

—SOLIDARITY

FOR WORKERS' POWER **—————**

Volume 2 Number 5

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ПРОТИВ ВСЕХ БОМБ

Кампания против всех ядерных оружий в Великобритании начинает затрагивать рабочий класс и, следовательно, все больше и больше становится вызовом капиталистическому государству.

Это является новым развитием как деятельности, так и сознания кампании. Это искренний призыв к массам простых рабочих, а не к бюрократии лейбористского или тред-юнионского движения. В результате такого поворота вещей начинают замечаться протесты рабочих против бомбы. Грузчики, которые тесно связаны с ядерным производством отказываются разгружать груз. Другие рабочие устроили показательные забастовки.

РОЛЬ БОМБЫ В КЛАССОВОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ

Все больше и больше участников кампании начинают понимать глубокое значение протеста. Тот класс, который господствует в обществе, он решает направление и, несомненно, его через государственную систему у них нет голоса. Только смерть. Только смерть, от которой все зависит.

TEXT
OF LEAFLET
DISTRIBUTED IN
MOSCOW BY SUPPORTERS
OF THE COMMITTEE OF 100

AGAINST ALL BOMBS

The campaign in Britain against nuclear weapons is beginning to turn towards the working class. As it does so, it will create an increasing challenge to the capitalist State.

This marks a development both in the activities and in the consciousness of the Campaign. It is a genuine turn to the masses of ordinary workers, not to the bureaucracies of the Labour and Trade Union movements. Already, as a result of this emphasis, we have seen the beginnings of industrial action against the Bomb. Workers directly involved have refused to handle nuclear cargoes. Others have held token strikes.

(cont'd.)

THE BOMB IN CLASS SOCIETY.

More and more people in the campaign are seeing the deeper implications of working class action against the Bomb. The class which dominates production controls society. It decides policy and, despite the democratic facade, enforces it through its State apparatus. Until the ordinary people are free in production, they cannot have any effective say in the decisions of war and peace, life and death. Only a society with inhuman relations in production could produce these monstrous weapons.

But the USSR has the same monstrous weapons. Should not this be different if your society is fundamentally different from ours? We know the means of production are nationalized. But Marx himself insisted that it is the 'relations of production' (the relations between men and men at work) which determine the class nature of society.* The property relations might reflect these relations of production or might serve to mask them.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

What has happened to your Revolution that your rulers should threaten the workers of other lands with these weapons? What has happened to the internationalist ideals of October?

The Revolution made sweeping changes in the property relations. But it did not solve the central contradiction of class society, that between rulers and ruled in production.

It was never the policy of the Bolsheviks to allow the workers to take over power in production itself. In 1921 Lenin wrote: 'It is absolutely essential that all authority in the factories should be concentrated in the hands of management. Under these circumstances, any direct intervention by the trade unions in the management of enterprises should be regarded as positively harmful and impermissible'. This typifies the whole ideology and practice of the Party in this period. Here were the roots of Stalinism.

From this viewpoint, the USSR has essentially the same relations of production as Britain or America. The Russian worker has to get up in the morning when the alarm clock rings. The time is not of his choosing. Someone else has decided what he shall produce, how much, and at what cost to himself. Has he chosen to have Sputniks rather than butter?

Both East and West management makes all the plans, and seeks to reduce the worker to a standard unit in them. It consciously removes variety and decision-making from his job, and subjects him to the ruthless tempo of the machines. In Marxist terms, he is alienated. And any opposition to this system brings him up against the forces of the State, which, again, are beyond his control.

* 'The sum total of the relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which arise legal and political superstructures'. K. Marx & F. Engels, Collected Works, vol. 13, p. 6-7, Moscow 1959.

Is this a State that is 'beginning to wither away from the moment of the Revolution'? Or is it the kernel of the socialist programme that has withered away?

INTERNATIONAL ACTION.

In Britain our protests bring us up against our State forces too. When a mass demonstration tried to immobilize the NATO base at Wethersfield last December, six of our members were gaoled for long periods. Many others have been arrested on similar demonstrations.

