WORLD LABOUR NEWS

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Wind of change threatens Iberian dictators

IN our last issue we dealt with the industrial discontent which had slowly been building up in the Basque provinces of Spain. As we went to Press, we learnt that the focus of labour unrest had moved to the important coal basin of Asturias in north-west Spain and a traditional strong centre of the Socialists and Anarcho-syndicalists. Earlier in the year, several members of the militant CNT regional committee had been arrested together with two libertarian youths of the FIJL. Now, more than 80,000 miners had come out on strike and began what was quickly to develop into the biggest crisis that has faced Franco's 25 years' dictatorship.

THE STRIKES

The strike movement spread rapidly to other regions of Spain and has lasted nearly two months. Before it finally quietened down, Franco had to call a State of Emergency in the three provinces more directly affected by the strikes: Asturias, Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa. This is the first time since the Civil War that a State of Emergency has been declared in Spain, and although in theory this restricted civil liberties, in fact it made little difference in a country where the limitations are so drastic anyway. Under Franco, there is a permanent ban on freedom of movement, speech and association; proclamation of the State of Emergency simply empowered Franco to use force to crush the strike movement if threats and negotiations failed. It is also the first time that a strike movement of this magnitude has taken place in a totalitarian state where strikes are illegal.

The conflict started over Easter in a number of coal pits in the areas of Langreo and Mieres in the province of Asturias. Many miners refused to come up from the pits and others failed to clock in. Soon, the most important coal-producing area of Spain was completely paralysed.

In spite of the fact that the Spanish Press carried no mention of the strikes at this stage, they quickly spread to the industrial Basque provinces with over 20,000 iron and steel and naval workers joining in sympathy. In Bilbao, San Sebastian and Mondragon, important enterprises such as the Constructora Naval, Babcock and Wilcox and Unquinesa in Bilbao, and the Union Serrajera and Roneo in Mondragon, as well as hundreds of small firms joined in solidarity.

This movement, that has aptly been described as a great 'upsurge of solidarity', soon spread to other areas of Spain. To the mines of Villavino del Vierzo in the province of Leon; the mines of Peñarroya in Cordova; those of Linares in Jaen; Rio Tinto in Huelva; the industrial and mining zone of Puertollano in the province of Ciudad Real; the textile workers of Bejar, Salamanca; the shipyards of Bazan, Cartagena; the Sagunto steel works near Valencia; the railway workshops in Madrid. In Barcelona such factories as the Pirelli, Enasa, Macosa, and Siemens y Cornella had to close. The miners of Collet in Guardiola, to the north of Barcelona province, went on strike down in the pits, stating that they would remain there until the pay rise they had asked for was granted. They had food supplies for several days and two supervisors as hostages against police threats. The police intimidated many other workers from doing the same in several other places and in many cases arrested the ringleaders. In the vicinity of Barcelona, Sabadell, Vallcebre, Figols, Pobla de Lollet, were affected by strikes and sporadic stoppages.

Throughout this time, hundreds of leaflets and handouts were being distributed all over the affected areas, urging workers to support the strike. The CNT had started with a May Day message which circulated all over Spain, calling on the workers to take direct action and for a General Strike. It condemned the various solutions which had been put forward to replace Franco and suggested that the most constructive solution was an experimental libertarian revolution, impulsed by the people themselves and avoiding both monarchic and parliamentary solutions, which would not change anything fundamentally, nor give the country the new life and inspiration it needs. It ended by listing a number of immediate objectives which included: workers' control of industry; agrarian reform; the abolition of military service; free primary, secondary and higher education; the socialisation of housing; provision for infants and the aged; and consumers and producers municipal and district planning councils.

During the strikes many other leaflets were distributed by the CNT in Barcelona (some in Catalan), Madrid, Asturias, Andalucia and the other affected areas. As a result of these and other actions, many of its members were arrested. In Barcelona alone there were over fifty who had been charged with 'anti-economic activities', that is to say supporting the strikes. In Asturias, there were also several CNT members arrested for taking part in strike committees.

As well as CNT leaflets, there were many Catholic (HOAC Hermandades Obreras de Accion Catolica and JOC Juventudes Obreras Catolicas), Communists, Anarchist (FAI), Socialist, Basque Nationalist, and Catalan Regionalist.

NOT JUST ECONOMIC

Many commentators have interpreted the strikes as being a simple economic conflict. To do this is to underestimate the aims of the workers. One early indication that it was not merely a struggle for higher wages was the fact that the Asturian miners refused to return to work, even when their claims had been accepted. They insisted on official recognition of the strikes and in many cases refused to negotiate through the official Falangist 'vertical syndicates'. Further, they insisted on the release of those workers who had been arrested, before returning to work.

In a country where strikes are illegal and under a totalitarian dictatorship, any one of these things, the strikes in themselves, becomes much more significant and attains a depth of meaning which is difficult to interpret by someone who has not lived and worked in a totalitarian regime. It cannot be viewed by Western standards.

Once the action is taken, it projects itself much further and becomes a challenge and defiance to the regime in power. It is a revolutionary step; and in this case, it is significant that Franco did not take up the challenge by breaking the strikes at the point of a bayonet, as he would have done a few years back. **All tends to indicate that this time Franco could not do it and in itself is a certain sign that he is on the way out.**

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CUBAN SYNDICALIST 'DISAPPEARS'

THE SITUATION of Syndicalist prisoners in Cuba is worsening. Luis Miguel Linsuain has disappeared from the prison of Santiago and, as the authorities have not notified his family of his whereabouts, it is feared that he has been murdered by the Castro authorities. A young Spanish comrade, Prometeo Iglesias Bernal, aged 20, has been in the police cells at La Cabana for several months, accused of 'counter-revolutionary' activities. Alberto Garcia, Placido Mendez, Sandalio Torres and Jose Acena are among those serving long terms of imprisonment on the Isle of Pines.

French Anarchist's hunger-strike wins reform of CO law

LOUIS LECOIN, 74-year-old Anarchist veteran whose book 'De Prison en Prison' (From Prison to Prison) tells the story of a life spent fighting for freedom and social justice, ended a successful hunger strike to force reform in the laws governing conscientious objectors in France on June 23. His hunger strike, which lasted 24 days, attracted wide publicity in the French Press and the De Gaulle Government finally capitulated by promising that a radical reform in the CO law would be passed before Parliament rose on July 25. Under this, French CO's will get similar treatment to those in Britain, instead of being condemned to long years of prison, without hope of release. Reporting this on June 24, the London 'Sunday Times' headed its Paris despatch 'Lecoin wins Objector Law Reform'—and commented: 'It was manifestly one of the finest triumphs for M. Lecoin, who has been campaigning for this and other humanitarian causes for more than 50 years.'

THE CHURCH

While the students in Madrid were demonstrating in solidarity with the Asturian miners and against the Opus Dei, who had recently been accorded the right to issue degrees at its new university in Pamplona, and have slowly gained strong 'behind the scene' influence in many ascepts of university life (as well as in all walks of Spanish life), to which all the students objected, many elements of the Catholic Church had come out defending the strikes.

