Fords—union bosses prepare the sell-out

A WEEK or two ago Fords of Dagenham granted a wage increase of 10s. a week and then a little later, 600 men were told they were to go on a four-day week, which meant an approximate reduction of £7 per week. Not a bad rise that—makes for improvement of industrial relations.

In exchange for the rise, unions promised co-operation to reduce inefficiencies, eliminate waste of manpower and avoid loss of time.

One of the key proposals made by Fords to the unions was that the union side of the National Joint Negotiating Committee should have power to issue and withdraw special credentials for shop stewards. To date the unions have refused to accept this proposal.

The men on the floor, the rank and file, elect their shop stewards and sack them; it's the shop stewards who have the shop floor problems at their finger tips and take suitable action at once because it is on their premises.

Let's dispense with all this bull about worker-management relationship. Fords want a show down, they want to smash the shop steward organisation, then speed up like hell. An employers' organisation stated some time ago that industrial relations would be far tougher when we entered the Common Market. Fords are attempting the softening-up process. This stewards must be reinstated, otherwise who knows who will be next for the chopper.

ITALIAN ANARCHISTS SAVE SPANISH MILITANT'S LIFE BY KIDNAPPING CONSUL

FOUR young Italian Anarchist students—Gianfranco Pedron, Alberto Toniole, Amedeo Bertoldo and Luigi Gugli—who had a daring and successful blow in support of Jorge Conill Vial, a member of the Spanish Libertarian Youth threatened with the death penalty in Barcelona for anti-fascist activity, when they kidnapped Franco's vice-consul in Milan, on Friday, September 28.

Conill, 25-year-old chemistry student, appeared before a military tribunal in Madrid on September 22, with two other young anarchist-syndicalists, 24-year-old Marcelino Jimenez Cubas, an engineering student, and Tomaso Mur Peiron, a 26-year-old mechanic, charged with "sabotage and terrorist activities." The three accused had no right to defend before the military court which imposed a sentence of death on Conill, with jail terms of 25 and 20 years respectively for Jimenez and Peiron. The sentences were those demanded by the State prosecutor.

The specific charges against our three comrades were that, following the widespread strike movement in Spain earlier this year, they had placed charges of explosive at various newspaper offices and other buildings of the fascist administration, as a protest at repression being carried out against militant Asturian miners. Nobody was injured by the explosion. They are, after all, a natural form of propaganda in a country where free expression of written or spoken opinion is impossible.

Franco's corps of international public relations men immediately began causing confusion about the case. It was put out that Conill had not, in fact, been sentenced to death; that the accused belonged to a "Communist" terror organisation, whose headquarters were in Toulouse, France, and that there had been confusion in bomb attacks between the CP and the young Syndicalists. All three statements were deliberate lies. The "Communist" smear is regularly used by Franco to discredit any form of opposition to his regime; there has been no co-operation of any kind between our Spanish movement and the Communist Party; the treacherous activity of the CP during 1936-39 made such collaboration an impossibility for all time.

News of the savage sentences against Conill and his two companions caused widespread anger. Telegrams of protest, including one from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, poured into Madrid from all over the world. It was in Italy that the storm of protest reached its height, with the students of Rome greeting the opening of the Ecumenical Council with an impressive demonstration of protest outside the Spanish Embassy where there were 45 arrests. Similar marches took place in other Italian cities and in Milan there was a sit-down outside the Spanish Consulate.

On the afternoon of September 28, the vice-consul, Isu Elias,
Salvador proscribes Communists, prescribes 7 years for Anarchists

The Central American "banana republic" of El Salvador recently passed a new law, proscribing Communist activity. It lists a series of penalties for anyone daring to carry out any form of left-wing activity. As is usual in such cases, that the proscription of the labelled countries is only a pretext to stifle any sort of activity, labelling as "Communist" anyone who calls for even a little more bread and freedom for the people.

Brotherhood, the Roman Catholic newspaper in El Salvador, recently revealed in a Press Agency report that: "The Legislative Assembly at midnight approved the Anti-Communist law, which provides for terms of up to seven years' jail for anyone taking part in anarchist activity. The new law, which criminalizes the ideas of the Existential Anarchist doctrine of a totalitarian character," what lunatics dreamed up this? The libertarian movement is the only organised movement in the world diametrically opposed to totalitarianism, through its opposition to the existence of the State itself and any other form of authoritarian organisation.

