-elected committees. The big landowners saw their estates seized by the peasants who, without any State directives, formed their own collectives and a new social basis for agriculture.

Buenaventura Durruti, who was to die on the Madrid front four months later with a bullet in his back, summed up the situation as CNT workers saw it: "We know what we want; to us it means nothing that there is a Soviet Union somewhere in the world, for the sake of whose peace and tranquillity the workers of Germany and China were sacrificed to fascist barbarism by Stalin. We want the revolution here in Spain, right now, not maybe after the next European war. We are giving Hitler and Mussolini far more worry today with our revolution than the whole Red Army of Russia. We are setting an example to the German and Italian working class how to deal with fascism."

If you succeed, Durruti was told, you will find yourself sitting on a pile of ruins. His answer was simple.

"We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall. We will know how to accommodate ourselves for a time. For you must not forget that we can also build. It is we who built these palaces and cities, here in Spain and in America and everywhere. We, the workers, we can build others to take their place. And better ones. We are not in the least afraid of ruins. We are going to inherit the earth. There is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world, here in our hearts. That world is growing this minute."

That was the spirit of the Spanish Revolution, animating the life of the worker, the peasant, the militiaman, a spirit which enabled the Spanish people, confronted with the armed might of international fascism and the complicity of the so-called democratic States, to fight on for nearly three years, despite the black treachery of those who claimed to be on their side. It is a spirit which makes the SWP proud to belong to the same international federation, the IWMA, as the CNT.

The eventual defeat of the revolutionary forces in Spain and the triumph of the foul Franco dictatorship, which—propped by dollar

loans—still persists, was no responsibility of the Spanish workers. They sacrificed everything in the struggle, but the coalition against them was too strong and, to its eternal shame, the international labour movement did not lend the support which could have been decisive.

In the early days of the struggle, a delegation came to England from the Socialist trade unions of the UGT, to seek the support of British unions for a policy of "Arms for Spain." The delegation saw Ernest Bevin, then secretary of the T&GWU and a member of the TUC, to appeal for pressure on the National Government for arms to be provided for the anti-fascist forces. "No," replied Bevin, "we are not going to be blackmailed by our Spanish brothers." In France, the Popular Front Government of Leon Blum signed the infamous Non-Intervention Pact. And the Soviet Union did likewise. Later Stalin was to switch his policy and send arms, for down payment in gold, which were used by the Communist Party of Spain to split the anti-fascist front and attack the workers' collectives. Those arms never reached the revolutionary workers at the fronts, but were used by the CP to establish a stranglehold on a State apparatus which, in the early months of the struggle, had existed only in name.

The Spanish Revolution, both in its positive and negative aspects, vindicated the anti-State principles of libertarian Syndicalism. Its strength was that of a people in arms, tenaciously defending its conquests, with workers' control operating industry, education freed from State and clerical chains and, despite a bitter civil war, greater liberty than Spain had ever known. Speaking of his experiences in Spain, British Labour MP Fenner Brockway recalled: "I had the good fortune to visit some of these CNT fishing towns, where the whole population lived in equality and where the catch was divided

REVOLUTION IN SPAIN

1936-1961

Public meeting

to commemorate the Spanish workers' social revolutionary struggle against fascism and to express solidarity with the Spanish people.

SUNDAY, July 16

6.30 p.m.

DENISON HOUSE, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1
(3 minutes from Victoria Station)

Film: "FURY OVER SPAIN"

SPEAKERS:

FRANCISCO CRESPO (CNT)
L. BAILEY (FAS)
SALVADOR GURUCHARRI (FIJL)
PHILIP SANSOM (LAG)
KEN HAWKES (SWF)

CHAIRMAN: TOM BROWN

Sponsors: Spanish National Confederation of Labour (CNT), Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth (FIJL), Jewish "Free Voice of Labour" Group (FAS), London Anarchist Group (LAG), Syndicalist Workers' Federation (SWF).

equally among them. Except in Israel, I doubt very much whether there are any communities in the world which express the spirit of co-operation and of equality in the same manner as did these villages I saw in Spain." (Hansard, 6.3.58.)

Not only the fishing industry, but rail and road transport, textiles, engineering, telecommunications, bakeries, printing and mining, among many other useful jobs, were collectivised by the workers, throughout loyalist territory. The tempo of socialisation was higher in Catalonia and Aragon than in Castille, but everywhere the tendency was towards a new form of society. The direct action of the workers, inspired by the Anarcho-syndicalist teachings of the CNT, proved the utter bankruptcy of social-democracy and of bolshevism.

It is easy to criticise the CNT for some of its tactics during the Revolution, but before doing so we must acknowledge our responsibility, as part of the international working-class movement, for a situation in which Spanish Syndicalism was forced towards a policy of compromise with those who feared its libertarian aims almost as much as they feared fascism. We know that participation by the CNT in the Popular Front Government was a tragic mistake, but the issue did not look nearly so clear-cut in the heat of battle in 1936, when the pressure for anti-fascist unity seemed almost irresistible. Subsequent events, culminating in the May week of 1937, when Stalinism came into the open as a counter-revolutionary force, proved that deviation from the clearly-defined principles of the IWMA had been costly.

But to err is human, and it is through the empirical method of learning from mistakes that we can find the way forward. Persistence in error is something else. The CNT of Spain now freely acknowledges that the political collaboration of the Civil War period was an error—and one that will not be repeated.

That is not to say that the CNT has adopted a policy of lofty isolation. Its recently-agreed pact with the UGT and Basque trade unions and its constantly-reiterated call for a workers' front—excluding the Communists—against Franco are proof to the contrary. But participation in Government is over for good.

The policy of the CNT is that of direct action, as has repeatedly been shown by the countless militants executed by Franco firing squads or garrotted for their continued anti-fascist struggle. Despite the military defeat of March, 1939, the activity of the CNT and the Libertarian Movement has never flagged.

British Prime Minister Macmillan can attempt to justify the overtures of alliance made to Franco by R. A. Butler and Lord Home with the cynical comment that the events of the Spanish Civil War were "a very long time ago." Macmillan may have a convenient memory. We have not. For the SWF, for the IWMA, those July days of 1936 are a living example, an inspiration, the justification of our principles, aims and tactics. Twenty-five years of war, reaction and counter-revolution have only strengthened our own memory of those days of hope.

In 1936, the workers of Spain showed a bitter and disillusioned international labour movement that Social Revolution was not a nostalgic hangover from the days of the 19th Century barricades, but the only way to create a new and free society. That revolution was temporarily defeated. Next time—and it may not be so far distant—we must ensure that our Spanish brothers are not left to struggle alone. Our actions can help create the conditions for a new 19th of July. In that rests our hope for the future of humanity.