In the affected areas, particularly Asturias and the Basque provinces, priests were openly backing the strike. In many cases from the very pulpits which once had been used to bolster support for Franco's fascist rebellion, young priests, quoting extensively from the Pope's encyclical Mater et Magistra, were inciting workers to continue the strike and in several cases making collections for the strikers and their families.

The Catholic Brotherhoods (HOAC) and the Young Catholic Workers (JOC) distributed pamphlets calling on workers to continue with the strike and asking for official recognition of workers' rights. The presidents of both groups were fined 50,000 pesetas for permitting the publication of the pamphlets. Even the official Catholic weekly 'Ecclesia' declared that 'the right to strike was a natural Christian right', even if it was illegal in Spain.

The strikes have, in fact, laid bare the rife that exists between the Church, one of the strong pillars which has supported Franco until now, and the Falangist regime. This creates an altogether new situation and it would be interesting to know just why the Church has decided to show its hand at this particular moment. Considering that many of Franco's ministers and his own personal secretary are members of the Opus Dei (a Catholic lay society which, as we mentioned above, has taken over many key posts in Spain), the Church is in a position to know which way the wind is blowing and, if necessary, to help direct it. So, has the Church been acting on inside information and is quickly entering a rehabilitation campaign to save its face in the eyes of the Spanish workers? What ever the answer may be, she certainly needs it—and it comes rather late in the day.

Diehard Falangists who are still sucking the golden teat have reacted strongly against the action of the Church. After having quickly read their bibles, they found a fitting headline for their daily 'Arriba'. In an editorial under the title of 'Render to Caesar what is Caesar's' they lament the fact that after receiving all the material and spiritual aid from the (Falangist) State, it is sad to see the Church intervening in the political, social and Governmental affairs, which the State alone is competent to do. It is the first time the Church has been openly criticised in such strong terms by Franco's regime.

Subsequently, a number of priests have been accused of being Communist agents and an army chaplain has in fact been tried on that charge.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The strikes are over, but neither the conditions that forced them, nor the open discontent which continues against the regime, have been changed. Soon after the strikes finished, three plastic explosions shook Madrid. One at the Opus Dei centre, another at one of the Opus Dei controlled banks and a third at the old residence of the Papal Nuncio. The police alleged that the FLP (Frente de Liberacion Popular, Popular Liberation Front) were responsible for these acts and quickly effected a purge of its members.

Later a man was killed when a time bomb which he carried in a suitcase exploded. He was apparently identified and, after conflicting reports, it appeared that he was a member of the Catholic Brotherhoods and a veteran of the Blue Division that Franco raised to help Hitler on the Russian front. Knowing the dubious tactics of the Spanish secret police, he could have been anybody, even a stooge-victim of some elaborate plan to discredit the Brotherhoods or the perpetrators of the acts of sabotage.

Apparently as a result of these explosions, all air passengers were being searched methodically at airports, and frontier controls became more strict. At the same time Franco revived the old order that no Spaniard would be able to change his residence without official assent. This was possibly aimed at the prominent leaders of the Christian Democrats, who had met at Munich with republican and socialist exiles to discuss actions for the removal of Franco and his succession. But since it appears that Franco had been personally informed by Gil Robles of the meeting, it is odd that Gil Robles, Riduejo and several others were allowed to leave Spain, only to be given the choice of exile or banishment to the Canary Islands on their return.

It seems more likely that Franco fears renewed activity within Spain and is seeking powers to counteract it. Seen in this background, the declaration of Franco on 'Victory Day' that he had never felt so strong, appears rather hollow. Everything indicates that the rift between the Church and Franco will widen and that the discontent of the workers, which has lasted 25 years, will increase and that Franco will be faced with further crisis, unless the situation changes quickly and radically with the setting up of the monarchy. The Church will certainly back the latter, rather than have an open revolt of the workers, which she would inevitably be unable to control.

IN PORTUGAL, TOO

While Franco's dictatorship is effectively being undermined, his bosom friend Salazar faces similar difficulties. His disastrous colonial affairs have been followed at home by growing opposition to his dictatorial regime.

At the same moment that the strike movement in Spain was giving Franco a painful headache, the Salazar dictatorship was faced with May Day demonstrations in Lisbon, Oporto and many other parts of Portugal, with the police opening fire on workers and students. In Lisbon riots broke out in several places and demonstrators stoned the police, who had opened machine-gun fire on civilians. Several civilians were killed as a result and hundreds wounded. The police arrested over a hundred demonstrators and more arrests have followed. This was the culmination of widefelt discontent among students and workers and members of the opposition.

Practically the same situation as in Spain exists in Portugal, and it is an accepted fact that, if Franco goes, Salazar follows—and vice versa. The agitation which these dictatorships are facing and the mounting opposition to them, stands a very fair chance of overthrowing both in the near future.

S.G.

SITDOWN AT SPANISH EMBASSY

A DEMONSTRATION of solidarity with the Spanish strikers and of opposition to Franco was held at the Spanish Embassy, Belgrave Square, London on Saturday May 26. Some sixty comrades responded to a joint call from the CNT, FIJL, SWF and LAG and a three-hour picket, with posters, paraded outside the Embassy. Five English comrades entered the Embassy, demanding to see the Ambassador. In his absence they were seen by the Councillor and told him they would not leave until a public declaration of support for the strikers was forthcoming. They staged a sit-down until police were called to eject them—and a two-column picture of SWF member Margaret Haines being dumped on the pavement outside graced the 'Sunday Telegraph' on the following day.

Postbag

Dear Comrades,

May I raise a tentative protest against some of the ideas expressed in 'Earl Russell's Super State' in your last issue? I have no great desire to leap to the defence of some of Russell's more idiotic pronouncements, but I would like to voice a word of caution. His detractors (for and against the Bomb) tend to select what is convenient to themselves out of his writings for criticism, while ignoring the extraordinary volume of common sense he has used over the years to deride and discredit the superstitious and the reactionary. Surely Syndicalistst can appreciate his support for workers' control in industry, decentralisation, the abolition of conscription, rational thought processes rather than irrational faith, etc. Those aspects of his outlook we don't like we can and should reject, while thanking our lucky stars he is on our side against the warfare state. The real harm I see in Russell is the elevated position he has been elected to by others. The leadership complex is a pernicious disease.

My main quarrel with T.B.'s article was the misuse of the term pacifism, which was written off as a sort of middle-class luxury. Without wanting to be sectarian, I think it is important to point out that the N.D. movement cannot yet be called pacifist in the more commonly accepted meaning of the word. The limited objective of banning nuclear weapons has never been accepted by pacifists as anything more than a move in the right direction. Even so, pacifism is a general term embracing people who are frankly conservative and interested only in the question of conscientious objection and, at the other end of the scale, truly non-violent revolutionaries, whose views on industry and the State coincide with those of Syndicalists, even though often with a different emphasis. As I am a Syndicalist and a pacifist, let me make a plea for mutual tolerance and understanding which, with good will and a flexible approach, will lead to the establishment of (for a change) an effective revolutionary force which can beat the State and avoid nuclear destruction.