Fascist 'revival' spreads to Canada

The fascist revival has spread to Alberta. On the University of Alberta campus, a fascist students group called "Young Canadians for Freedom" has been trying to instigate a witch-hunt against socialists. They warned that radical leftists were "sowing the seeds of division and insecurity and demoralisation," and accused the head of the department of political science of "profusing false indoctrination" by means of a course he taught on Marxism.

Prof. Mardros replied "I make no apology for introducing a study of Marx into a course in Social Philosophy. His ideas in one way or another are influencing the masses and I would be derelict in my duty as a university teacher if I excluded them from consideration in my course."

We concur with Prof. Mardros in his defence of academic freedom, but would go further and suggest that he also introduce a course on Anarchist-Syndicalism, which is the only social philosophy that offers a clear-cut libertarian alternative to Marxist, Communist and Capitalist authoritarian social philosophies.

Early in October the Provisional Conservative Party held a convention to elect a leader. One of the candidates, the mayor of Drumheller, was an acknowledged member of the Fascist John Birch Society. He came second to a Calgary lawyer who was advocating the nationalisation of the oil industry. All Canadian political parties, with the exception of the New Democratic Party which is trying to live down its wartime image, are dominated by the corporate nationalist bloc.

The leader of the Alberta Teachers' Association, which is campaigning for the nationalisation of the oil industry, is costing the Social Credit government of British Columbia recently nationalised the electric power industry; while not being explicitly in favour of nationalisation, Quebec have just announced that it is going to hold an election and is campaigning on the issue of nationalisation of Quebec's electrical power industry.

These events seem to demonstrate that the discerning Canadian that there is no real difference between the parties. They all support the idea of the welfare state (or war state as it is more accurately designated in libertarian circles); the idea that the mass of the population is an army of serfs, incapable of ordering their own lives, that they must be enshrined in a maze of laws, rules and regulations, and that the state is an impersonal bureaucracy for the good of the people, of course. Big Brother is indeed watching us.

The leader of the New Democratic Party, T. C. Douglas, who failed in his election attempt in the recent federal election, is hoping to enter parliament as a member for a Vancouver constituency. The leader, for this constituency, one of the few "safe" NDP seats, has resigned to allow Douglas to contest the by-election. The growth of the NDP has been so rapid that Douglas will probably be opposed by a Socialist Party of Canada (sister party to the SPGB) candidate who claims, with considerable justification, to represent the only socialist party in Canada.

The NDP, in its short existence, is considerably embarrassed by the Canadian Trotskyites. Organised in the League for Socialist Action, publishing a monthly newspaper, they are able despite their numerical insignificance, to generate some support for their particular brand of communism within the NDP. The NDP leadership, who ask nothing more than to be left alone to develop into a respectable, capitalist, parliamentary political party, are forced therefore to search out and expel as many Trotskyites as they can find in the party. This arouses considerable indignation among the Trotskyites, who believe they should have complete freedom to take over the NDP and use it to further their communist ideas. The sterility of these ideas can be seen in their call for a national referendum on the question of nuclear disarmament. Presumably, if 51 per cent of the population voted for nuclear disarmament, the Canadian Trotskyites would be in favour too.

BILL GREENWOOD

PRESS FUND, August 18—October 24, 1962

Cleveland, Ohio: T. S. Wolffamptham, J. G. L. 4s 6d; Hyde Park, London: 2s 6d; Witney, Ozone, C. & L.O. 5s; San Francisco, E.S.D. 4s; Rockdale, B.B. & J.M. 3s 10s; 10s; Edmonton, Alberta, W.G. 7s; Los Angeles, R.A. 1s; Minneapolis, J.H. 1s; Hong Kong, M.s. 4s. Total £66.0d. 1962 total carried forward £28.

Our thanks to the above comrades—and to our comrades S.M. of Poland, Ohio, for his gift of G. P. Maximoff's "Guillotine at Work" and "Bakunin". Book gifts, especially of libertarian books, are always extremely welcome.

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

UNTIL recently, the case for Nuclear Disarmament has not to any great extent, been put to the industrial workers of the country. A few CND groups, on their own initiative, have done some good work at local factories and trade union branches, but on the whole CND has not attempted much that was aimed at winning over the mass of the trade union leaders, who managed to achieve a certain amount of success, as was seen at the 1960 Labour Party conference. Even with this success, nothing has really been changed, for there has been no action taken by these unilateralists to unite the unions.

