

Direct Action

WORLD
LABOUR
NEWS

For Workers' Direct
Control of Industry

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

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Vol.4 No.8 (26)

August, 1963

Fourpence

After the Voting's over

YOUR TINY WAGE IS FROZEN

The Labour Party's greatest asset is its title - Labour, and at the next election millions of working men will "vote Labour" because they expect from that party a higher income, higher wages, more overtime, more hand-outs.

But "Labour's" Prime Minister to be lacks discretion, the result of self-certain victory perhaps, and is liable to say things before the election that Attlee said after such events. Speaking to the national conferences of the Transport and General Workers' Union and the National Union of Railwaymen, Wilson left no doubt that one of the first aims of the next Labour Cabinet would be a wage freeze, with the usual worthless sops of alleged control of profits.

"We shall have to ask for restraints in the matter of incomes. But when we say incomes, we mean all incomes, not only wages."

Those whose short memories do not recall the Labour Party wage freeze, 1945-51, enforced with the aid of the trade unions, should refresh their memories by reading the Direct Action pamphlet, "How Labour Governed". The ice age was modified and then broken by a long series of both large and small struggles and gains won by unofficial strikes and the threat of such strikes. The Labour Government tried to crush this movement by repressive war style legislation, by reviving reactionary laws of the Industrial Revolution and hauling strikers to the Old Bailey.

Wilson and Labour leaders have not forgotten this resistance and the shadow premier threatened, "We cannot afford restrictive practices or out-of-date methods on either side of industry. WE CANNOT AFFORD UNOFFICIAL STRIKES" As most strikes are unofficial, he might well have said "All strikes".

But already some resistance is appearing. The Boilermakers union is considering pushing a resolution at the next T.U.C., simply, "Congress opposes any wage restraint". Doubtless the block vote will kill it, if it gets that far, but that matters little, the battle will be on the shop floor.

It would be interesting to know the thoughts of State employees, such as civil servants, nurses and railmen. The Daily Telegraph reported, "At both conferences he received enthusiastic welcomes for the policies he put forward."

If sheep could speak they might shout for the abattoir, if they could clap their trotters they might applaud their butcher - or perhaps sheep are not so stupid. But if YOU don't want a wage freeze, why vote Labour? Why Vote?

T.B.

The Sanctity of Property

Rents, Rachman & Racketeers

The criminal methods of landlords operating in Britain under their 1957 Charter, the Rent Act, have been brought to light in dramatic fashion by chance references in the Ward case to Peter Rachman.

The Sunday Times article of July 7 gave a detailed account of his activities and his techniques for keeping the ownership of his property ambiguous. It explained how this racketeer played on racial tensions to exploit West Indians, accumulating a fortune out of human misery which should have put him in the top layers of the millionaire class.

The entire British press then discovered the Evil Peter and revealed his methods of terror and exploitation and his highly developed technique of "destatting" or driving from their homes statutory tenants whose rents are still controlled by law on low-rated property.

"Standover" tactics by the hirelings of landlords and property investment companies are rife in Paddington and Notting Hill, and have been suffered for several years. Labour Alderman Wegg-Prosser in his brief but effective appearance on the now famous Panorama programme on Rachmanism made this clear and stressed that the reign of thuggery continues even now. He also pointed out that the police were not helpful when questioned as to how the gangsters got away with it for so long.

"CURIOUSLY PASSIVE" POLICE

Why were such brutalities allowed to happen? How do the property agents and their strong-arm men manage to evade the rigour of the hour?

Whatever may be said about the criminal laxity of the Tory controlled Council of the Paddington Borough the Labour Group has campaigned for several years on this issue. Ben Parkin M.P., has made speech after speech in the House of Commons, the St. Stephen's Gardens Tenants Association was formed as far back as 1959 to fight Rachmanism, and yet one of Rachman's women unwittingly succeeded in gaining more publicity for the victims of his dominion than all the speeches and all the letters directed to those in authority where housing is concerned.

Four years ago "The Kensington News" was one of the first papers to pub-

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lish news of Peter and his Property Empire. "The Authorities were informed but nothing was done because Rachman and others like him are always just within the law" (Kensington News 19.7.63). And in the same issue appears the latest record of their deprivations under the heading: RACHMAN IS DEAD --- PEOPLE STILL LIVE IN FEAR.