KEN HAWKES

MINERS' DIRECT ACTION

BOLIVIA—On June 1, 3,800 workers at the Quechisla and other smaller nationalized tin mines went back to work after a two-week strike. They won their demands, the principal of which was for two weeks' pay for two weeks' work!

Background to the dispute is the crisis in the mining industry, lynch-pin of Bolivia's economy. Tin alone provides some 75 per cent of the country's exports. The imprisonment of union leaders at the beginning of June was answered by a mass strike of miners and other workers. By June 12, 12,000 workers were out in La Paz, the capital, supported by miners in many other parts of the country, and it was reported that they had taken over the mining town of Potosi, 350 miles south-east of La Paz.

CHILE—When all the workmen at El Teniente copper plant walked out on May 23 in solidarity with the foundry workers, who had struck a few days earlier, they were replaced by scab labour. At Chuquicamata copper plant 36 workers struck on May 31 in protest at the sacking of their union president, but other sections of the plant continued working normally.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA—Conciliation was refused by the

Department of Labour to 985 African employees of the Rhodesian and General Asbestos Corporation who struck on June 5 at Gaths Mine, Mashaba, and after 136 of them had been paid off, the rest returned to work. Africans at the Corporation's King Section Mine, Mashaba, came out on strike on June 6.

JAPAN—A strike of 150,000 coalminers began on April 20 in support of a demand for an extra 3,000 yen to bring their basic wage up to 23,000 yen (about £23) a month.

ANGOLA—THE ACHILLES HEEL OF SALAZAR

IN "Freedom" (13.5.61) in my African Commentary concerning the Angolan revolution, I quoted from the "New Statesman" thus: "Angola is likely to become Salazar's Achilles heel. Unless the conflict is quickly suppressed a chain reaction may well extend to Mozambique on the East Coast of Africa and back to Portugal itself." To this is added "from there the whole Iberian peninsula might rise at last, and the Africans of South Africa be inspired to attempt a revolutionary general strike."

The Movement for Colonial Freedom has received a cable from agitators in Mozambique informing the world of arrests and massacres in their country by the Portuguese authorities; this certainly shows the revolt is spreading. In Spain the Madrid paper "A.B.C." reports that "Spain is living Portugal's present difficulties as if they were her own, because Portugal is a sister nation with which we have military and political ties and because any weakening of Portugal at home or abroad could have dangerous effects here." This shows the jitters of the Spanish fascists are growing into a fear akin to panic.

It is regrettable that the proposed general strike in South Africa was such a failure, but arrests of thousands of Africans before the strike and the show of Teutonic force showed the world once again the thorough ugliness of apartheid. However, as the "New Statesman" Commonwealth Correspondent reported (9.6.61): "The South Africans are now sending air, army and naval forces to Walvis Bay and other parts of this mandated territory (South-West Africa). The South Africans are becoming desperately worried over the southward advance of African revolt into Angola."

Lord Home, the British foreign minister, on a visit to Portugal is reported to have said that the theories of Portuguese colonial rule were "based on a respect for human personality." Yet in the "Daily Mirror," a report of an interview with a Portuguese army officer in Angola gives a different impression. "I estimate," states the officer, "that we've killed 30,000 of these 'animals'. There are probably another 100,000 working with the terrorists. We intend killing them when the dry season starts in six weeks time." The idea is to use napalm fire bombs to start vast fires in the dry African bush, thus trapping the African revolutionaries and burning them alive. This is a time when Lord Home pats dictator Salazar on the back for his "respect for human personality."

The editorial in the last issue of "World Labour News" reminded us of the Syndicalist General Confederation of Labour "which was that country's (Portugal's) strongest working-class organisation." And we need no reminder of the seeds of insurrection in Spain. If the revolt in Angola is not suppressed and spreads to Mozambique and to the South of Africa, we may be sure of enormous repercussions in Portugal and Spain. If we remember the Belgian General Strike, after the economic consequences of the loss of the Congo were felt, we can look to Portugal, already seething with revolt, and expect a similar reaction to the effect the loss of Angola would have on the Portuguese economy. And if the Portuguese people rise, so will their Spanish neighbours!

A pamphlet published by the Union of Democratic Control, price 6d., entitled "The Facts About Portugal's African Colonies," by Abel Dias, an executive member of the Revolutionary Front for the Independence of Portugal's African Colonies, is well worth reading. As Basil Davidson writes in the introduction: "Here, at last, in this remarkable pamphlet, is an authentic voice of the peoples of 'Portuguese Africa'."

Another excellent publication that concerns Portuguese colonies is "Portugal's African 'Wards'," by Marvin Harris (published by the American Committee on Africa). The author spent from June, 1955 to May, 1957 in Mozambique, carrying out anthropological research and received much of his information from Africans who risked their lives to tell the story of the Africans in Mozambique. He transmits a picture of suppression and exploitation and of the resistance to it that is steadily growing among the Africans.

He writes in his conclusion: "The Negro is regarded as an eternal child, amusing in his backwardness, sometimes loyal and hard-

working, but never a complete equal of the white, never desirable as a wife, though acceptable as an illicit lover; in short a good servant when well-disciplined, who is likeable as long as he doesn't try to take your hand when you offer a foot. These attitudes coupled with arbitrary beatings, the discriminatory wages, the forced labour, the curfews, the denial of freedom of movement, the unilateral contracts, the compulsory crop system, the separate and unequal educational system, and the subjection to arbitrary, personal justice on every hand, leave little room for the Portuguese or their well-wishers to manoeuvre."

It might seem a matter of controversy to suggest that the United Nations or an Afro-Asian force should intervene in Angola, as they did in the Congo, in order to save lives. At best this would be a first-aid operation, but with no voluntary force of internationalists ready to enter the struggle, it seems to me to be correct for an Anarcho-syndicalist to support such a move. Are we to stand aside with the prospect of thousands of Africans being burnt alive in Angola and still natter away about our respect for human life?

In a recent talk here at Hull University by E. P. Thompson of the "New Left Review," the speaker mentioned the lack of international solidarity that had driven Castro into the hands of the Communists. I asked Thompson whether, instead of crying over past faults, it might not be a bad idea to show some solidarity over Angola; he agreed and we were at one over the pathetic squeal from the Labour Party over the Angolan issue. He suggested that organisations of international socialism were needed, but seemed unaware of the International Workingmen's Association. It seems the IWMA might well form a force of volunteers to enter into such crisis areas as Cuba, the Congo or Angola (and, in the future, South Africa) to help the revolutionary forces.

Whatever one's views on these two suggestions, of United Nations intervention and an international force, one might at least expect libertarians to discuss such vital questions. It is thus with some concern that I hear from the editors of "Freedom" that they "Regret being unable" to enter into the controversy.