This last point was proved recently at this year’s Labour Party Conference, with the issue of the Bomb being soft-pedalled by the Labour leaders of the country. As we know, a General Strike was far off and the interest of some Party members in this takes precedence over everything else.

A new approach was needed. Appeals to TU leaders and politicians, and the boring from within of the small left-wing group was doomed to failure. The formation of the Committee of 100 was the new approach, or rather an old one which had been wrongly disregarded. It asked people to do something for themselves, instead of having someone else do it for them. A do-it-yourself movement of personal responsibility, instead of the usual delegation of responsibility.

Up until now this has been a lower middle-class movement, with only a sprinkling of industrial workers. This was rightly seen as a weakness, for without working class support no resistance movement could hope for any success.

A meeting was arranged at Caxton Hall, London, to which trade unionists were invited. It was well attended, especially by the members of the Left who support the traditional constitutional methods of working through the Labour Party and our Trade Union leadership.

After a couple of meetings in the New Year, an Industrial Sub-Committee of the Committee of 100 was formed by a simple show of hands, where intensity of feeling as well as the intention of those forming the sub-committee worked in industries, such as engineering, printing, transport, docks and building.

There was already a group in the docks who were holding lunchtime strikes. A group in an engineering factory worked forward; numbers of workers from the docks, came on to the industrial Sub-Committee.

On May Day, a meeting was held in North-West London, which was attended by speakers Alan Sillett and Pat Arrowsmith, together with those of the docks and engineering groups. Pat spoke of the work she had been doing for industrial action on Merseyside and of the long arduous work which lay ahead, for one couldn’t just call for strike action, without the whole case for nuclear disarmament before the industrial workers.

During the meeting a tape recording of Bertrand Russell’s May Day appeal to all workers was played. In it he spoke of the oversell of the United Nations in control of the arms race, the U.S. and Russia, and Moscow care very little for our lives, our homes and our farms, but they rely on those who build and transport their bombs and aircraft and instruments. They rely on those who unload their ships and those who provide goods for the bases and food for the people who will drop the bombs. When ordinary people in their millions refuse to help them in their mad policies, they will be forced to stop.

The kind of beginning we have gone ahead with the production of a number of different leaflets, meetings at factory gates, building sites and docks. Now we have a programme of lunch-time meetings for every weekday. There is also the routine work of contacting people from different parts of the country who are willing to help.

One of the things that gave us a real boost was the leaflet “Against all Bombs”, which was given out in Moscow during the Congress for Disarmament and Peace. This was a real breakthrough, for how many times have we heard the old cry, “Why don’t you protest in Moscow?” The leaflet received a lot of publicity in the Press, on the radio and was attacked in the Daily Worker.

The leaflet told of the beginnings of industrial action against the Bomb in this country and spoke of our progress against the Bomb in the U.S. and Russia. The Russian workers talk up in the morning when the alarm clock rings. The time is not his choosing. Someone else has decided when and what he shall produce. Later it called for international action by British and Russian workers over the heads of both our leaders. “Together we must act—OR WE SHALL PERISH TOGETHER.”

“Together we must act.” This is the message we have to spread to the workers of this country. It is an enormous task.

We need more speakers at factory gates, more leaflets and more people willing to help. Other industrial committees are forming and should work in close co-operation with us.

There are signs that the work of this industrial committee is having an effect. Last May building workers on the Petrochemical site organised a one-day token stoppage, in protest against the refusal of tests. Dockers have refused to handle cargoes going to Aldermaston and recently in Liverpool, a meeting of industrial workers was held outside the Superblend Co. factory, after which they marched through the city for a meeting at Cammell Laird’s shipyard where an atomic bomb is being built.

These are small beginnings, but when the question of nuclear weapons is explained, people realise that the Bomb is part and parcel of the system under which we live.

On the day of the railway strike, some of the ideas which were being discussed among members and supporters of the Committee of 100, were put into action. A railway blockage committee was held by the Industrial Sub-Committee in Hyde Park and a leaflet showing a link between nuclear weapons and the recent cuts in rail services and the closure of workshops, was distributed.

The Government is wasting millions of pounds on nuclear weapons, but it says there is no money to keep the railways going. What sort of priorities are these? Which do you want as a public service? The means of getting from A to B, or the means of wiping both A and B off the face of the earth?

This is the sort of world we want. These are things people understand, because they are part of the workers’ everyday life. The linking of these disputes with nuclear weapons and the eventual demand of workers’ control in what they produce, this is the way we must go, for without workers’ control of the means of production and distribution, we will continue to live under the threat of nuclear weapons.