Your fraternally,

London, W.9 **TONY SMYTHE.**

KENYA—Surest way to silence a rebel—give him a Government job. One-time firebrand Jomo Kenyatta, now Minister of State for Constitutional Affairs in Kenya, on June 8 condemned widespread strikes in that country, saying the workers might have legitimate grievances, but these should be dealt with by negotiation. On the same day, printing employers capitulated to striking workers, conceding recognition of their union and extension of a recent pay award to grades represented by the union . . . an effective answer to Kenyatta.

BONUS SYSTEM IS A THREE-CARD TRICK

BONUS SYSTEMS are a refinement of the wage system, with which most workers in industry today are familiar. Many firms have some sort of bonus system, while many more are attempting or hoping to introduce them in some form or other. The explanation generally given by the management is that they would like to see a system introduced whereby both they and the workers can benefit. The firm's output—so the theory goes—will increase (and its profits), while the workers will get higher wages. And everybody lives happily ever after.

All this despite the fact that the working class and the employing class have nothing in common, least of all a common interest in production—a fact that both managements and workers know. It is the management that introduces or attempts to introduce these schemes and the bonus rates that they initially offer show that, far from being interested in a scheme that benefits the workers, as well as the management, they aim only at raising profits and lowering costs.

However these schemes are dressed up, one fact emerges: the management either wants more work for the same pay, or more work for less pay—and they intend to get this extra work not by more man hours (which would mean paying overtime or employing more men), but by making the workers work harder and faster during their basic week. The management would obviously not even bother to try and introduce a scheme which did not increase their profits; there would be no point—besides, these schemes are expensive to introduce . . . those horny-handed sons of toil, the time and motion study men, don't come cheaply.

Most working conditions in industry are far from congenial and once a variable bonus scheme, piece-work, PBR, or any sort of incentive scheme is introduced, they become a damn sight less so. These schemes bring with them all manner of stresses and strains, both mental and physical, over and above those already existing on the job. The knowledge that he must work harder and faster, harder and faster, because if he doesn't, his family will suffer at the end of the week, is hardly conducive to good mental health.

Also these strains will have numerous repercussions in his life outside the factory—particularly in his family, as this is where he spends most of his leisure time. From the purely physical point of view, these schemes are an open invitation to take a chance and disregard the various safety limits of machinery for the sake of a few extra shillings at the end of the week (I personally know of one death that was the direct result of a crane being overloaded by men on piece-work).

The introduction of these schemes are usually resisted by the workers, though the vigour and success of their resistance depends, of course, on the militancy of those workers involved. Some managements find it relatively easy to introduce their schemes, while others have quite a struggle, and have to increase their initial rates. However, there is a point beyond which the management will not increase their rates and the worker will find that, if his weekly pay-packet has increased at all, it has not done so by a percentage that compares with his increased output. Although it might appear at first to some workers that the bonus rates offered by the management are fair, every time a bonus scheme is successfully introduced, it can be chalked up as a victory for the bosses.

The ways in which the management try to bulldoze the workers into accepting their latest racket are varied and at T. C. Jones & Co. Ltd., a firm of constructional engineers in Shepherd's Bush, West London, these methods are fairly well illustrated. Here the management's approach is basically one of an attack on the men's solidarity. Having made their time and motion observations over a period of months, the management have picked a time of the year for the introduction—the holiday season—when the men's solidarity is at a low ebb. Some of the men are away on holiday and not completely aware of what is going on, or what the latest developments are, while others who are shortly going to take their families on holiday, are going to think twice before getting themselves involved in industrial action.

They have not been approached as a whole, but piecemeal. The different sections—welders, riveters, the men on the saws, etc.—have all been tackled separately, presented with folders full of facts and figures that look like something out of a university Department of Statistics and exhorted to keep it to themselves.

Solidarity isn't particularly increased by the fact that, in the shop, there are at least five different unions (though most men are in one of three—the Boilermakers', the CEU or the AEU). The trade unions at this point seem to be willing to back any decisions that their members care to take (the CEU would not accept the management's proposal to introduce part of the scheme on June 14 and will not meet the management again until all their members are aware of the full details of the scheme and have discussed it).

The initial rates offered have been rejected by all sections that have been approached. The management has already expressed their intention of forcing the scheme through (obviously only in a form beneficial to them) and have used veiled threats about having to close the shop down if the scheme is not introduced.

The men have rejected the scheme as it stands, so now the firm will either have to increase their bonus rates until the men think that they are reasonable, or they will get tough immediately. The latter course is unlikely, as this would involve a direct clash with the unions. It is more likely that they will improve the rates slightly, in the hope of tempting the men into some sort of agreement.

At what point, if at all, will agreement be reached? The management will be unwilling to raise their rates beyond that point where they would cease to increase their profits at the workers' expense and cover the high cost of introducing the scheme. It is not yet apparent how far the workers are willing to take their resistance. One thing, though, is apparent—that the men have already made their first tactical mistake. This was in allowing the time and motion study men into the shop in the first place. This mistake has given the management an initial advantage, which is going to make the men's fight even harder—and fight they must, with or without the unions, otherwise they are going to come out of this affair very badly and with a reduced real wage.

Can workers in industry resist the continual threats to their already low standard of living? It is probable that the threat of reduced real wages, whether by means of phoney bonus schemes, reductions in overtime (which usually follow the introduction of bonus schemes), or what have you, can be resisted by conventional trade union methods, though even this is not definite, in view of the number of times TU members have been sold out by their leaders.

However, strike action, whether threatened or actual, as a weapon against wage reductions or for cost-of-living raises, is a purely defensive measure and gains for the worker only a temporary respite. If one bonus scheme is thrown out by the workers, the bosses will seek other ways of increasing their rake-off from the wealth produced by labour. If one cost-of-living rise is won, the inflationary spiral still continues to climb steadily—necessitating more and more cost-of-living claims, not all of them successful.

The day-to-day struggle for improved conditions and pay goes on. The worker cannot afford to relax in this struggle, for if he does that small proportion of the total wealth he produces which finds its way into his pocket will get even smaller.

This is what the wage system means. This state of affairs will continue for as long as there is an employing class (private or State).

The employing class is a disease of society and the energy and suffering that workers put into the day-to-day struggle to improve their conditions and pay unfortunately do not even provide a cure, merely a very temporary relief. Prevention is the only sure way of dealing with this disease. The wage system must be abolished and with it must go the boss class (again whether it be private or State) and all its trappings. All idea of the domination of one man by another must finish.

If one accepts this idea, that the domination and exploitation of one man by another is wrong, then the only industrial alternative to our present industrial system (or that of the so-called socialist and communist countries) than one can accept is that of workers' control of industry. Only then will men be able to enjoy in full the wealth that they produce.

B.L.H.

An unhealthy service

MOST people agree that nurses are underpaid, overworked and subject to severe restrictions on their personal freedoms. The public health service suffers as a result of this and the inadequate hospital building programme.

Because of the conditions, many nurses quit during or after training—a waste of money and training facilities, a disruption of careers and a loss from the health service of some of the more able and enlightened workers.