For myself I can only express the views of one P. H., who wrote in "Freedom" (22.10.60) that "Anarchists must find ways of expressing themselves which do not consist of crying in the wilderness, or playing ring-a-ring o' roses with all the other minority sects."

JERRY WESTALL

The editors of "World Labour News" are not in complete agreement with the writer, particularly regarding the value of U.N. intervention in Angola, but believe it is a point of view which needs discussion.

CANADA

MARATHON RAIL DISPUTE

EDMONTON, ALBERTA. The marathon wage dispute between the non-operating railway unions and the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific Railways, which started way back in September, 1959, has finally been settled. After over a year of fruitless negotiations, in which the railways maintained that they could not afford wage increases unless they received a government subsidy (they refused point blank to accept the compromise recommendation of a government conciliation board which recommended a 14c. an hour increase as against the 25c. an hour asked by the union) the non-ops fixed a strike date for November 15, 1960.

The Tory government then rushed through a law forbidding the railway workers to strike for a period of six months and the unions bowed to the will of the politicians and postponed the strike date to May 15. Meanwhile, on April 10, the government received (very conveniently) the report of the "Royal Commission on Transportation," which had been studying the failings of the Canadian railway system for nearly two years.

The government because it has saved "face" by not allowing itself to be bullied into paying the railways a subsidy to meet union wage demands (the \$97 million was for other reasons, was it not?). The railways are happy because they have a government subsidy and so can meet the union demands for higher wages, without having to cut profits. The unions are happy because they have got their demands without having to call their members out on strike and the railway workers are happy because the wage increase is retro-active to January 1, 1960 and they will all be getting a very welcome cheque for back pay.

The pertinent part of the report was a recommendation that the government should give the railways a subsidy of \$97 million per year to cover "losses on passenger services, unprofitable branch lines and for hauling western grain at prices established in 1896". No mention of meeting union wage demands and yet it only took the unions and railways a couple of weeks to sign an agreement on the

terms recommended by the conciliation board nearly a year ago. So now everyone is happy.

The contract expires on January 1, 1962, so in a few months the whole process will start all over again, as the railways and unions start negotiating a new contract. Meanwhile the operating trades unions are after their share of the subsidy, and so far the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen has asked for an 18 per cent wage increase and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has asked for 15 per cent.

Trades unions in Canada are so hemmed in by restrictive and repressive laws that they have become little more than agencies for the suppression of militant rank and file action. This is due to the unholy trinity of government, employers and trade union bosses, who do a little shadow boxing every now and then, in order to hoodwink the workers and end up by giving them a few cents rise. Just enough to deter them from taking any direct action to improve their conditions of employment, but not enough for any worthwhile improvement in their standard of living. Strikes have largely ceased to be part of the struggle for better working conditions and have become, instead, tactical manoeuvres by the trade union bosses to increase their share of power within the "trinity", or to resist attempts by the other two groups to gain more power.

The interests of the rank and file workers have been largely forgotten in this three-way power struggle, and often groups of workers are manoeuvred into strikes they have little or no chance of winning, only to be abandoned weeks or months later by the trade union bosses when they have served their purpose in the struggle for power.

Union bosses like the cneck-off

The latest power struggle within the "trinity" is in British Columbia, where the Social Credit Government recently passed a law prohibiting use of union dues for political purposes and requiring unions to file a statutory declaration that they will obey this law in order to obtain dues check-off rights. Check-off rights are very important to the trade union hierarchy, as by law the union that receives the majority vote in a government-supervised election at any factory, mine or other such bargaining unit becomes the sole representative of all employees in that unit. The "official union" then negotiates a contract with the employer for a stated term (usually one, two or three years) which, when signed, becomes legally binding on both the employer and all the employees and no strikes are permitted for the duration of the contract.

The first item in the contract—and the one always insisted on by the union—is dues check-off rights. This means that the employer deducts union dues from the employees' pay cheque and pays them directly to the union. It is easy to see that with such a system, employers and union bosses have the worker just where they want him, unable to strike or quit "his" union.

Back, then, to B.C., where unions can now only obtain check-off rights from the employers if they do not use union dues for political purposes—these being financial support for the New Party to be launched this fall by the trade union bosses and the C.C.F. politicians, which will rely largely on trade union funds to fill its treasury.

The Social Credit Party, itself financially supported by big business, has effectively stymied the trade union bosses, who will eventually no doubt file the statutory declarations rather than lose their cherished check-off rights. They are, of course, hopping mad and are crying that the law is unconstitutional, and are threatening to test its validity in the courts, right up to the Supreme Court of Canada if necessary.

Syndicalists are, of course, opposed to both dues check-off agreements and giving union funds to political parties. This does not deter us from voicing our protests at this increasing of government control over the working class. The phrase "political purposes" is ominously vague, and this law can be used in the future against militant workers' organisations which pursue such political purposes as striking against armament manufacturers and war, or for workers' control of industry.

Those Canadians who have been worrying how they would manage in the event of a nuclear war destroying the government, as well as a few million ordinary citizens, can put their minds at rest. An underground "concrete city" is being built twenty miles from Ottawa, the capital, with a concrete roof twenty feet thick, accommodation for 400 persons, and with emergency food, water and supplies for six weeks. It will serve as an emergency headquarters for defence and communications and an alternative meeting place for Parliament in a National Emergency. Even after a nuclear war the government will still be there to look after our interests!

BILL GREENWOOD

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Left turn, right turn

FOUR NEWS ITEMS appeared in early May that separately might not have meant anything. It was announced that Nehru, Nasser and Tito were sending out invitations to a Neutralist summit in September. Russian papers suddenly started to denounce Nasser as tyrant since he has Communists in prison (if they had not known his before; and if they do not also know that large numbers of Jews lie there too, and that in Cairo there is a band of ex-Nazis to whom Eichmann was a mere office-boy, with an "information" agency governmentally financed, then one must assume that C.I.A. and M.I.5 have a competitor in the inefficiency stakes). The same papers once again started to attack Tito and Titoism. Suslov was sent to India to prevail on the right wing of the Communist Party of India not to force through a motion at the Party Conference condemning China over the border dispute and to accept the election of a National Council on which, though a majority, they are very much under-represented.

It has been assumed that the C.P.I. conference was a moderate victory for the Right (Krushchevite) faction (c.f. Sharokh Sabavala writing in the "New Leader" and "Socialist Leader"), but its proposal, which had many adherents, even in the central faction, that the Party re-enter Congress was not seriously pressed, being dropped in favour of vague phrases about a popular front.

It is not hard to connect these events with the recent re-introduction of the death penalty in Russia for a variety of crimes, a happening that caused "Tribune" rightly to comment on "the return to Barbarism", but not, curiously, to ponder why this return and what exactly is the Barbarism. Hard, too, not to think of Severin and Casanova's suspension from the French C.P., and their later open support of de Gaulle at the time of the attempted *coup d'état* in Algeria.