For this work and the propagation of these ideas the Industrial Sub-Committee of the Committee of 100 urgently needs money if we are to carry on. Please send whatever you can to the Treasurer of the Industrial Sub-Committee, P. G. Turner, 9, South Block, Peabody Estate, Lawrence Street, London, S.W.3. All money acknowledged.

PETER TURNER

229 barmen in Glasgow have formed a union and are discussing demands for higher wages and more time off. The increased hours of operation of the new licensing act have thrown a heavier burden on barmen, sometimes without a proportionate wage increase or extra staff.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Since the last issue of World Labour News, the SWF premises at 25A, Amberley Road, London, W.9, have been broken into and post stolen. The thief, who left evidence of his identity amid a trail of damage, had obviously known the SWF premises before.

We have made arrangements to arrange a replacement at 25A, Amberley Road, London, W.9 and we are sending out a cheque for £1.7. Postal and money orders should be made payable to K. Hawkes and crossed, as previously.

We also ask for anyone who receives a renewal notice with this issue to notify us immediately either by phone or by sending an additional remittance for the amount of the renewal and noting your remittance was not received. This applies equally to anyone who may have written sending money for literature, as a donation to the Press Fund, or payment of SWF dues, and not received any acknowledgement.
Through the rungs of the chair!

The future “trade unionist” will be different. The present trade unionist has for the most part been brought up on the idea of working class solidarity. Circumstances—fear of losing his job, fear of being oppressed—compelled him to rally to his union, to his brothers, and, indeed, to his own children. But now these external circumstances have changed... the trade union of 1965 will calculate more on the basis of his own individual advantage... so said George Woodcock, secretary of the ETU. He certainly could never be accused of being vague about the rank and file, so his statement must be for the trade union “leadership”. It certainly is for the right-wing bureaucracy in the ETU.

This year’s rules revision conference was loaded with amendments, all submitted by the EC and all aimed at strengthening the hands of the ETU leaders and managers. It clearly shows in the list of amendments proposed to Rule 21 of the Union Rule Book (1958), dealing with elections. In future all elections will be conducted by the Electoral Reform Society—a most controversial group which caused some very unimportant 2 years ago in the NUM elections—with more ballots being cast for one candidate at a mine face than were miners in the pit.

The policy of Transferrable Vote is also being brought into being—it means you vote for each candidate in order of preference. On each count the bottom of the last is eliminated and another most democratic way of reaching the overall... the one with the most overall votes then being elected. It could mean a candidate with a small first-preference vote being elected.

Delegates to the TUC and Labour Party Conferences will now be elected by the conference and they must be present at the conference and registered. The policy of Transferrable Vote will not be adopted by Rules Revision Conferences. However on the main point of Rule 21 the ETU became unstuck. They wished to put themselves in office for a five-year period instead of the two-year period as now. This would make it impossible for the policy of Transferrable Vote to be adopted after legislation. Resulting from this defeat the EC withdrew its proposed amendment aiming at establishing the EC as a full-time body. It seems John Thomas and his crowd had no intention of leaving anything standing in which the right will be bullied, bullied, bullied until they are nearly all voting anti-ETU.”

When a chairman says he is not conducting the proceedings under any normal rules of chairmanship, but under the 1938 Rule Book (which hasn’t a word about chairmanship) one immediately becomes aware of the friction which is bound to grow throughout the proceedings.

Chapple proceeded through the conference switching off the microphone on delegates whom he did not wish to hear and refusing to allow members to raise points of order at various stages through the discussions. On the question of Binioumia Conference, instead of annual as at present (Rule 19), he allowed tellers to check whether a majority wanted a vote. But when the actual vote was taken, Brother Chapple took it himself and, to the cries for “a re-count”, he declared the motion carried without giving the delegates their normal rights.

When a loud uproar ensued, he took the vote by roll call, each delegate giving his name and the way he was voting. This gave the EC the roll-call on delegates and how they were voting. Certainly a new way of finding out who supports what. To compensate for all his other irregularities, Chapple really infuriated even some of the uninhibited by turning his back on the conference at various intervals.

Among other significant points won or “fiddled” by the chairman was the amendment to Rule 16, now putting the election of Area President into the hands of the area committee. The more prominent set by appointment and the less bullying of the rank and file the better, it seems to the ETU. The EC, however, wants to take the list of applications from branch level down, away, and again they met with defeat. This vote, taken on the Thursday, showed at last the feelings of those present. For the longer the conference lasted, the greater the decrease in the uncommitted.