Those who remain have often accepted hospital conditions in the higher interest of helping the sick and tend also to accept, in the rush of work, standards which are grossly inadequate. Even to reveal these conditions often seems to the nurses to be whining in self-pity and condemning the sincere efforts of their fellow workers.

Yet the health service could be radically changed by diverting to it a fraction of the resources used in war preparations. The numbers and quality of nurses could be increased without limit by offering conditions comparable to those in industries devoted to the destruction of life.

What can we do to cause these changes in the health service? Nurses and others can stimulate public opinion by revealing the facts. Self interest should make us all concerned about a public

service we will probably urgently need at some time in our lives.

The nurses could theoretically strike, but since they have accepted poor conditions for so long in the interests of their patients, they are unlikely to withdraw their services, or even 'go slow' when the immediate result might be tragic.

Mass protests by nurses have drawn sympathy, money and token strikes, but the demand is for wages rather than for an improved health service which would itself necessitate better wages and conditions. The possibility of mass strikes to force a radical change seems remote, since the understanding of radical needs and possibilities is inadequate at present. The nurses may hope for a small increase in money, but this will bring with it a decline in sympathy and action and in the long run changes little.

What effect could a highly-organised nurses' union have? It could spread propaganda, but could it increase radical understanding among nurses? Would not the paid officials form a reactionary leadership? Would not the union reflect the authoritarian attitudes of its leaders, even in its propaganda?

Every nurse has ample opportunity for spreading his or her ideas by personal contacts inside and outside the profession. **They also have ample opportunities for direct action against the unsatisfactory conditions in their everyday work.** Freed from the illusion that changes are brought about by other people, as a result of our gifts of money, advice and appeals, every one of us carries the responsibility for change in our own lives.

We continuously find ourselves in situations where we can accept or refuse unsatisfactory conditions. If we refuse at every point, we gravitate to prison where we are powerless, but while accepting things beyond our strength, we can set limits to our acceptance.

Nurses could refuse to accept work outside their normal duties, insist on adequate time and facilities for leisure, resist injustice and the abuses of authority in the hospital and in their private lives and try to achieve, so far as possible, co-operative and non-authoritarian relationships with higher standards.

M.B.

The gentle saboteur

SABOTAGE too often evokes images of train wrecks, fires and nocturnal explosions. Perhaps this is largely due to the calls made by governments in wartime—calls to carry out these deeds against the other side, often with expert hints and even liberal supplies of saboteur's kits.

But here we are concerned with the sort of sabotage in which no one is injured and no property is destroyed. Certain groups of workers have wanted to strike but, hesitating to do so because of blacklegs or lack of strike pay, they have tried strike methods which have hurt neither them nor the public.

One such method, usually attributed to Syndicalists, is the 'big mouth strike', used by shop assistants. An inquiring customer is told the truth. 'Is this all wool?' 'No, half cotton, madam.' 'Will it shrink?' 'Certainly'. 'Is this the best model there is?' 'No, the Co-op have a better.' I know an Edinburgh girl who got a job in one of the more expensive stores in London's Oxford Street. A customer was about to buy a dress from an assistant who had assured her it suited her well, when she turned to the Scots girl and asked for a second opinion. That lassie told the customer it didn't suit, she looked awful in it and why. The woman agreed, cancelled the purchase and gave the girl a pound for the money she had been saved.

This was not done as an act of striking, but it gave the girls something to think about. If, however, any reader thinks that all this has nothing to do with the art of the wooden shoe (French 'sabot', wooden shoe), let him listen to the heart-rending cry from the boss, 'It's Sabotage!'

Another form of strike action likely to please the customer is the 'good work strike'. This was successfully used in a few cases in the building trade, notably in France about 50 years ago. The work is carried out, not as the contractor instructs, but as he contracted to have it done. Concrete work, three of sand, not five, to one of cement, all knotty, weak or pest-ridden timber is rejected, the spirit level and plumb line are used throughout, the full number of coats of paint are applied and the customer gets what he paid for, a house that will stand for 200 years, not one that shows signs of collapse after ten. Such workmanship also raises the self-respect of the worker.

This was expressed in a Syndicalist building trade journal in France (quoted in 'The World of Labour, 1928' by Professor G. D. H. Cole), in which the writer urged that form of 'sabotage' which turns out art in our respective trades and raises the standard of workmanship.

Engineering factories, too, offer good ground for such tactics, for there a constant lowering of standards has been forced on workmen during at least three generations, but I know of only very small-scale use of this weapon.

Best of all, this method could be applied to the deliberately ignored safety regulations which the State prescribes and experience approves, but which management insists shall be broken in the name of 'production'. If a worker breaks the rules and 'gets away with it', he may be a good man in his boss's eyes, but if his lot is injury or death, then **he** is to blame, his boss repudiates him. Let the worker always remember that, especially when the cry of 'Sabotage!' is heard.

Rather different is the 'string of pearls strike', again attributed to Syndicalism. The workers, without strike pay, anxious about blacklegs, oppressed by the forces of the State, remain at work, but do everything wrong. One small mistake is added to another, till a number of small pearls make a mighty fine necklace.

Originating in Europe, the idea seems to have been adapted to American struggles. The cinema operators of New York and some other cities tried it after wage claims had been rejected. Films were shown upside down, an odd reel from one film would be slipped into another, weird noises would come over the loudspeakers and some operators even showed the films on the ceiling. The operators won a two-year contract with a 15 per cent rise (reported in the Manchester Guardian, 3.3.48).

There is also the case of tramwaymen taking out the trams and refusing to take fares. I have read of three such cases, but so remote in time and place and so briefly reported that, I regret, I can give no detailed report. None of the cases was in Britain. It seems the passengers were, for a while, very happy, though in one instance the trams were continually crammed with joy-riding children. Of course, the transport owners soon stopped the trams running, declaring a lock-out. At least **they** got the public's anger, not the workers.

Another effective method for transport workers, particularly busmen in a traffic-choked city like London, would be to abandon their buses in the streets at an agreed time, thus providing an effective dam to the torrent of strike-breaking private cars. The West Indian driver who stopped his bus in a South London street recently, saying 'It's been a long day—and I'm going home' as he walked off into the night, may have had the embryo of this idea in his mind.

Best of all I like the case, attributed to the IWW, of workers in a remote salmon cannery, who switched boxes of labels, so that the poor tail-end pink cuts got high-priced tags and the middle cuts of red salmon got cheap labels. Some customers must have been annoyed and some delighted. It could be a nice change for both parties.

T. B.

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Thank you, but . . .

OUR THANKS to the few comrades listed below, who replied to our appeal in the last issue of WLN. It is still open—and we optimistically hope to publish a much longer list in our next issue.

PRESS FUND, April 20—June 13, 1962

London, W.11, C.&L.O. 5s 3d; **London, N.W.1,** C.D. 2s 6d; **London, S.W.14,** P.C.O. 6s; **London, N.W.2,** M.B. 7s; **Paris,** E.E. 7s; **London, S.W.3,** P.T. 10s; **Wolverhampton,** J.G.L. 13s; **S. Milwaukee,** C.C. 8s 6d; **Sudbury, Ont.,** A.O. 3s 9d; **Falmouth,** R.W. 1s 6d; **London, W.11,** C.&L.O. 13s 7d; **London, N.W.3,** K.H. £1. Total: £4 18. 1. 1962 total carried forward, £14 11. 9.