Recently members of the South Paddington Labour Party and its General Management Committee have criticised the local police who on many occasions, said Councillor Bill Dow, the Party Secretary, "either stood by and did nothing while legal tenants were thrown out of their properties and their furniture smashed up or in some cases actually assisted landlords, agents, or their thugs to evict tenants." (Paddington Mercury 19.7.63). As we go to press the local Labour Councillors are preparing yet another assault on the Tory administrators of the borough in this weeks debate on Chicago-style gangsterism in 20th century Paddington.

Harold Wilson in the Commons debate referred to the "curiously passive" role of the police. He could have quoted the leader of the Labour Group on Paddington Borough Council, Mr. Dumont who stated: "There is no contract between London local authorities and the police as is provided by Watch Committees in the provinces...the only way to get co-ordination is to go to the Commissioner of Police, which the Council have tried, but which has not proved very effective." (S. Telegraph 21.7.63)

Now Mr. Brooke of Rent Act fame has called for an urgent report on the Rachman rent racketeering scandal in Paddington from the Commissioner of Police. The effectiveness of Inland Revenue and Fraud Squad investigations will also be questioned, for not one of Rachman's companies made any tax returns. Yet within recent weeks the "heavy glove" gangs with their alsations have prowled over their properties unhindered.

Will the exploited tenants of Paddington and Notting Hill be granted the same police protection as the National Socialist N.S. at Princedale Road in the same area? Just try pitching Jordan's furniture into the street - I think you would find no curious passivity there on the part of the police who regularly patrol. Nor as I remember were they at all lethargic or just not around when Queen Frederika was in London recently.

M. Callinan

RESISTANCE

SHALL

GROW...

6^d

Copies obtainable from Bill Christopher, 34 Cumberland Rd., E.17.

SOUTH

Police State, Fascist State. 10,000,000 "natives" without rights or human dignity, ministering in slavery to the wants of 2,000,000 whites.

One third of all native babies die before their first birthday. Native wages one quarter or less than the lowest wages paid to white unskilled labour. The standard of native living officially admitted to be well below the minimum subsistence level.

Legal job restriction allows Africans to work only on the most menial, physically exhausting and unpleasant jobs. African education, by constitution, is aimed solely to train docile slaves. No trade union may negotiate for African workers. It is a criminal offence for employers to recognise African Unions.

Families are separated, and by law not allowed to live together, even if no offence has been committed. 1,000 Africans are arrested EVERY DAY, mostly for trivial pass law offences. On arrest, an African can expect to be beaten up by the police, whether he is guilty or not. Over 86,000 judicial lashes were last year inflicted on quivering African backs.

Any political act of which the Government disapproves is, by legal definition, "communism", and may carry the death penalty.

A gathering of five or more persons is an illegal assembly. Any South African, black or white, may be held incommunicado for unlimited consecutive periods of 90 days by police edict alone; formal court or even magistrate's authority is not required.

It is an offence to report the name of any arrested person, to publish a statement of any person "named" by the Government, or to seek help from anyone outside South Africa. Political prisoners, after serving their sentence in full, may continue to be held in gaol indefinitely.

An African may be banished to semi desert land and left to starve. Black or white may be sentenced to house arrest, even to the extent of being prohibited from leaving his house for any time for any purpose, or from receiving visitors of any sort.

White farmers may employ African convicts, with powers to flog them and work them on literally starvation rations for unlimited hours. White employers who flog Africans to death are merely fined. Whites are able to purchase in open shops, aerosol cans of poison gas for "defence" against Africans.

Yes, we have heard it all, and a whole lot more besides. What the Hell are we doing about it?

We have passed resolutions of exemplary piety. We have lobbied M.P.'s
We have sent telegrams to South Africa House and made up deputations.
We have joined poster parades. We have marched from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square to listen to tear jerking speeches. We have refused to drink South African Sherry. We have worn black sashes, laid wreaths and snivelled

AFRICA

by Jim Petter

round war memorials. We have prayed.