It would seem the assumption by most Western commentators, including the present writer, that the recent Manifesto of 81 Communist Parties marked (with some small concessions) a victory for Russia in the Sino-Soviet rivalry may have been premature. Let us re-examine that rivalry.

When in Russia forty years ago the factory managers, ministerial civil servants, Party and trade union bureaucrats first emerged as a new ruling class, they had two great reasons for wishing to continue Russia's isolation from the West. Their economic *raison d'être* being, for Marxists, Russia's industrial backwardness, they would, they felt, have been swept aside had Western Europe gone Socialist. While, in order to maintain their position on the backs of a young revolution, they needed the fear of restoration, imposed by Western capitalism, as a bogey. Consequently this Salariat, after gaining from Trotsky the N.E.P. and the *enrichissez-vous* policy, thrust Stalin into power, not merely so that he would make Stakhanovism the rule, but because his policy of aiding world Communism just enough to annoy the Western capitalists, but not enough to foster World Revolution, was ideally suited to maintaining Russian isolation.

Stalin tried to carry on these policies at the end of the war: thus Togliatti's flight to Italy in order to prevent a Republic and to betray the revolution that had already begun; thus the 1946 betrayal in France; thus the deliberate support given by Stalin to Chiang Kai Shek against Mao-Tse Tung; thus, too, the creation of the new bogeyman out of Tito. However, by the time of his death, the Salariat, which was to a large extent by then second generation (men who had reached the top not through their revolutionary past, but by going to management and supervisory schools) had different needs.

Stalin, like Hitler in Germany, having been pushed to power in order to serve the interests of one class, had had no scruples in rendering the members of that class as much as others. So the Salariat wanted a slackening of the Terror. Exit Beria. The factory managers

were now certain that they were capable of trading with the West and had come to resent centralist interference. Also the revolution was sufficiently long ago for them to favour the carrot, rather than the stick, as a means to maintain power. Mikoyan, the epitome of the N.E.P., thus put forward, against the opposition of Kaganovitch, the State Executive *par excellence* (equivalent of Roosevelt's trouble-shooters), the policy of decentralisation and trade with the West, either directly or through neutral powers. Hence the fall of the anti-Party group.

But the age-old question of free trade or protection was not dead. China, being in the position that Russia had gone through in the last years of Lenin, was then in process of producing a new ruling class and the interests of this class are now basically those of Russia in the late twenties. The position is altered, obviously, by the fact that Russia is there, but precisely because of this China wants a near-monopoly of Russian trade, at less than World prices, to attain which she must maintain Russia's isolation, as well as her own. For this China needs the maintenance of the Cold War and wants pin-pricks in the West with no serious advance of Communism.

Whereas, in terms of the more obvious differences between China now and Russia in the early Stalin period, China is better off, but nevertheless weaker and dependent on her more powerful ally. In terms of the necessity for isolation of the ruling class, in order to grow more powerful (which rather than popular interest is the decisive factor in politics), China is now worse off. So, despite Russia's greater wealth, in some senses China is less dependent on Russia than vice-versa, for if the Chinese-oriented bureaucracies of the Western Communists start to wave the Red Flag (as would happen if China grows more adamant and isolationist), the result could well be felt across the Iron Curtain.

However, this might not be the only reason why Russia is swinging back to Barbarism. Last year marked a series of gains for bourgeois liberalism over bourgeois tyranny: South Korea, Turkey, the Southern U.S.A., much of Africa and Japan—all showed the winds of change making significant, though by no means revolutionary gains. This year again in Korea, in Turkey and in the Southern States, in Cuba and elsewhere one sees authoritarianism reasserting itself (though in doing so it may well be sowing the seeds of a future revolutionary situation).

Just as the Winds of Change were born in Poland and Hungary, so it may be that the cradle of reaction has been Russia. That the danger to the Kremlin of a World Independent Left, epitomised by the C.N.D., is such that it may well be worth arming the reactionaries of the West by a return to Stalinist barbarism, so as to provide the Fascists with free excuses.

Whether or not Russia's rulers can go back to Stalinism remains to be seen. Every major revolution in history has come when a tyranny has first been relaxed and then re-imposed in full severity. So there is yet hope.

LAURENS OTTER

Unemployment everywhere

From the four corners of the earth, concealed in cold statistics, news ceaselessly comes of the sufferings of men used as mere tools of capitalism.

The State Railways of Argentina are being 'rationalized'. Dining cars, station restaurants, and most railway workshops are to be sold to private firms, and 2,500 miles of track are to be closed. As a result, some 75,000 railway workers will lose their jobs.

Australia's textile industry has been hit by a slump. Mr. A. R. Loft, general secretary of the Textile Workers Union, announced on May 21 that 5,000 textile workers had been thrown out of work and 20,000 others put on short time.

In Kingston, Jamaica, more than a thousand dockers came out on strike on May 4 in protest against the suspension of workmates who had refused to work on a ship after mechanical equipment had been introduced into the hold.

British Guiana's Minister of Education, Mr. Balram Singh Rai speaking on Commonwealth Training Week on June 1, said that hundreds of workers had been thrown out of work by the mechanization and rationalization of the sugar industry.

Unemployment in America fell during May by 194,000 to 4,768,000, but the decrease was fully accounted for by the normal seasonal increase in jobs available, and the level was still 1,300,000 above the May 1960 level. "There has not been the job recovery we have been looking for," commented Labour Department statistician Seymour Wolfbein. As David Bruce, the U.S. Ambassador in London put it, in dismissing full employment as unattainable, America had ample resources and a large reserve of unemployed manpower to give its people an ever-rising standard of living. How comforting for those four-and-three-quarter million!

PAGES OF LABOUR HISTORY No. 1

Engineering workers lead the fight back

THE GENERAL post-war slump hit most of British industry about two-and-a-half years after the 1918 Armistice, but shipbuilding was in depression almost at once, for the Coalition Government's policy of "Make Germany Pay" took from her a great deal of merchant shipping and set the German yards making ships for "reparation". Naturally, this threw out of work British boilermakers and fitters.

General wage reductions in all trades, beginning with the lock-out of the miners, took place during 1921 and 1922. After several wage cuts, the shipyards and engineering workers were locked out in 1922 and defeated. The unions, particularly the Amalgamated Engineering Union, lost many members. Pessimism and defeatism prevailed. Southampton marine engineering workers were badly hit. The wage of fully skilled men was £2 7s. a week of 47 hours—that is, 1s. an hour. Compare this with £2 16s. for the Tyne and Clyde, £3 0s. 11d. for London, 1s. 6d. an hour for provincial dockers, 1s. 2d. for building labourers.