STRIKE WINS RECOGNITION

Labour history was made recently when one of Canada's most virulent anti-labour firms — the Hudson's Bay Company — finally signed an agreement with the Retail Food and Drug Clerks Union. The agreement, which followed a seven-week strike at the company's store at Powell River, B.C., was the first union contract ever signed by Hudson's Bay, since the 'company of gentlemen adventurers' first received their charter, nearly 300 years ago.—**Industrial Worker,** 28.5.62.

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

INDEC TAKES STING OUT OF CND

INDEC (the new CND independent Parliamentarian group) published its statement of Arguments and Aims at about the time that the last issue of WLN went to Press. It starts with a reasonably factual review of CND and the C. of 100's progress up to the present; then postulates the view that CND has always had five choices: 'an alliance with the traditional Left' (in the Labour Party), 'influencing the selection of existing candidates' (of the LP), 'the Voters' Veto' (refusal to vote for Multilateralist candidates), 'putting up candidates at general elections' and at 'by-elections'.

It is notable that, whereas the Voters' Veto was, as far as it went, a policy Anarchists could support, the writers have not even bothered to consider the anti-parliamentarian case and appear to have no inkling of the absolute impossibility of Parliamentary change permanently abolishing the Bomb. They have naturally little difficulty in demolishing the case for Labour Party work, by mere reference to the facts: the LP leadership's disregard for Conference decisions, interference with constituency selections, the cowardly nature of Labour Party 'left' Parliamentarians and the large numbers of CND members who wouldn't touch the LP at any price; and they decide, not altogether logically, against General Elections.

Having been formed by former Labour 'Leftists' (some of whom had previously tried to tailor Campaign policy to what the LP might accept) it is not surprising that INDEC is determined to take the revolutionary sting out of Unilateralism, which it does by including among the points of an Unilateralist policy strengthening the United Nations. Quite apart from the horrors of World Government, as potentially the most powerful and tyrannical Government ever, any real thought would show that in a world with two dominant power blocks, the whole concept of an effective United Nations Organisation, capable of preventing war between them and disciplining the one in a way that did not involve such war, is patently absurd.

The final point of INDEC policy is, however, quite staggering, yet advanced with no apparent conception of what it entails, unless the authors wish to conceal its implications. INDEC is to advance 'those aspects of social reform arising from the above points' (Unilateralism, Disengagement, Renunciation of all Nuclear bases, strengthening the UNO, Co-operation with Neutralist countries), but no examples are given of such reform and no account of the probable necessary extent!

In other words, without specifying what reforms are liable to be necessary, INDEC wants endorsement for what would be the most far-reaching economic transformation in British history. At the moment Britain spends about £1,600,000,000 per annum on weapons, to say nothing of related industries. It is hard to say what proportion of this will be cut when we achieve disarmament, but obviously it involves a huge section of Industry.

If we achieve—even temporary—Unilateral Disarmament and if we are to avoid a slump, either we must make a total libertarian social-revolution in a very short space of time, or the Government will enormously increase the powers of the State, by large-scale nationalisation or other interference in industry, on a generally State Socialist pattern.

It would not greatly matter whether it was an ostensibly socialist or conservative Government in power, this increase in State power would, of course, mean that, unless we made considerably more far-reaching steps towards the social revolution, the Government would at some future date be in a position to remake the Bomb.

Since INDEC does not say that it intends social revolution; since it advocates the use of Parliament, and since it nowhere advocates the self-liberation of the vast majority, one must assume that it is offering the old Marxist mixture (guaranteed cancer-forming).

Nevertheless, saying this one should make one thing quite clear; those who can stomach reading Tribune may be excused if they have come to the conclusion that Anarchism has recently become a mass movement; so many letters has it carried attacking INDEC for diverting CND into Constitutional channels. On closer reading, one found that curiously their authors did not consider this inconsistent with advocating continued work in the Labour Party. (Though they probably meant that this could hardly be described as constitutional work for CND.)

Various other attacks have centred 'on the impossibility of fighting an election on only one issue'. This comes somewhat strangely from LP members since it is some time since that party fought one with any issue at all and also shows a remarkable lack of knowledge of their party's history, since Keir Hardie founded the ILP to fight for the ten-hour day. Nevertheless, it is worth drawing attention to the recent candidate in Pontefract, who while campaigning against the retention of the Bomb, was also for the retention of capital punishment. INDEC might say whether it would endorse such a candidate and give their reasons . . .

Parliamentarian and Constitutionalist activity detracts from any real struggle against Nuclear Weapons, because it leads people to ignore the root causes of War, in the State, capitalism and injustice. To get Nuclear Disarmament it is necessary to deal with these, so the method of Direct Action is more fundamental than the short-term aim of Nuclear Disarmament.

Those Parliamentarians who come as near as Parliamentarianism allows to a radical stand against War (as for instance the ILP and SPGB), are never likely to get any mass support—unless they abandon their principles or (as the former shows signs of doing) come to rely on the use of Direct Action and cease to be Parliamentarian. But while INDEC may be harmful to the Unilateralist cause, it is not—in the opinion of this writer—as harmful as those who suggest work within the LP or CP, both of which are essentially opposed to Neutralism.

LAURENS OTTER

With Algeria's refugees on eve of independence

This first-hand account of the life and aspirations of Algerian refugees in Morocco is compiled from the experiences of two comrades who have recently spent some time travelling and living among these unfortunate victims of French imperialism.

* * *

THE war in Algeria was still going on when we were in Morocco. Although we naturally heard much about the war, we saw little. Our one attempt to enter Algeria at the border near Oujda resulted in a two-hour wait under the nonchalant guard of two heavily-armed young French servicemen, while various officers and officials came and went, trying to persuade us to give up the film in our camera, on which, as they knew, we had taken a shot of their outpost. These attempts being unsuccessful they finally decided to take the film themselves, while we sadly but non-violently sat by and watched the ruin of two dozen precious pictures of our journey round Morocco.

After thoroughly searching our van for signs of espionage, they allowed us to leave courteously enough, and we drove back along the shell-scarred road, crossing the border and the no-man's land which lay between the bunker and the Moroccan customs check point. Here the friendly Moroccan police were confidently awaiting our early return. No traffic had passed that way for months, although we knew well that the ominous silence hanging over this dusty desert landscape, the distant mountains and the few deserted and half-roofless homesteads, must cover a continuous movement over the border by night.

At Oujda we met two of the Algerian tax-gatherers whose task was to go from village to village, collecting the 10 per cent levy on their income from all Algerian workers in Morocco and France, which was used to finance the FLN. We understood that most paid gladly—they wanted peace. Any dissenters were marked down on the blacklist for 'after independence'. The two workers themselves, who were part of a team continuously active round the country, were given barely a subsistence level wage for their trouble.