We have also protested against the Russian H-tests, which threaten workers all over the world with 'socialist' leukaemia. Our bourgeois police have protected your Embassy against us, and arrested hundreds of demonstrators.

Our struggle is the struggle for new relationships in production and in society. Both East and West, privileged minorities protected by their State machines manage production and parcel out the social product. They try to protect these privileges against greedy neighbours.

That is what the H-bomb defends. But workers gain nothing by assisting in protecting their own rulers against others. We must have faith only in ourselves, in our ability to transform society. We extend our hands in solidarity with the working people of Russia, over the heads of our rulers and yours. We have already taken up this struggle: it is yours too. Together we must ACT - OR WE SHALL PERISH TOGETHER.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE !

The Committee of 100 exists to organize mass civil disobedience and resistance against the production, testing and threatened use of nuclear weapons. Its basis is in rank-and-file action, not in politicians' manoeuvres.

Its Industrial Sub-Committee seeks to develop these ideas among ordinary workers. Its first leaflet stated: 'Workers make the weapons of mass destruction, transport them, handle them, install them. They supply and equip those who use them. When they no longer accept to do so, the politicians will have to fight their own wars'.

The Sub-Committee is composed of workers in the Docks, in road and rail transport, and in the Engineering, Building and Printing industries.

Published on behalf of the Industrial Sub-Committee of the London Committee of 100, by Ken Weller (Engineering Shop Steward), 37, Queens Mansions, North Road, London N.7

THAT

'Solidarity' feels the full text of the leaflet distributed (in Russian) at the recent World Disarmament Congress in Moscow, should go on record, in view of the widespread repercussions (and deliberate lies) it has evoked.

The following notes are based on a report by Dave Picton, one of the members of the London Committee of 100, who took the leaflets to Moscow.

On July 10, two of us gave out the first batch of leaflets in Gorky Street. They were taken eagerly and folded away in inside pockets ... because of the litter laws. After we had distributed quite a number we were stopped by three 'volunteer auxiliary militia', who only became friendly after a passer-by had explained that we were Congress delegates. The first (administrative) reflex had been to arrest us. The second (equally administrative) reflex had been to be friendly to an official foreign delegation. Obviously a dialectical contradiction. Neither reflex was related to the content of what we were distributing. That kind of response only took place later, at a higher level.

We also distributed the leaflet at a factory gate. It was an engineering works, in the suburbs. We distributed as the workers were returning from a dinner break. The leaflets were again all taken and pocketed.

We also distributed the leaflet through letter boxes in a nearby block of workers' flats. A second 'block of flats' we entered turned out to be a police station. We decided not to stay.

Certain members of the British delegation became quite hostile after reading the leaflet. Late one night, one of the delegates found a woman in his room. His opinion of the Conference Arrangements Committee soared... till he found she was English - and that she was tearing up his leaflets. 'Any method is justified against you people!', she claimed. Unfortunately for her she had found the wrong leaflets.

The Chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee (Mr. Korneichuk) at one point asked for an assurance that the leaflets would no longer be distributed, despite an earlier agreement that we could put our case by any means we chose.

'The Guardian' gave the best coverage. A front-page article titled 'Heresy in Moscow' by Victor Zorza (12.7.62) quoted nearly all of the text which it called 'the most direct challenge to official Soviet policies and ideas to have been presented to the Soviet man in the street since freedom of speech died under Stalin'. The article referred

LEAFLET

with glee to the 'blasphemy of blaming Lenin, the best refuge of the reformed Khrushchevites, for the ideas Stalin put into practice'.

In general the Press reports on the leafleting and on the demonstration in Red Square were remarkably sympathetic. Only Peter Simple, in the 'Daily Telegraph' (13.7.62) objected to 'a direct incitement to revolution in the Communist world'. He believed that 'a campaign of illegal opposition to one government, on one issue, was being exploited by those who want to organise illegal opposition to all governments, on all issues. The anarchist face of CND is beginning to show'.