"Semi-skilled", many of them highly skilled machinists, received less, labour less again. Holidays were unpaid, work often temporary. In ship repairing, men stood each day in the dockyard, hoping to be picked up for a few days' work after being looked over by a few men in bowler hats, in the manner of a slave market.

In 1924, opportunity to redress the balance a little came with the "lay up" of Atlantic shipping for annual repairs. But few expected the long upward fight back of the engineering workers to begin in Southampton. Union membership was low, Scots and Northern workers did not have much regard for the port as a fighting unit. Southampton's two MPs were Tories, each enjoying a big majority. But fight the Southampton workers did. Led by the local AEU, the unions demanded an advance in wages. The employers refused and referred to the employer-union agreements, particularly the "procedure for avoiding disputes", the "machinery" which creaked for six months to a year over every case and reached no decision. The union executives stood by this agreement and refused to back the men.

The *Mauretania*, "Blue Riband" of the Atlantic, had her turbines dismantled, the rotors slung in the engine room. Despite the threats of the AEU and other executives, the ship repair engineering workers voted a strike. A scratch organisation had to be created at once and a strike committee of experienced trade unionists, with necessary sub-committees, was formed.

When considering the work of this committee, one should remember that trade union members were a minority of the workers concerned. The strikers had to fight the employers, backed by the State and the trade unions. No strike money was paid by the unions.

Fitter handled the finance

Money, then, was one of the early problems to be tackled. Local trade union branches and AEU branches throughout the country were circularised. Well-organised local events helped to raise cash and strike money was paid out of this "unofficial" fund. The financial business of the strike was handled splendidly, though the middle-aged fitter who was treasurer was told by the professional auditor that he, the fitter, must know nothing about finance, or he would not have carried an odd halfpenny down through the books—and that was the only fault he could find.

But what of the non-unionist strikers? They, too, received strike pay with the union members—penny for penny, pound for pound. First, however, the "nons" had to be got out on strike, and meetings were held at all factory and dock gates. All, irrespective of union or non-union, were promised a fair share of all money raised, and protection against victimisation. "one back, all back; one out, all out," a promise that was honourably kept. Many of the "nons" had dropped their previous membership because of the high rate of union dues, 2s. a week in the case of the AEU, and some were still trade unionists at heart—but not all.

There were those, too, who refused to join the strike. They had to be encouraged by additional measures. Picket lines, good, solid, militant picket lines were formed each morning to draw out the waverers. Whatever, in those days, may have been the law about the "right to peaceful picketing," in fact the Law usually acted as though all picketing was illegal. As an extra, a flying picket was organised, squads of loyal stalwarts, some on cycles, who met outlying blacklegs on their way to work, often in the country lanes which were then close to Southampton docks on the Woolston side of the Itchen.

I remember, in particular, two red-headed brothers of about 23 who took alternate days on the flying picket. The efforts of police and assaulted scabs to bring a prosecution against one or the other and the defendants' alibis made a delightful comedy of errors.

Frequent meetings were held, so that all were kept informed and encouraged to join in strike activities. Amusements, sports and concerts were organised, for boredom and personal isolation are inimical to strike success. We had a good supply of singers, musicians and comedians. I doubt if such an array of talent could be mustered at scratch today, for there was then no telly and little radio and more people developed their own talents.

There was propaganda, too. A panel of speakers was active every day, visiting union branch meetings and anywhere else they could get a hearing. But printed and duplicated means of presenting the strikers' case were insufficient. There was no national organisation directly sympathetic to the strike case and trade union officials were active in the districts of trade unions to curtail support.

Tough times were ahead. The Engineering Employers' Federation threatened to lock out all members of the AEU and other unions concerned in the strike—a complete lock-out on a full national scale. The employers got permission from the Government to move the *Mauretania*, with her engines suspended, to be taken to Cherbourg by tug to have her overhaul completed.

The full victory which had been just possible escaped the strikers, but they did get a two-stage advance of 7s. a week, the first win for the engineers since the big defeat of all trades in 1921-22.

Aircraft men reap the harvest

Aircraft workers in Southampton had wanted to join the strike, but this would not have helped the marine engineers, who were fighting other employers—Harland and Wolff and J. I. Thornycroft. The aircraft men worked for A. V. Roe, Faireys and Supermarine. Then, too, the slender strike fund would have been more heavily drawn on. The aircraft men pressed their claim in the climate created by the strike and got an advance of 15s. 8d. a week, a direct fruit of the marine workers' action.

Engineering workers in other parts of the country were encouraged by the Southampton example, initiating small actions, usually in one factory at a time, to regain a little lost ground and dispel the spirit of defeat.

One weakness of the strike was the failure to persuade the French workers to declare black the *Mauretania*; lack of communication, of international organisation and contact, were largely responsible for this. That is one lesson. Another comes from consideration of the sort of men who took part in the strike. Southampton was a Tory stronghold and, as any strike to be successful must have at least 90 per cent support, many strikers must have been Tories, some Liberals and many non-voters. On the strike committee there was no faction which could be defined as "left wing," much less a majority, though some were more radical than others, of course. Most were just good solid, perhaps rather old-fashioned trade unionists, but they were quick to learn the changing facts of life.

On the strike committee there was unity of purpose and respect of others, from right wing to rebel. The Communist Party tried to muscle in, sending down Pollitt and the rest of its top brass and a cohort of full-time officials with Moscow-made slogans, "Defend the Soviet Union", "Vote Labour", and the rest of the ragbag, but the strikers had their own slogans—the aims of the strike. After the strike the CP tried to persuade the strike committee to become the district committee of their newly-formed Minority Movement. The offer was rejected with scorn.

This unity, mutual respect and tolerance, a major factor of success, was never understood by the CP, but the militants understood the importance of recognising, as the Prayer Book says, that there are "all sorts and conditions of men."

Commonsense in organisation and absolute honesty in the collection, care of and distribution of money were also ingredients of success. All this contrasts, as light to murky darkness, with the Communist sponsoring of strikes in the following years, with their confusion, sectarianism and lack of financial frankness, the double-dealing of their trade union bureaucrats and the leadership's eagerness to get them back to work after about the tenth day.

For the will to win is the greatest single factor in winning a strike.

TOM BROWN

An Irish argument

A.B. WRITES . . .

IN THE MARCH-APRIL issue of World Labour News, under the heading "Priest Rule in Ireland", D.P. makes what I, as a busman, consider to be a slanderous attack on our union (IT&GWU), our officials and also on the members of the two other unions concerned in the CIE dispute. He says "It is doubtful if the leadership of the unions want a strike—clearly they do not, as is evidenced by their mishandling of the business to date." D.P. does not give any examples of the alleged mishandling.