The usual Bedouin population in the Oujda region had been doubled by the influx of refugees. Many families simply carried on their customary nomadic existence, but had fled over the border to safety. This meant an extra burden on the already sparse resources of the land, but these people at least had some occupation, as they could carry on their usual way of life. Less fortunate were the hundreds in the villages and towns who have no work. The Algerian refugees in Morocco at this time were reckoned to number something like 120,000, of which about 50,000 were in this region. But most live scattered over the towns and villages and cannot be easily numbered. Considering that Morocco has its own unemployment problems, and that the state of the Moroccans was often no better than that of the refugees, we saw everywhere a remarkable degree of friendship and hospitality to the Algerians.

Later we came through the broad valley leading to Saidia on the coast. The mountains rise steeply on the Algerian side, and the rugged coastline, lined here with palm forest, is very beautiful. We walked along the sand dunes towards the border, which we could see distantly marked by lookout posts and wire fences. A shout called us back, and a shabby and pleasant Algerian boy, who had obviously been sent to follow us—we were told the region is populated with spies and counter-spies—warned us not to go on as the beach was mined. Certainly if we went on we should be shot by the French. Four or five had died this way recently, and several families were bombed in their homesteads just on the border.

Here in Saidia live many hundreds of refugees, many in makeshift houses built up inside the walls of the ancient and disused Kasbah. There had been no work for years, and the children had little or no education. A minimum standard of living was apparently

maintained with aid from the UN and numerous voluntary organisations, and we met the team from Rädda Barnen (the Swedish Save the Children organisation) who were giving medical help, food, and some basic education, over an amazingly large area. Often the Moroccans are included in this aid, as their need is as great as that of the refugees. We also met the American Friends Service Committee team, who concentrate on giving some basic training in trades and housecraft, to mitigate the idle and aimless existence of the young people and give them some skills which can be of use in the future. One young teacher said that with his class, who were learning simple carpentry, his chief difficulty was to get them to stop working. Each boy when he leaves is given a set of tools of his own to use how he likes in the future.

Similar work, but in more established surroundings, has been going on for some years in the Rabat area, where a number of schools have been set up under the sponsorship of the UGTA (Union Générale de Travailleurs Algériens) and largely supported from voluntary sources. We saw small groups of boys working with deep concentration on electrical fittings, metalwork and carpentry and, at the school for younger boys at Khemisset, writing French compositions and chanting fluent Arabic from their readers. Arabic was outlawed as a foreign language in Algeria, and only a small number in religious schools there learn their own tongue from their teachers.

The enthusiasm of their pupils and their hope for the future is certainly the only reward of their teachers, all refugees themselves, who live in the same spartan surroundings as the children and work voluntarily. Similar training is given in a girls' school situated in a beautiful wooded area of coastland and run by a devoted young headmistress. These children, fortunate in their opportunities, are actually the unlucky ones, orphans and those who have lost touch with their parents, and who are selected from the border areas and sent here.

In Morocco there is enough evidence that the imperialist system has to a large extent been replaced by a bureaucratic and capitalist national system, although development and education are moving forward slowly. The younger generation are taking advantage of their new emancipation, but against a background of widespread illiteracy and poverty, and there are huge differences between the pay of educated officials and professional workers and that of the unskilled workers and peasants.

Determined plans that the same situation shall not arise in Algeria are being made by the more radical organisers for the new regime, and from Ali Sakri, organising secretary of the UGTA, and others outside the organisation, we learnt something of their hopes.

Plans include the three countries, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, Algeria is at the moment, as a result of French policy, the more highly developed, while Morocco appears to some extent as a medieval world of craftsmen and peasants using methods that date back to Bible times.

The opinion seems to be unanimous among those that we met that all the effort made for the war will be wasted if there is not a social and economic revolution, although it is not agreed whether this should follow Syndicalist lines, or consist of nationalisation of heavy industries, leaving light industry to private enterprise.

The background of French imperialism has determined the present state of agriculture and industry in Algeria. In 1865 the land was taken over from the Algerian peasant farmers, and re-divided among the French and other European settlers. For some time they retained control, but gradually the Algerians were allowed to buy up some farm implements and livestock, and to some extent to buy back land for their own farms. The industries have, of course, been entirely under the control of French and other interests. The large foreign population of Algeria at the moment is accounted for by deliberate government policy during the colonial period, when the French, Spanish, Italian, Jewish and other settlers were encouraged to have large families and increase in number by a system of bonuses or rewards per child born to them, graded upwards as the family increased. Now the foreign population numbers something like 900,000, largely in the bigger towns. It is felt very important that the natural resources of the Sahara should be made available to the three countries, and the borders, which are not historical, should be removed.

This is just a little impression we gained of what to hope for in Algeria, not through reading, but through talking to the people themselves in Morocco. For the rest of our journey we saw as much as possible of the Moroccan people, who made us enormously welcome in every place we visited. The people of the northern cities assured us that their hospitality and the quality of their kush-kush was unequalled, which we well believed. We wandered through the streets of Fez, making way to the shouts of donkey boys, and sat drinking tea in a tiny teahouse and watching a letter writer with an ancient typewriter plying his trade opposite.

An elderly, blind man of exceptional dignity was given a bowl of soup free by the next-door soupseller, whose interests were apparently more philosophical than commercial, for we saw him make no profit that day, only watching and talking with the passers-by.

But the hospitality of the south was overwhelming. We were offered numerous glasses of tea and bowls of dates in fortified Arabian Nights townships, oasis towns and Bedouin encampments. Perhaps the most welcome help we were given was by the group of Bedouin who appeared apparently from nowhere when our van had firmly dug its four wheels into the sand on a lonely desert track and refused to move. Big bunches of scrubby desert grasses were scavenged from the surrounding country, and a few minutes later this self-appointed rescue team had mined away the sand and replaced it with these, while we helped, wondered and learned their technique. After a few attempts we started successfully and proceeded to the next town with their leader as passenger. We had a feeling that anyone who needs a lift simply lurks near this sand trap, which makes a most dependable desert bus-stop. We spent much of the time accompanied by anything up to ten or twelve hitch-hikers, which on one occasion included two sheep, one alive and one dead, on their way to market.

AVERIL OSKARSSON.

CANADA

Solving bosses' problems

WHAT does the Canadian Labour Congress do to justify its existence? Here we have an organisation of over 1,000,000 members, potentially capable of completely paralysing the economy of the country, yet its president, Claude Jodoin, spent a large part of his opening address to its fourth congress (held recently in Vancouver) pleading with the Government and bosses to 'consult' with Labour to find a way of solving the economic problems facing this country.

What interest have the working class in solving the economic problems of capitalism? Any 'solution' acceptable to the bosses would be to the detriment of the workers anyway

Of course he admits that the system is far from perfect. Little things like over 500,000 people being more or less permanently unemployed, or the fact that those fortunate enough to have jobs are robbed of a large slice of the wealth they produce. But he is confident that, so long as we use the system of 'free collective bargaining' in the future, all these little problems will be straightened out.