And it's all of less value than a cold in the head.

A few weeks ago, a Swedish ship tried to unload South African fruit in Denmark. The Copenhagen dockers refused to unload, so the ship sailed to Aarhus. The Danish dockers were warned that it was illegal for them to apply industrial sanctions. The Aarhus dockers deliberately broke the law and refused to unload.

Then the ICFTU sought to urge their affiliates to impose industrial sanctions against South African goods, our own TUC showed its statesmanlike sense of responsibility. They pointed out that such a call placed an intolerable burden on one section only of trade unionists-- the dockers.

Why should not engineers, electricians and sheet metal workers refuse to service aircraft at London Airport bound for South Africa?

Why should not inspector members of ASSET refuse to survey South African planes? Why should not the 39 Unions in the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions declare BLACK all work on arms for South Africa?

Why should not boilermakers and shipwrights refuse maintenance on ships trading with South Africa? Why should not carpenters and joiners refuse to work on South African timber. Why should not ladders and roofers refuse to handle Cape asbestos?

Why should not printers refuse to set type for the filthy advertisements from South Africa House? Why should not tobacco workers refuse to process South African leaf?

Why should not USDAV refuse to handle South African goods in LCS shops? Perhaps if a few of these things were done, the dockers would refuse to unload South African ships.

The close association between our country and South Africa gives a special responsibility to take effective action.

The Danish workers, who have no special responsibility, put us to shame.

Must we wait until it is too late before we try to eradicate that shame?

Direct Action —
Now

Cuba Protest

In order to express our solidarity with our comrades of the Cuban Libertarian Movement and to protest against their imprisonment and murder by the Castro regime, members of the London Federation of Anarchists and the Syndicalist Workers' Federation picketed and occupied the Cuban Embassy on Saturday 20 July in a demonstration organised by the London Federation of Anarchists.

The demonstration started at 1.30 p.m. when a picket was mounted outside the Embassy by more than a dozen friends and comrades while eight others entered the Embassy in a manner that bore little relation to the Embassy statement that appeared in the press next day.

The Cuban Embassy, which doubles as living accommodation for the Ambassador, is on the second floor of a building in Mount St., Mayfair. The street door which gives access to the building as a whole was easily negotiated as it is one that opens automatically at the push of a button. Up two flights of stairs to the floor of the Embassy itself - which wasn't so easy. The doorbell was rung and it was answered by a gentleman wearing pyjamas. He seemed a little surprised to see us standing there. He told us, "Today is a holiday. Not working. Come back next week." However the first one in pushed past him and the rest of us filed past him into the Embassy. During this operation the Ambassador (for it was him) was not handled at all let alone 'mis' or 'man'-handled. As for the Ambassador's allegation that we broke his glasses - this is a complete mystery - and one is inclined to congratulate the Ambassador in his agile mind. Actually at no time during the occupation did we realise that this man was the Ambassador. We thought he was some sort of embassy official possibly even the janitor and every time we asked him if we could see the Ambassador he told us that the Ambassador was away.

From the door of the Embassy we went straight to the waiting-room or, as the Embassy hand-out describes it, the 'library' (a library with no books!) On our way to the 'library' we asked to see the Ambassador. Once inside the 'library' we distributed a very large number of leaflets all over the room and hung banners out of the windows facing out into Mount St.,. The leaflets were of two sorts - one leaflet gave a list of Batista's ex-ministers and collaborators who hold power in the present regime, and a list of our comrades who have been murdered and imprisoned by the present regime. The other leaflet demanded the release of all political prisoners. The banners that were hung outside the Embassy were decorated with the Red and Black flag and demanded the release of Castro's political prisoners. One of the banners bore the legend "Yanqui-no, Castro-no, the Cuban people-SI". The placards carried by the pickets expressed similar sentiments, while one of them pointed out that Queen Frederika is not the only one who has political prisoners.

The Embassy appeared to have some trouble with their telephone which necessitated telephoning from outside the Embassy, and it was nearly 2 p.m. before the police arrived. At first there were only two coppers - both of them officers, one of them in mufti. The police were followed inside by three more

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Seaman's Voice

S.S. Tasmania Star,
Southampton.