"Secondly," he says, "CIE is probably the best organised religious sodality company in Ireland and what is said by the priests at these meetings counts for much more than what is said by trade union militants." It is true that the vast majority of CIE workers are members of the company's sodality, but only a small minority of these attend meetings regularly, and the fact that the recent week-end strike, plus the organised resistance to the company's lock-out, was 100 per cent solid, as indeed have been all transport disputes in recent years, proves the falsity of D.P.'s assertions. Many times during the dispute our leaders had ample opportunity to sell us out, had they been so inclined, but they did not do so, and the dispute ended with a settlement which was not far short of a complete victory for the workers. The morale at management level, following the dispute, was so low that they did not even dare to pass on the increase to the public by way of increased fares. Not only did we win the bulk of our claim, but we also forced the company to withdraw the lock-out after four days. D.P. is always quick to report the failings of Irish workers, but he seldom reports our victories. Why?

In the May-June issue, D.P., speaking on the proposed reorganisation of the Labour Court (Postbag), says that "the bright idea of Mr. Lemass and his trade-union leader friends . . . is to make the decision of this court binding on both sides. The only example he gives of support for Mr. Lemass's "bright idea" is from a recent conference of the FUE, which is, of course, the Federated Union of Employers. He does not tell us who Mr. Lemass's "trade union leader friends" are. Neither, however, does he tell us about the struggle put up by the busmen AND their leaders AGAINST any form of compulsory arbitration, not to mention other sections of the Irish trade union movement who are at present in dispute with their employers. None of them will submit to compulsory arbitration. I would suggest that D.P. would do well to learn a little about his subject before plunging into print and that he would do better if he spoke less against the "One True Church" and more against capitalism.

I will conclude by re-affirming my solidarity with workers in struggle all over the globe, and it is with a feeling of legitimate pride that I contemplate the strength and solidarity of the Irish Trade Union movement.

. . . D.P. REPLIES

A.B.'s LETTER shows complete lack of knowledge of the facts. Here are a few questions on points he conveniently forgets:—

Is it not true that Leo Crawford, joint secretary of the ICTU, called off the first week-end strike without prior consultations with the workers? The fact that negotiations were going on with the Government and the management of CIE for two days before that, without reaching agreement, coupled with the calling off of the strike on the Saturday afternoon throws up a suspicion that there was, in fact, a pre-strike agreement with CIE.

Is it not a fact that the two Labour representatives on the board of CIE, Mr. McMullen, formerly General President of IT&GWU, and Mr. O'Farrell, formerly Irish Secretary of TSSA, not only failed to resign in protest against the arbitrary lock-out of the workers by Andrews, but also failed to protest?

Is it not a fact that the real reason there was no sell-out after Crawford's calling off the strike was the meeting in the Mansion House, when the workers made known their utter disgust and anger at the handling of the strike? A.B., as a busman, should be aware of this, if he was present. A similar meeting of protests greeted Jim Larkin at the Workers' Union of Ireland.

Is it not true that Leo Crawford called the workers back after the second week-end strike, without their prior agreement and that the workers were back two weeks before balloting on the recommendations of the Court of Enquiry, which the Union leaders had said they would recommend the workers to accept, before the Court had even reached agreement?

Is it not a fact that Leo Crawford took the hitherto unprecedented step of representing the workers at all the negotiations with the Government and CIE and that at no stage did the leaders of the Unions involved take part in the talks?

A.B. says that the Union forced CIE to withdraw the lock-out—true, by calling off the strike without the consent of the workers and having won only half the battle. (I don't give credit to your leaders for that.) The reason for CIE not increasing bus fares is not the Unions, but more likely the fact of the forthcoming General Election.

This seems to me and also to 1,077 busmen who voted against acceptance of the offer of the Court of Enquiry as gross mismanagement.

I don't apologise for exposing the reactionary activities of the "One True Church". As with all other established religions, this forms an integral part of the capitalist structure of society. Karl Marx said that religion is the opium of the people. That is as true today as it was then and particularly so in Ireland. Is it not a fact that many priests from the Catholic Workers College (which follows a policy of class collaboration) have been called on to intervene in many recent disputes? A.B.'s views on the "One True Church" have come a long way from those expressed in *The Newsletter* (19.12.59), when he claimed that the only obstacle to a revolutionary Marxist Party in Ireland is Catholic Action. Perhaps now the Stalinist Irish Workers League fills that vacuum.

A.B. then takes me to task for referring to Lemass's trade union friends. Has A.B. any idea of the history of both the IT&GWU and their faction in the Labour Party? Has he ever heard of the split in the Trade Union Congress caused by the pro-Fianna Fail policies of the IT&GWU. Which trade union gave the capitalist-backed Fianna Fail Government an interest-free loan of £60,000? The IT&GWU. Who in the trade union movement constantly boosts Lemass and his "national revival" policy? Mr. Conroy, General President IT&GWU. At a meeting of Dublin No. 1 Branch, IT&GWU (*Irish Times*, 5.2.61) and also at a meeting of Liberty Study Group, Dublin No. 2 Branch, IT&GWU (*Sunday Press*, 26.2.61), he spoke in high praise of Lemass and lauded him for providing great progress in working conditions.

Mr. Conroy is a member of the board of Bord Failte, and the Assistant General Secretary of IT&GWU is a director of Cement Ltd., where workers were so recently engaged in a bitter struggle for a reduction of four hours per week. Mr. Robbins, late official of IT&GWU, was made a director of Irish Shipping. I might add that these positions were not a reward for services to revolutionary socialism.

Does A.B. think the current talks between the FUE and ICTU are to discuss means of improving the lot of workers, at a time of widespread strikes for very modest claims by the workers, and when Senator McGuire, President FUE, is writing articles in the Press propagating an industrial relations policy smelling strongly of the Corporate State? How naïve of A.B. He says workers will not submit to compulsory arbitration. They will not be asked to submit, as with the Health Bill, 1951, the 10s. formula and the call-off of the bus strike, their leaders do it for them. It will not be the first time that workers have been sold out by their leaders.

In his last paragraph, A.B. refers to the strength and solidarity of the ICTU. This is revealed as rubbish when judged against the scabbing on members of AEU by the Irish Engineering and Electrical Trade Union in Verdolmes shipyards, the scabbing by the Irish Woodworkers on members of NUFTO in a recent dispute, the attempt by the IT&GWU to do a deal with Maj-General Costello of Irish Sugar Co., against the members of English-based unions to reduce the workers' wage rates. While members of the IT&GWU (that great union again) are engaged in a dispute with the cinema owners, other members of the same union scab on them by making Croke Park ready for the Music Festival, which was to be held in one of the affected theatres. What sort of solidarity is that? Or does it mean the same thing to A.B. as it does to revolutionary socialists?