The conference, which had been conducted more in the manner of a police court than a trade union assembly, left Chapple continually reiterating the phrase “I shall not be dictated to by...”

On both sides of the wall

EAST GERMANY—A White Paper issued by the West German government on October 5 reported that since the completion of the Berlin wall on August 13, 1961, more than 12,000 people had escaped to the west, of whom nearly a thousand were frontier policemen or soldiers. Among them was Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Lüder, commander of a motored ride regiment stationed on the border and the most senior officer of the East German People’s Army to desert so far, who said he was a Communist, but not in the spirit of Helmut Kolthoff. Over $1,000 East Germans who were on West German territory when the trap was sprung refused to go back. East German frontier guards had opened fire on 358 occasions and at least 35 people had been killed. The wall itself was nearly eight miles long, and the material used in its construction could have provided homes for 150 families. Furthermore, nearly 4,000 people had been forcibly removed from their homes near the wall.

WEST GERMANY—49-year-old Georg Hutter, for eighteen months chief of the criminal investigation department of the Rhine- land Palatinate police force, was the chief defendant in a war crimes trial which opened in Koblenz on October 15. As a former SS Hauptsturmführer in charge of the Minsk Gestapo office, he was charged with responsibility for the shooting of 30,356 Jews and allegedly insane persons during the Second World War. Among thirteen others accused of taking part in some 10,000 of the murders is Karl Dalheimer, a former police inspector in Bremen.

The arrest of two chief commissioners of police in Frankfurt and one in Bremen on suspicion of having taken part in the mass shooting of Jews and Russian prisoners of war in east Europe was announced last week. Before the trial, the Wuppertal public prosecutor announced that three other senior West German police officials were to be prosecuted for suspected war crimes.

In a war crimes trial in Stuttgart which ended on October 2, Professor Kurt Leibbrand, an international authority on traffic problems, was charged with murdering 22 Italians attached to the engineering company that he commanded in France in 1944. He told the court that, in an effort to save his men, he had fired on the civilians in the German army who refused to obey orders to be shot. One day some Italians in his unit refused to work. “I reminded them of the army order and had them taken away. I never saw them again... There was no doubt about the military necessity of the shooting,” Leibbrand was acquitted because of lack of evidence.

In calling on the East German regime to hand over all the evidence about former Nazis in its possession, the West German Trade Union Congress has insisted on the hypocrisy of the Communists in making propaganda out of it, while retaining former leading Nazis in important party posts.

DOV

Communists”, finished on a pathetic note, with John Byrne at last saying a brief few words. Up to then he had said nothing—there for pouring out glasses of water for Chapple, it seemed. Maybe it was raising the bombastic arrogance of his “AIDE-IN-THE-CHAIR”.

The overall results of the conference are something of a Pyrrhic Victory for the EC. This conference is but the first in which they will try to steamroll the amendment to the EC rules concerning the rights of the rank and file. Fortunately the rank and file are still battling and winning main issues, but the small issues which are being lost are mounting up. The eyes of the rank and file throughout the whole Labour Movement must be opened to what is happening. For who can hold back the might of the forward moving mass of the Rank and File?

“SPARK”
Cousins stops busmen acting with railmen

What's the score in public transport? The issue is clear-cut—
in every section of the industry profit versus service to the community.

On October 3, the railwaymen decided to call it a day and
pack up for 24 hours, letting Beeching and Co. take it out of that.
Leading up to October 3 had been a series of fumbling, gymnastic
and dramatic acts. Dr. Beeching was taken on NUR'S promise to
make the railways pay and any method Beeching used was "fair
game."

Beeching's policy is one of demolition. Out of 29 main
workshops, only 3 are left with even the rack for thousands of men.
Rank and file pressure grew as Beeching's policy flowered;
all over the country strike action was demanded.

The NUR were presented with proposals by the Transport
Commission, not as a basis for discussion, but as proposals that
were going to be implemented. So far as the NUR were concerned, it
was a fail-accopli.

The NUR'S alternative proposals were:
1. Short-time working.
2. 33-hour week.
3. The work for British Railways should be done in their
own workshops, not farmed out to private firms e.g. among
the shops to be axed is Caerphilly, but the Commission is
preparing to order many thousands of new wagons from a
private concern. No one in Caerphilly
has ever got a job.