In fact he waxed eloquent on the wonders of 'free collective bargaining', so perhaps we should go a little deeper into the workings of this system. What happens is this. A union is negotiating a contract with a company on behalf of its employees. The union has an economic expert on its payroll, who figures that the company, having had a profitable year's operations, can afford to give its workers a, say, 5 per cent increase and still pay big enough dividends to keep its shareholders happy. The company has an economic expert who arrives at the same conclusions.

The union and company representatives then sit down together and the union man asks for a 10 per cent wage increase and the company man says the company cannot possibly afford an increase this year. Meetings are then held over a period of weeks or months, while the two groups freely and collectively bargain. The union may even call a strike vote to impress its members of its concern for their welfare. But before any strike action is taken an agreement is reached, giving the employes a 5 per cent wage increase.

Of course, occasionally one side or the other makes a mistake in its calculations and a strike actually occurs, but generally speaking the system works well—for the bosses. This, then, is the system in which those who control the CLC place their faith.

Having heard Monsieur Jodoin's collaborationist address, the congress proceeded to endorse plans to: 1, provide support for the New Democratic Party; 2, continue an 'open door' policy towards workers who wish to return to the mainstream of organised labour (this being an auphemism for continue a policy of raiding the membership of unions not affiliated to the CLC); 3, launch a new, co-ordinated campaign on a long term basis to enlist more than 500,000 white collar workers into the trade union movement; 4, include provisions for shorter work-weeks with the same or higher take home pay and more holidays in coming agreements with employers; 5, initiate a special study on the problem of jurisdiction disputes and their solution by arbitration and other methods.

The need for this study was highlighted by the walkout from the congress staged by the 65,000 member Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. This was in protest at the hearing of a report on its jurisdictional dispute with the International Woodworkers of America over the right to organise the Newfoundland loggers. This dispute arose out of the loggers strike in 1959, which was organised by the IWA to which the loggers then belonged. The prime minister of Newfoundland, at the behest of the big pulp and paper firms Bowaters and Anglo-Newfoundland Development, passed special laws banning the IWA from the province and by so doing succeeded in breaking the strike.

He then launched a company union, which proceeded to sign a 'sweetheart' pact with the pulp and paper companies. This action

continued on page 7

PAGES OF LABOUR HISTORY

London's match girls strike a light

'GOT A MATCH, MATE?' asked the old docker, pausing on his tired way homeward. I handed him a box and, having lit his cigarette, he held the match until its dying flame touched his fingers, looking at the brave, pale light as though, like the girl in Hans Andersen's immortal story, he was trying to get from its flicker a little warmth, or a tiny light to fight the gathering gloom of Shadwell.

Thoughtfully the old man looked at the box as he thanked me and handed it back. 'Bryant and May, eh? Don't see so many of them around now. Used to be all B & M's.' With a 'Good night, mate,' he turned towards the sound of Commercial Road's busy traffic. What were his thoughts, I wondered, for he walked with the stoop and tread of an ancient scholar . . . perhaps kippers for tea, or steak and kidney pud.

But, as I pocketed the matches, my thoughts were of the women and girls who, here in London's East End, had made a more brilliant strike than B & M's ever expected of their matches. It all happened before I was born, but I had so often heard the old ones speak of it, always with shining eyes and a quickening of speech.

One often hears it said that 'It is easy to get a strike where people are working for starvation wages. Hunger makes them strike, they have nothing to lose.' How false! The man with even a moderate wage starts a strike well clad and shod, with some food in the larder and a few shillings in an old teapot. Often, too, he will have the backing of a union with some finance. But the lowest-paid worker has no reserve: he begins his struggle with an empty cupboard, ill-clad and with leaky shoes. He, more than others, must cling to the slender source of that daily bread which is his slender thread of life. In such circumstances to strike is an act of heroism.

Such heroism was shown in 1888 by the women of the East End factory of the world's leading phosphorus match makers, Bryant and May, who dominated the British market. At that time the East End was an area of very low-paid labour, gas workers, dockers and thousands of odd job men. At the bottom of that economic ladder were the match girls.

Their wages, for women 8s, a few 9s a week, girls 4s. No paid holiday, no sick pay. In case that was too much, the firm imposed a system of arbitrary and often unspecified fines, which reduced their meagre wage by as much as 2s a week. Their poor wage did not span the week—Friday, the day before pay day, was a day of starvation.

Then it happened that a lecturer at a Fabian meeting compared the low wages of its workers with the high profits of the firm and in the audience was Annie Besant, an associate of Bradlaugh and a Socialist, though scarcely a good Party member, and owner of a political weekly, the **Link.** Besant afterwards became a famous theosophist, but at this time she was an emotional and very effective orator of social revolt.

The revealing statistics struck Besant hard and with Herbert Burrows she went to the East End and questioned the girls. She found the figures to be correct and, further, that the girls worked in conditions that threatened their health.

In her little paper she wrote an exposure entitled 'White Slavery in London'. Bryant and May at once threatened a libel action and prepared their case. Their first step seemed easy. The foremen and managers were sent round the factory with a petition 'from the workers' stating that their pay and conditions were good and that they were satisfied, happy and well treated. The girls were ordered to sign, the firm being quite confident that none dare refuse. Reluctantly, the girls were signing, until the foremen reached a certain group. 'No!' cried one girl, 'Annie Besant spoke up for us; I won't let her down.' 'No!' cried the next girl. 'No, no!' answered each as the management approached them.

Threats were useless, the group stood fast and one girl, accused of being ringleader, was sacked. At once the girls struck work and those who had signed joined them. One striker said afterwards: 'It just went like tinder. One girl began and rest said 'yes', so out we all went.' Some 1,400 were on the stones.

Outside they held a meeting. Help was needed, so a deputation set off to talk to Annie Besant, who at once joined the fight. Money had to be collected, the **Link** became a strike paper, strike headquarters were set up in Mile End Road. This was a period of many street propaganda meetings of Socialists, Syndicalists, Anarchists and free-lance agitators, most of whom spent their time trying to fan the flickering embers of revolt. Here was a ready-made publicity machine, sprung from the paving stones.

Money began to come into the strike fund. Besant and Burrows saw Shipton, secretary of the London Trades Council. At that time most trade unions were not much interested in unskilled workers, far less in low-paid women labour, but Shipton could scarce resist the ardour of the deputation and he promised to enlist the Council's support.

More money came in, not a lot when divided among 1,400, but it paid expenses and left something over for plain food. The firm said they would recruit enough labour in Glasgow, the girls promised a 100 per cent picket, other East End workers offered to join with them.

Bryant and May said they would take the equipment to Norway and open a factory there; as they always urged the public to buy British matches, this threat increased the strikers' propaganda campaign. Telling, too, was the revelation that several 'progressive' Liberal politicians were shareholders. The threat to remove the factory was answered by a call for boycott of the firm's matches.

After two weeks the firm, which had refused to negotiate or arbitrate, offered higher wages, abolition of fines, the reinstatement of the victimised worker and union recognition. The girls accepted, but before going back formed a union, the Society of Match Girls, which lasted until 1907. Singing, they return triumphant to work.