A.B. accuses me of reporting only the failures of the workers. On the contrary, I was exposing the betrayals of the reformist trade union leaders. This was something he himself was engaged in up to recently. Perhaps I may recall to memory March, 1960, when several hundred workers were laid off by CIE at Inchicore. Then A.B. was exposing the reformist trade union leadership, to quote: "The only real guardians of trade union solidarity are the men who pay the weekly subscriptions". And he made a call for a rank and file movement (*The Newsletter*, 5.3.60 and 19.12.59). What has changed? The trade union leaders certainly have not.

It is a measure of the strength of the Irish reformist trade unions that workers have not got one penny more today in real wages than in 1939.

I will conclude by reiterating A.B.'s call of eighteen months ago for a rank and file workers' movement to overthrow capitalism and create an International Industrial Commonwealth, as James Connolly propagated.

RHODESIA

The land where copper is king

COPPER is King in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. It provides 59 per cent of the total value of all exports. Largely for its sake, the African was turned into a slave of the master race; yet with it he has forged the weapons with which he will win racial equality and can win real equality.

Copper is the basis of Rhodesia's Industrial Revolution, which is transforming the tribal peasant into a skilled worker whose horizons will no longer be bounded by the veldt, but will embrace the universe. For every one of the 40,000-odd Africans working in the copper mines, some half-a-dozen others depend for their livelihood either directly or indirectly on copper. During the terrible slump of the early '30's, when the price of copper on the world markets fell from £72 to £27 a ton and all but two of Rhodesia's copper mines closed down, not only were African miners laid off in their thousands, but thousands of other African workers were ousted from their jobs by white miners looking for other work. Some idea of the dimensions of this social disaster is shown by the number of Africans who failed to pay their poll tax in 1934—158,000. More than 6,000 of these helpless victims of the white man's capricious god, capitalism, were thrown into gaol.

A gruesome cure for the sickness of a crazy social system was provided, of course, by the Second World War, with the desperate need for copper which it caused. Stifling their patriotic urge to defend their 'way of life' at all costs, the white miners at Mufulira and Nkana came out on unofficial strike for more lolly. They got it.

At that time the African miners were paid 25 per cent less than before the great slump—13s. 6d. instead of 17s. 6d. a ticket for a surface worker and 22s. 6d. instead of 30s. for an underground worker. Fired by the success of their white brothers, and with somewhat fewer reasons to have patriotic scruples, they struck work at the same two mines. In a disturbance which followed, 17 Africans were killed and more than 60 wounded by the gallant defenders of Freedom and Democracy.

After an inquiry the Africans were granted a rise of half-a-crown a ticket and a number of other paltry concessions, but at what cost they had been won compared with the bloodless victory of the white miners.

The first African strike in Northern Rhodesia, from May 22-29, 1935, over the demand for higher wages to meet an increase in the poll tax on the Copperbelt, also ended in bloodshed, six Africans being shot dead and 22 wounded by troops brought in from Southern Rhodesia.

A tribute to the solidarity of the African miners is paid by Edward Clegg (*Race and Politics*): "Despite the heterogeneous nature of the population in the mining compounds, the enormous turnover in the labour force, and the lack of any kind of workers' organization, Native labour was withdrawn from three of the four mines on the Copperbelt completely and spontaneously."

'Not fit for trade unions'

He quotes one of the men responsible for the handling of Native labour on a copper mine as saying: "Throughout the big construction period, there continuously emerged from the African mass, Natives of outstanding ability, and it is due to this class of Native that it has been possible to build up the highly efficient labour force which we have today."

Yet Welensky, himself a former railway trade union leader, told the Legislative Council after a big strike of African railwaymen in 1945: "We are now witnessing a revolution among the African peoples. . . . We should face up to the position and guide it along proper lines. . . . I do not think the African is yet fit for the trade union movement."

Three years later, when a commission appointed to inquire into the advancement of Africans in industry reported that Africans were capable of filling twenty-eight different categories of work in the mining industry immediately, eleven more after a short period of training, and nineteen others after longer training, Welensky declared that the recommended sub-division of white jobs "must lead to the elimination of the European." Chanting the sacred refrain 'The rate for the job,' the European Mine Workers' Union successfully blocked this road to advancement for the Africans and continued to do so for more than another decade.

The same bitter opposition to African advancement occurred on the railways as recently as 1959. Sub-divisions of white jobs was turned down flatly by both white railway workers' unions and a substitute scheme for training selected Africans for white jobs and

putting them on probation for four years at £10 less than the full rate was denounced by the Amalgamated Engineering Union as an infringement of the principle of 'the rate for the job'. Overruled in compulsory arbitration, the AEU called a 24-hour protest strike, in which it was joined by several branches of the European Railway Workers' Union, which had repudiated their executives' decision to accept the plan. "White workers have exploited the social implications of 'the rate for the job' deliberately to retard African advancement, for they are no more willing than the white communities generally to accept social integration," comments Edward Clegg.

It must be remembered that with very few exceptions Africans had no opportunities to train for skilled or semi-skilled grades of work. They were expressly excluded from the Apprenticeship Ordinance governing the conditions under which apprentices were indentured in Northern Rhodesia, and the technical training of Africans by missions had from the beginning been opposed by the settlers. Thus, on the one hand they were told that when they acquired greater skill they would be able to enjoy the higher standard of living from their white brothers; on the other they were deliberately debarred from acquiring such skill.

Frustrated at every turn, not by the bosses, but by the white trade unionists, the Africans at last began to organize, setting up the African Mine Workers' Union at Nkana and other organisations at all the principal mines. In the following year, 1949, they found greater strength by uniting their little strengths into the Northern Rhodesian African Mine Workers' Union.

Into the melting pot

The new union won its first notable victory in October, 1952, when 37,000 African miners took part in a three-week strike which won them wage increases of from 1s. 2d. to 1s. 8d. a shift. Despite the fact that a quarter of their number was migrant labour, they achieved 100 per cent solidarity. Tribal and racial rivalries had been thrown into the melting pot of common exploitation by the bosses.

Soon, however, a serious breach was to be opened in the solidarity of the Africans—a breach with its roots in class rivalry. For within the great, simple, ultimate truth of the fundamental class division between capital and labour, between bosses and workers, between slave-owners and slaves, between lords and serfs, between rulers and ruled, there is the petty, quisling truth of the class division among the servants between the less privileged and the more privileged—a division so diligently fostered by the masters.

The mining companies had encouraged the establishment of an African Salaried Staff Association for those few Africans among their employees who had been favoured with the crumbs of paltry privilege. As Edward Clegg writes: "The members of the Salaried Staff Association had, or potentially had, a basically different attitude to the differences between the levels of remuneration of Europeans and the ordinary Africans employed on the mines. They constituted an intermediate category between the two; collectively their attitude was more conservative, more approaching that of the European mine worker, for they were scaling the ladder of promotion. *The mass of lowly paid members of the African Union also constituted a threat to their living standards.*" (My italics.)