These proposals have never been considered.

The NUR strike plan included the underground workers in
London. This meant rank and file pressure was really turned on,
as it is unusual for the NUR to call them out, although they are
NUR members. The 24-hour strike was called to work
making the stoppage of the rest of the NUR a farce.

The other half of public transport was changing at the bit.
At a conference of London's central bus section on Wednesday,
September 26, it was decided by a vote of 44 to 44 that a
one-day strike be called in support of the railwaymen on October
3.

NUR General Secretary, who had been out of the country when
his executive first considered it, said he hoped the stoppage
in the buses on the roads, as it would increase congestion. At the Labour
Party Conference Frank Cousins, T&GWU General Secretary,
promised Greene support—if he asked for it.

On September 27, a delegation of five members of the Central
Bus Committee saw Cousins to secure some official backing for
their conference decision. Cousins refused to sanction the strike and
instructed an official to convene an emergency meeting of the Central
Bus Committee for the purpose. The new Committee, including
Greene, held the strike vote by 54 votes to 22. Instead of action, Cousins made a public speech
calling Margates and Beeching nasty games. "Sticks and stones may
break my bones, etc." we sang as kids. From Cousins the entire
bus fleet will go on strike or stop working—though he might write their names on
inventory lists.

As usual, the union leaderships were hopelessly divided at
what the London busmen's paper, Platform, (Oct. 1962), called
"the most critical stage in the greatest strike that has ever struck this country." That the London busmen are finding it
Chains of the present was shown by another passage in Platform: "Whether Greene had or had not asked Cousins for support, whether Cousins
disliked Greene or vice versa, were immaterial. The central fact was
that the Government was dismembering the nationalised transport
services, making a sham of the transport services and utterly
destroying the lives of a half-million employees.

On the morning of October 1, in the "Octopus" programme,
Margates got into the act by asking Greene publicly if he would meet
Beeching in a last-minute effort to avert the stoppage. Greene was
put "on ice." He accepted, but knew it would be short-lived.

The strike took place and was [100] per cent effective. Two-thirds of London didn't go to work, leaving the roads comparatively clear.
Others stayed in town overnight and some went into work extra
early. All these arrangements worked well for one day—any
longer and staff shortages would be impossible.

All the events leading up to, and including, October 3 prove that
the rank and file busmen and railwaymen are firm in their demands.

In an effort to avert another rail stoppage, Beeching met the
leaders of the three rail unions on October 15. He refused a
request from Greene to withdraw the whole plan for closure of
railway workshops, but conceded there might have been errors in
consultation and offered the unions fresh negotiations. (We all make
mistakes and we're sorry!)

On October 19 the NUR executive discussed the meeting with
Beeching and decided by 14 votes to 10 to defer further strike
action until it saw the outcome of further talks. Obviously a fair
section of the EC are convinced that Beeching has nothing to offer.

There are signs of a "wobbly handshake" in the air. A Financial
Times editorial on October 17 latched on to the idea of a "package
deal." Railwaymen have a wage increase due, so the deal would be
to be "swollen the workshop redundancy in exchange for possibly
better compensation payments and a bigger wage increase,
tie it all up with blue ribbon and hope to hell it will fool the
rank and file.

But the rank and file are not so easily tricked. Several districts
are demanding further strike action. They claim the one-day stoppage
on October 3 was a warning to the BIC to withdraw the closures,
not to discuss how they should be carried out.

Beeching is also holding out another carrot. He has assured Greense he will be allowed to discuss the line closures before they
are put into operation. No fail-accomplish this time.

Looking back at past events and anticipating future talks, the
whole set-up is phoney. It stinks of capitalist economics.

Everyone agrees that railways should be as efficient as possible,
from the angle of railway workers, passengers and freight users.
There isn't, of course, enough traffic to make the railways work on the
railways should control and manage them as a social service for
the benefit of all, and end the £75-million a year interest charges
which have been paid since nationalisation.

No redundancy until every displaced worker is placed in an
acceptable job and guaranteed accommodation which is also
acceptable.

Until these conditions prevail, the struggle must be intensified
by all workers.

BILL CHRISTOPHER

How to murder a railway

Writing the story of Jarrow's devastation during the slump
of the thirties, Ellen Wilkinson called her book The Town
that was Murdered. Now, in this land which gave the world
railways, we have to contemplate the murder of a railway system.
It has taken the token strike of railwaymen to bring to the front pages of
the Press the meaning of the recently-announced wholesale
mutilation of the railways, which is to replace the previous policy
of slow strangulation.