While giving full honour to those who helped the girls, it must never be forgotten that they themselves did most of the work and it was their spirit that roused the aid they received. The secretary of the Women's Trade Union League wrote, 'The great success of the movement was due to the discipline, unity and steadfastness of the girls.'

The East End was thrilled and aroused by this gallant stand. The gas workers followed their example; then the dockers. In small workshops the spirit of revolt was manifest. 'You've been listening to them match girls' was, I am told, a frequent complaint of foremen.

History has little interest for this paper, unless it has something to enlighten today's struggle. The match girls' story does that. We learn that no case is hopeless, that we must not overlook the spontaneous spirit of revolt, that when the blow is struck, action must follow quickly upon action. We must learn that a propaganda force, even if it is only a small paper and a number of 'soap box' orators, is essential to spread the news of the strike quickly and arouse support. We must learn that money must come in soon and be quickly distributed.

When, as must often be, we are discouraged and think our task a hard one, recall the example of the match girls of London's East End every time you strike a light.

TOM BROWN

CANADIAN NEWS (*continued*)

was loudly condemned by the CLC and its member unions and a campaign was launched to have the discriminating laws repealed. While this campaign was in progress, secret negotiations were being held between the company union and the Carpenters, aimed at having the Carpenters take over the company union (hence making it respectable.)

The IWA was finally allowed back into Newfoundland, but while it was rebuilding its organisation, the companies and the Carpenters union announced the signing of a two-year contract on behalf of the Newfoundland loggers (the loggers incidentally were never even consulted as to whether or not they wished to be represented by the Carpenters, or whether they approved of the terms of the contract.)

The IWA protested to the CLC and accused the Carpenters of raiding its jurisdiction. This led to the CLC appointing a committee to investigate the affair. The committee recommended that both unions withdraw from Newfoundland for a one-year period and a CLC chartered local organise the loggers; after a year a secret vote would be held to decide which union the loggers wanted to represent them. The Carpenters refused to accept this and declared their determination to hold on to the Newfoundland loggers. Should they persist in their attitude, they face expulsion from the CLC where they would join the 16,000 strong Seafarers' International Union and the 40,000 strong International Brotherhood of Teamsters, both recently expelled for raiding.

Raiding may be expected to increase in the future, as the ravages of automation become more widespread, reducing employment opportunities and leaving the unions fighting each other for control over ever-decreasing numbers of workers. Union bosses can be expected to do little more than pay lip service to the idea of shorter hours with no loss of pay. It is therefore up to the workers themselves to refuse to fight each other for those jobs that are available in our automated future and start fighting the bosses for a shorter workweek and jobs for all. Unfortunately the Canadian worker shows no concern for his fellow workers unable to obtain work, indeed he is never happier than when allowed to work unlimited overtime. The idea that it is wrong for some workers to be on overtime whilst others are on the dole does not even occur to him. It is time it started occurring.

BILL GREENWOOD

DAY-TO-DAY STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN

Railmen come back for that second helping

THE railway unions are reporting back to collect the rest of the debt owing to them. Remember Mac's words? 'Come back later'. Dr. Beeching is well in trouble. If he accepts the Guillebaud principle, then the award that should be made will blow the 'wage pause' higher than it is now. It is quite on the cards that the Government will take the railway workers 'on' this time, and the union leadership will be forced by their rank and file to call a stoppage.

A very interesting article in 'Railway Review' referred to the girls who work in railway refreshment rooms. Their wages are fabulous, seven whole pounds a week and they only have to work a 48-hour week for that. Womens' wages follow Wages Council rates, they haven't yet received the 3 per cent increase award to railwaymen on April 1. If I remember rightly, 'the only time the Spanish railways ran efficiently was when the workers ran them themselves'. That statement was made by an American newspaper man who had experienced both, before and after so to speak.

In the last issue of 'Direct Action' (Industrial News) it was reported that British employers viewed the Cost of Living Bonus as 'inflationary' and therefore wanted these agreements terminated. The printing employers as members of the Employers Confederation are asking for an discontinuation of the Cost of Living Bonus, they claim it is ' an unsatisfactory means of adjusting wages'. The building trade employers have exactly the same idea in mind. As far as the printing unions are concerned, I will stick my neck out and say that they will throw the employers' proposals straight out of the window. With wages tied to the Cost of Living Index, one has a slight chance of keeping rising costs within sight.

CRIME DOES PAY

One of the most vicious crimes ever committed has again been drawn to the public's attention. The murder referred to is the closure of the 'News Chronicle' and the 'Star'.

When the closure took place it was announced that former employees were to receive compensation in the order of one week's pay for every year of service. A certain shareholder objected to this and managed to secure an injunction restraining the Daily News Ltd., (Chronicle and Star) from paying up. The case was taken to court and judgment given in favour of the shareholder, so to date the victims of the murder receive nothing.

In an article in the 'Financial Times' 7.6.62., the point is made, that English Law has remained wedded to the principle that a company's sole purpose is to make profits for its shareholders. One might term that statement as a 'classic truth', capitalist economics in its stark nakedness. Referring to the case of the Daily News Ltd., in particular, the article states 'If the undertaking to pay compensation to the former employees of the 'News Chronicle' and 'Star' had been part and parcel of the contract of sale between Daily News Ltd., and Associated Newspapers Ltd., fresh legal considerations would have arisen'.

When the merger took place, former employees of the Daily News Ltd. believed that the payment of the compensation would be purely a matter of time, allowing for legal rigmarole, organisation etc. Even when the injunction was granted, it was thought that the shareholder hadn't a snowball's chance in hell of preventing the compensation being paid.

In other words every one thought that the 'compensation' was covered in the 'sale agreements'. How wrong can you be? The whole set up smells of stinking fish, this affair must surely go down as the 'bloodiest murder in Fleet Street'.

AGAINST COLOUR BAR

Municipal workers at Alcan works, Banbury voted in favour of *excluding* coloured workers. 205 members *in favour* of coloured workers being employed, 591 *against*. There were 128 spoiled papers and more than 600 members abstained.

The policy of the National Union of General & Municipal Workers is opposed to any kind of colour bar.

What are the reasons for the decision at Alcan? One reason is economic, fear of future unemployment, another I believe is sexual. It should be noted that in parts of Africa where the colour bar is viciously employed, it is a criminal offence for a black man to go with a white girl, but for a black girl to go with a white man is classed as just 'not cricket' but nice.

A third reason is 'living habits and customs' which are totally different, community living is not understood or appreciated in this country. These are genuine difficulties and fears which must be overcome. No one asks to be born, or determines where he should be born and that must be the whole basis of understanding.

THEY WANT A LEVY

According to the June issue of the National Association of British Manufacturers journal, the test of the National Economic Development Council will be whether *all* its members recommend a limitation of under 3½ per cent for the average annual increase in wage rates. The Government's 2½ per cent is not regarded as a practical limit to wage increases in many sections of industry.

3½ per cent then, is the membership fee for the trade union reps. on 'Neddy'. May I suggest that the fee is prohibitive enough to force withdrawal of trade union reps., I wonder?

BILL CHRISTOPHER

Literature

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