This enthusiasm for the Committee's activities in Moscow was only matched by the same newspapers' hostility to the Committee's activities in England. This discrepancy was quickly pointed out by the 'Daily Worker' (16.7.62), by Arnold Kettle in a letter to 'The Guardian' (20.7.62), etc., etc. There was however another side to this particular coin. Committee of 100 demonstrations in this country have been praised to the skies by the Soviet Press and Radio. The 'Daily Worker' had also offered encouragements, from a safe distance. But now 'Pravda' (18.7.62) screamed at the 'people who act like thieves', the 'smart Alecks' who discussed 'offensive subjects' and 'thrust provocative, slanderous, leaflets' at passers-by. And the 'Daily Worker' had hysterics about the 'insulting, anti-socialist diatribe' and 'the distribution of such outrageous lies' by an 'irresponsible group'. Readers of both papers had to contain their curiosity about the nature of the lies so violently denounced. Not a line, not a single word of the leaflet was quoted.

During the Congress the text of the leaflet was beamed into Russia in twelve different Soviet languages. Many journals of the socialist and peace movement quoted it extensively. The full text has been republished and circulated by various organizations, including an (intended!) private employers' information service. It has been translated and distributed in France and circulated in Japanese by members of the Zengakuren.* Copies have gone to Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy and other countries. At least 3 batches have been used in different parts of Yugoslavia. In Helsinki, at the 'World' 'Youth' 'Congress', there was a punch-up on the distributors of the leaflets by members of the Rumanian delegation. Zengakuren representatives, including their President, Itoshi Nemoto, later demonstrated in the Red Square, on August 6. Their bulletin No.3 (September '62) states this was 'inspired by the activities of the Committee of 100' and was 'our first attempt to appeal to and unite with the workers and people of the USSR'. They attempted to distribute leaflets and were 'beaten and dragged behind the Lenin mausoleum, and detained there an hour'.

* All-Japan Federation of Autonomous Student Bodies.

THE FALLING RATE OF PROPHETS

(Tune: Old Jonah, he lived in a whale)

The slump, it is still on its way,
The slump, it is still on its way:
Soon the cars of the workers
Will jam Oxford Circus -
The slump, it is still on its way!

It ain't necessarily so,
It ain't necessarily so:
The working class harks
To each word that's in Marx -
It ain't necessarily so!

We're looking in our crystal balls,
We're looking in our crystal balls:
The Goddess of Fate, she
Denounces John Strachey -
For saying it's all crystal balls!

It ain't necessarily so,
It ain't necessarily so:
The things that the men in
S.R. see in Lenin -
It ain't necessarily so!

There's a fall in the profit rate,
There's a fall in the profit rate:
And the workers all heed
The ideas that proceed
From R. Luxembourg (on 208)!

It ain't necessarily so,
It ain't necessarily so:
The young socialist shows a
Respect for old Rosa -
It just ain't necessarily so.

The crisis of leadership grows,
The crisis of leadership grows:
That's why it's a pity
The Central Committee
Is split from its head to its toes!

It ain't necessarily so,
It ain't necessarily so:
Ideas all the lotsky
Have picked up from Trotsky
It ain't necessarily so!

John Lane.

the truth about VAUXHALL

BY KEN WELLER, A.E.U.

Jim Matthews, a National Industrial Officer of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, recently proposed a 'solution' to the 'situation at Fords'. Matthews' suggestions include 'full-time divisional shop stewards' who, if they could not reach agreement with the management, would immediately refer the disputed issue to the local full-time officers of the unions involved. His proposals are based on a set-up common in the U.S., where the trade union machine dominates the shop floor organization to a far greater extent than in England.

These and a number of similar ideas being touted by politicians, trade union bureaucrats and journalists of both 'left' and 'right', are worthy of serious study by militants. They illustrate an important trend of thought about industry today. As a first step towards this study, 'Solidarity' is going to take a look at a firm where American methods already operate - Vauxhall.