The Latin euphemism which has replaced the blunt
Anglo-Saxon "scrap heap", the hangman's noose of the wage
worker, is about to seethe through the men and women of British
Railways like an angel of doom. Not only the roadmen, but
the footplate men are in fear of the axe. The Southern
claims to have fired 4,000 men. With much "goodwill" the railway authority persuaded
many of the latter to accept and co-operate with "time and motion
study" by the inhuman hirelings who lurk behind machines with
pen and stopwatch. BR even made a film of such works.
Now, so the stopwatch has discovered, the works must be shut
down, its jobs farmed out to private business.

But what did the unions and workers expect? Never, never
in any circumstances should they allow the stopwatch men, the
heralds of redundancy, to spy on them and devise means of making
men into machines or scrap.

Reference to this scourge even intrudes into TV programmes.
In an actual news ITV feature, "Double Your Money", a railway office woman cleaner was interviewed. She said
she had just been given notice, along with her mates, one of whom
had 35 years of railway service behind her. Of course the offices
are over-crowded and the work of cleaning is being
highly paid over to a private "cleaning company". How do these
companies work? Do they push their workers harder and pay
lower wages? Certainly they are non-union.

But management never stops here. It is never redundant; top,
middle or lower, it increases as the devolution locust.

Of course this is not only the railway's problem, though it
would still merit our protest and action if it were. It is very much
a problem for the country. The problem of the layoffs which are
very tellingly contrasts two men—one of the great network
of British Railways today; the other of the railways as they will appear if
Dr. Beeching's thesis is carried out. On the latter, Scotland and
Wales are almost without railway and the nearer part of lines in
England disappear. Many communities will be isolated and had
best think about some sort of parochial archery, rather than the
Common Market.

To talk about the average level of unemployment being low
Eight... nine... OUT!

There is one struggle, not in the industrial field, but in the field of entertainment which has received little or no publicity.

It is the struggle which the wrestlers section of the Variety Artists’ Federation have with Joint Promotions Limited (including Dale-Martin Promotions) the largest group of wrestling employers in this country.

Joint Promotions (TV fame) refuse to negotiate with the union. Their form of contract does not even state a fee and they victimise wrestlers for joining a Trades Union.

These employers' tactics are reminiscent of dark bygone days when the workers were ostracised for the defence of their ideals.

What can be done to beat hell out of these scab employers? If there is professional wrestling in your area, check with the Variety Artists' Federation (their offices will be listed in your phone book) and then get cracking. Tackle the owners of the halls, probably local councils, picket the place.

Every other Thursday outside the Assembly Hall, Walthamstow E17 there is a joint VAF and Walthamstow Trades Council picketing declaring the show "black" and advertising alternative wrestling boots in the next borough (TU contract).

The picket is made up of engineers, electricians, printworkers, office workers, etc.

This struggle may seem insignificant in terms of Fords, railways, etc., but to the lads in the ring for your entertainment it means the "rights" that you and I take for granted.

Big Brother is Watching

The Economic League have made a discovery, not as brilliant as the August discovery of the high cost of living, but significant. They have found an organisation in Lancashire similar to the National Rank and File Movement! Boy are they rough! Then they mention that this organisation, Northern Industrial Action, stands for WORKERS' CONTROL, which others have done in the past. When they discover that Northern Industrial Action is as opposed to Nationalisation as it is to private enterprise, they really do their nut, calling in a back-handed manner on the trade union movement to put their rebels in order.

Ray Gunter, Prospective Sir

Ray Gunter, MP for Southwark, Labour's "Shadow Minister of Labour" has issued a stern lecture to the trade union movement on the need for self-discipline and self-restraint.

By self-discipline I suppose he means the type of action the Transport Salaried Staffs Association took during the rail stoppage on October 3. Funny, I don't call that self-discipline, I call it plain "milky".

According to Gunter, a Labour Government would want three things from the unions:
1. Their co-operation in a national incomes policy.
2. Change in competitive bargaining, so that the weak can receive a fair share of the national income.
3. Strengthen their power over wage claims to the National Railways Council.

These are brilliant proposals, which mean pulling down the comparatively strong to the level of the weak, instead of calling for the strong to actively support the weak.

This gun from the "Shadow Minister of Labour" is presented as an alternative to present Tory policy. No wonder the average worker cannot tell the difference. If he is wise, he will give the reversed "Victory V" to all the politicians and take the power in his own hands, which is the only solution.