We are currently suffering a two or three-day delay here in Southampton due to a bit of direct action by the dockers. Apparently as they are not being given any overtime to get the ship unloaded, they are going slow. I don't know the details, but if there seems to be anything widespread at issue will let you know more later.

Blue Star line is owned by Lord Vestey and family - who also own ranches in South America and numerous concerns (meat, ice-cream, etc) in England. They seem to be quite a line for the old "pay 'em little, work 'em hard" attitude. There was also a squabble on board this ship today over the fact that deck hands were knocked off over the week-end and given no overtime, apparently contrary to expectation or tradition. When some tried to give 48 hours' notice, which is a regular practice around the coast, they were told that they were being held to the letter of their articles and must stay till the trip ends in several weeks.

In the catering section we have a trouble-shooting chief steward, who sacked large numbers of the last crew, off both the ship and the company. He is sent on rotation on different ships, to select compliant crews and sack anyone who shows a sign of having a mind of their own. All of this, you will agree, shows Blue Star Line up in a pretty poor light.

D.A. Correspondent.

CUBA PROTEST Continued from page 8
demonstrators who joined us. The police asked us what we were doing there. We told them that we were waiting to see the Ambassador as we had some very important questions to ask him, where upon the police joined the Ambassador in his deception and told us that he wasn't there. They seemed very hurt that we hadn't had the decency to make an appointment. Our point was then made that the British police, when they search our houses, don't do it by appointment, nor do the Cuban Police when they drag off our comrades to either shoot them or chuck them into jail for thirty years. We were then asked to leave, told to leave, and finally threatened. But it was no use - we weren't going to leave of our own free-will until we had seen the Ambassador (it wasn't until we read the Sunday papers that we realised that we had indeed seen him).

The demonstration, though small and quite short (this was deliberate) was well-planned and very effective. The same evening a member of the London Federation of Anarchists was interviewed on ITN and he stated simply and clearly why we went there and what happened.

Brian Hart

GREEK DEMONSTRATIONS Continued from page 10

out warning. Later police blithely assured magistrates that those arrested had been informed that the Commissioner's Regulations were in force and had been asked to move. In one case where evidence had been brought to establish that no warning had been given, the magistrate ruled that anybody who knows that the regulations are in force, whether or not he is informed of this by the police, and whether or not he has been asked to move, can be guilty of an offence. Peace News has already commented on the behaviour of the London police: despite Macmillan's assurances that peaceful demonstration would be permitted, it was forbidden: demonstrators were beaten up in police coaches: evidence was fabricated - and so on. We should not be surprised at the violence of the State, at the contempt it shows for its 'citizens'. We are mistaken, however, if we use its methods. If we break through police cordons, we may get headlines in the newspapers but it is hard to see what else is achieved. Even those who still think in terms of a violent insurrection in the future cannot believe that street fighting serves any purpose at the moment. The press thinks of anarchists as a dangerous mob: There is no reason why we should live up to a lie.

It is undeniable that our objection to the Greek State visit and to political oppression in Greece was obscured in the demonstration on Tuesday evening. Since we set out to reach the Palace we should certainly have tried to find an alternative route when the Mall was closed to us: but to attempt to reach the Palace at all costs was a mistake. Before Cuba Saturday, the Committee's supporters would sit down when faced by police cordons and wait to be carried away. Certainly it is absurd to sit at once - without trying to find a way around a cordon - but we can expect the police to be able to prevent us at some point from reaching our objective. In these circumstances we can fight, go home, or stay and sit down, prepared to be arrested. The sit down is not obsolete.

Tynford Hicks.

About Turn!

Daily Worker, 7.8.45, "The employment of the new weapon on a substantial scale should expedite the surrender of Japan. Valuable lives in the Allied Nations will have been saved by the new discovery."

Daily Worker, 6.8.63, "August 6, 1945 the dropping of the Atom Bomb on Hiroshima - the greatest crime in the history of warfare".

ONE MUST BE CHARMING WHEN ONE GOES COURTING.

DIRECT ACTION

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(add 4d in the 1s for postage)

Printed and Published for the S.W.F. by Bill Christopher
34, Cumberland Road, London E.17.