At this time the average pay of an African miner was just over £7 a month (today it is about £20), that of a white miner over £2,000 a year (now about £2,250). The withdrawal by the mining companies of the option allowing certain senior African employees to join either the Association or the Union provoked a series of strikes in 1955.

Other strikes took place in 1953 and 1956 in support of the campaign launched by the Northern Rhodesian African Congress against the colour bar. Throughout the centres of white settlement in Northern Rhodesia there was a series of non-violent boycotts, demonstrations, and strikes reminiscent of the direct action taken by coloured peoples in America's Dixieland.

The self-discipline of an unsophisticated people with none of the constitutional rights of the American Negroes, provoked beyond endurance, denied the privilege of the ballot box to ameliorate their lot, is remarkable. On a very few occasions in this long, heroic struggle the African helots have lapsed into violence ("barbaric", of course, not "civilised" like the shooting down of African strikers, Hola, or Hiroshima). "But was the adoption of a policy of coercion and violence surprising?" asks Edward Clegg. "Terrorism and revolution are time-honoured means of achieving independence from

despotism. And the Administration in the Federation—as far as African affairs were concerned—were essentially despotic.”

That noble champion of democratic rights, Garfield Todd (who was later ousted from the premiership of Southern Rhodesia because the United Party and its settler supporters considered his outlook too liberal!) complained bitterly: “The Congress is endeavouring to discipline a mass machine whose powers would not be exerted through the vote but through some type of mass action. . . . What lies before us—co-operation or non-renting racialism?” “Co-operate ye slaves, damn you!” The plaintiff cry has rung through the centuries.

If divisions have even begun to appear among African workers, how much more so are there divisions between African and white workers. “The White community has a vested interest in maintaining the *status quo*—how many would willingly abandon a position where a God-given characteristic is an automatic passport to an aristocracy, no matter what the worth of the individual? In a highly-competitive

Workers' Voice

The Syndicalist Workers' Federation is now publishing a weekly, duplicated paper, *Workers' Voice*, in addition to *World Labour News*. This enables us to report and comment on day-to-day struggles of the working class and each issue is packed with up-to-the-minute information. Specimen copy, 5d. post-free, or 12 issues, 5s. post-free, from SWF, 25A, Amberley Road, London, W.9.

and very insecure world it is comforting beyond measure to know that there is someone underneath, that it is not possible to sink to the bottom . . . hence the extreme race prejudice of those Europeans closest to the bottom of White Society, for theirs is the greatest stake in preserving the existing position.”—Edward Clegg, *Race and Politics*.

Nevertheless, this is the ultimate degradation—not slavery, which is simply a misfortune, but the squabbling of the exploited for favours, the snapping of curs over the bones thrown in the dirt by their masters. Painfully, bit by bit, the Africans have wrested something from the white man. It is in the nature of things that those who have fought most selflessly will still be the underdogs when the racial fight is won. A class divided society is the evil heritage bequeathed them by those twin monsters with which the white man has polluted the virgin soil of Africa—capitalism and representative democracy. A long and bitter struggle will remain for real freedom and equality.

D. P.

Last round-up

DENMARK—On May 15, 40,000 dockers, seamen, and transport workers returned to work after being on strike for over a month. The strike of the 110,000 metal industry workers and the farmers' strike ended some days earlier. May 15 also saw the end of a ten-day strike of 11,000 slaughterhouse workers.

In defiance of the law forbidding Civil servants to strike, Copenhagen postmen staged a 24-hour strike on May 18 in protest against the Government's refusal to raise their offer of a 14 per cent rise to the 15 to 17 per cent demanded. They were not supported by postmen in the provinces or by any other sections of the Civil Service.

On May 24, the court of arbitration ordered a return to work of the 740 Danish employees of Foster and Wheeler, the British contractors building an oil refinery for the Tidewater Oil Company at Kalundborg. The strike began on May 18 over the bonus system and payment for work on holidays.

ICELAND—A nation-wide strike campaign in support of a demand for a wage increase of 20 per cent began on May 29. The 7,000 workers who opened the campaign were joined a few days later by 3,000 others.

FRANCE—Railway workers have been holding a series of strikes in support of their demand for a 40-hour week and a minimum wage of NF.500 (about £36) a month. There was a 24-hour strike on May 9, and a 32-hour strike on May 18-19. Both of them were joined by Paris bus and Metro workers, who are campaigning for equal pay for bus and train staff. Post Office workers staged sympathy strikes and gas and electricity workers stopped work for four hours on May 18, while maintaining supplies to hospitals and other essential services.

OCEAN ISLAND—Phosphate workers on this island in the British-ruled Gilbert and Ellice Group won a 23 per cent wage

increase, a child allowance of 10s. a week, and a £1,500,000 housing programme by a strike in April.

AUSTRALIA—On June 2, ten unions were fined a total of over £4,000 by the Industrial Commission for taking part in four illegal strikes at Broken Hill Proprietaries Newcastle Steelworks between last November and last March.

SPAIN—At the end of May a military tribunal in Madrid sentenced 32 farmworkers to terms of imprisonment up to 15 years for spreading Communist propaganda.

INDIA—Police opened fire on a demonstrating crowd at Gauhati, Assam, on May 19, killing seven people, including a woman and child.

IWMA world call

THE TENTH CONGRESS of the International Working Men's Association (Toulouse, September, 1958) agreed to support the formation of “Groups of Friends of the IWMA” in all countries where sections have not yet been set up, with the aim of gaining sympathy for our International and of spreading its principles and propaganda as widely as possible.

A group can be formed by five, ten or more members. It will give you the chance to maintain regular contact with the IWMA and of being in touch with the affairs of the international movement.

We address ourselves especially to comrades and sympathisers in Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas, Uruguay and Argentina excepted.

It is desirable that “Groups of Friends of the IWMA” should keep close contact between themselves in each country and they will receive our Press, propaganda and news of other countries through the international secretariat.

All interested in this proposal should write to the IWMA Secretariat (AIT-CNT), 4 rue Belfort, Toulouse (H.G.), France.

GLASGOW: Readers in the Clydeside area interested in SWF activity are asked to contact R. Lynn, 22, Ross Street, Glasgow, S.E.

MANCHESTER: For information about SWF activity in Lancashire, contact J. Pinkerton, 12, Alt Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

Literature

“Direct Action” pamphlets:—

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE UNIONS?

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THE HUNGARIAN WORKERS' REVOLUTION

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NATIONALISATION AND THE NEW BOSS CLASS

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