More Unemployed for Scotland

Massey-Ferguson plant in Kilmarnock have SACRED 230 workers as redundant. They have been compensated by an offer of £20. The Scottish workers have told the employers to "pork it" and the 1,300 workers have struck work. Fellow workers in the Midlands factory have been in full support. Coventry workers are to meet to discuss the situation.

The workers in Scotland want short-time working to prevent sackings, but this is refused by the management. Earlier in the year 400 additional workers were employed when a night shift started. After only short-term employment, NO OVERTIME, SHORTER WORKING WEEK WITHOUT LOSS OF PAY.

B.C.

OXFORD—A weekly Anarchist discussion group (town, town and district) is meeting at 4, Old Library, Oxford on Wednesdays at 5.30 p.m. during term time. All libertarian socialists (the original name for anarchists) and others who wish to discuss Anarchism and workers' co-operation will find an alternative meeting place for vacations will be found.

Notting Hill Anarchist Group

Meets on the last Friday of each month at Brian and Margaret Hart’s, 57 Ladbroke Road (near Notting Hill Gate Station), London, W.11 at 8 p.m.
North African labour organises—for what?

When North African countries gain independence, we are not so enthusiastic as when we see new working-class organisations moving into the arena of social struggle. In Oran, Tunis and Casablanca these organisations are mobilising great masses of workers, who only yesterday were subject to the authoritarian and dehumanising effects of Western capital, and acting as instruments at the service of a political obliquity.

Before independence, proletarian organisations existed in these countries, but led a sterile existence, limited as they were to the mining regions. We know full well that the struggles of the CGT in Oran, which had a heavy preponderance of Moslem, even in its executive, but followed the dictates and political opportunism of the French Communist Party and later the SFIO. We remember the strike of 1912 against employers which animated militant workers in this area and which inspired the Popular Front

There were these Moslem workers, who are now gathering in the National Confederation of Workers in Morocco and the General Union of Workers in Algeria and Tunis come from and where are they going?

In fact, the Moslem working class has no past, tradition or history. In fact, they have never been organised, never had a voice, and were not agents of the colonialist movement. But the struggle of the Moslem workers, who had given their lives for the Cause are now gathering in the National Confederation of Workers in Morocco and the General Union of Workers in Algeria and Tunis come from and where are they going?

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Striking Irish seamen fined under English Act

ON September 21, when the "Irish Poplar" and "Irish Spruce" pulled into Dublin, the crews walked off on unofficial strike in protest against the decision of Irish Shipping Ltd. to reduce crews by seven men. They were followed three days later by the crews of the "Irish Elm" and "Irish Holly", when these ships came into port. On September 27, the crew of the "Irish Sycomore" struck in Victoria Dock, London.

In this "free society", sections of the community are less free than others. Over a long period of struggle the long-suffering wage slaves of industry won the right to strike. In 1962 this right was restored to Irish seamen in the case of the Sycomore. A number of the crew members of the Sycomore were charged under this Act, in London on October 3, with refusing to obey their Master's orders. Questioned on their right to charge the seaman, the court replied that the seamen are not within the jurisdiction of the Master, but are no longer within our control, for the purpose of the Merchant Shipping Act she is deemed to be no longer within our control.

The summons served on the seamen referred to their refusal to obey the orders of the Master of the British motor vessel, M.V. Sycomore. Apparently Irish ships are also deemed to be British on entering U.K. ports, despite the green, white and orange tricolour on their stems. The Court official told the seamen that the responsibility rested with the Irish Government to rescind this Act, which otherwise would always be applicable. Pointing out that Irishmen go to Britain they are immediately entitled to the social welfare benefits accorded Englishmen, he said that in this case it was only right that the British laws applied.

Of the 17 men charged, 14 were fined £4 each with one guinea costs, while two deck boys and a galley boy were fined £2 each. Three crew members of the Irish Holly were summoned to appear in a Dublin Court on October 25, charged with refusing to obey the orders of the ship's Master.

On September 29, the strike was declared official by the Seamen's Union of Ireland and as Irish Shipping Ltd. boats pulled into port, the crews in manning; cases the were not liable under the Merchant Shipping Act, because their Articles of Contract had expired does not alter the facts of this scandalous legislation, on the British and Irish statute books.

One suggestion as to the motivation in this was the old horse of capitalism is dead. Let's bury it.

PAT KELLY

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