The self-appointed spokesmen of the 'left' have largely ignored such phenomena as Vauxhall, presumably because they don't fit with their pre-misconceptions. They have generally concentrated, in a very shallow and ignorant way, and with a total disregard for basic research, on places such as Fords, B.M.C., or the

docks where a militant struggle is already being waged without their help. A key question, on which discussion is badly needed, is why some factories, industries and areas (basically similar in most characteristics) are militant, while others are passive.

This article cannot fully answer this specific question, which is a very deep and complex one. But we hope to throw some light on some facets of the problem.

I. VAUXHALL MOTORS: THE FIRM

Vauxhall Motors Ltd. is a totally owned subsidiary of the General Motors giant. Other parts of this empire in Britain include Frigidaire (with their main factory at Cricklewood, London), A.C. Delco and Delco-Remy (who make electrical components and who have a factory at Luton), and Euclid of Glasgow (who make earth moving equipment). General Motors itself has some spares and maintenance facilities at Luton.

Vauxhall have two main factories: a 264 acre one at Luton, and another of 98 acres, 6 miles away at Dunstable. A third factory for the manufacture of mechanical

components is under construction at Ellesmere Port, at the Wirral, in Cheshire. It is hoped to complete this plant early in 1963. There is also a £2,500,000 research and development centre being constructed at Luton, which will employ about 1,400 staff. This centre will be completed early in 1964.

After the British Motor Corporation and Ford, Vauxhall are the third largest motor manufacturer in Britain. The Vauxhall Motor Company Ltd. and its subsidiaries dominate the labour market in Luton. Ferdinand Zweig in his book 'The Worker in an Affluent Society' gives Vauxhall alone a 45% share of the total male labour market. This situation gives the firm a very big say in local government and services. It also means that it is virtually impossible to get a job at even approximately similar wages within a reasonable distance from Luton. It follows that people attracted to Luton and Dunstable from all over Britain are virtually tied to Vauxhall, particularly so when they get themselves involved in commitments such as hire-purchase and house buying. This is of course an additional aid to the maintenance of 'labour discipline'.

The Government's policy of restricting the expansion of existing firms in South Bedfordshire* (other than Vauxhall) and of refusing planning permission for new industry in the town also helps make Luton a company town. It even further diminishes the chances of alternative employment, and thereby reinforces the domination of Vauxhall over 'their' labour force.

2. CONDITIONS

It has always been the declared policy of General Motors in Britain to establish a higher general level of wages and conditions in each of their factories than those existing in other factories in the same area. A week of $41\frac{1}{4}$ hours is worked* (compared with the nationally agreed 42 hour week worked in the general engineering industry).

A Grade 1, semi-skilled male production worker receives 7/7 an hour for the first two years and 7/8 thereafter. There is also a 'guaranteed week scheme'. But in the event of the Company meeting exceptional difficulties in production which might be met by working a shorter week (thus involving continuity of employment), the Management holds the right to waive the guaranteed week. It will do so only after discussion with the M.A.C.** representatives.

In return for these wages and conditions, management demands its price: absolute control within the factory. They attempt to achieve this by the skilled and subtle use of 'scientific management'.

They demand the arbitrary right to speed up the production line

* Most of the other major car firms also work a $41\frac{1}{4}$ hour week. Fords now work a 40 hour week.

** Management Advisory Committee; see section 5.

*** From 'Something About Vauxhall' p. 12, the handbook of the Vauxhall Personnel Department.

* See 'The Times', 8.9.62.

at will. They claim the freedom to break up work gangs, the power to move men at the whim of the management from shop to shop or even from factory to factory, without question. Ferdynand Zweig (loc. cit. p. 238) says:

'The Company (Vauxhall) is at liberty to transfer men from one job to another, and even from the Luton to the Dunstable factory, AND THERE IS NO RESISTANCE FROM THE UNION SIDE TO SUCH TRANSFERS (my emphasis, K.W.). The transfers are frequent and occur nearly every month, with changing schedules, shifts, overtime, etc. Most men do not like transfers and that was the most frequent subject of complaint I heard. "It is like an army camp here, the shifting from one place to another all the time", or "you don't know half your mates when the men are shifted around". Most men acquire a certain confidence in their jobs and frequent transfers upset them. They would often say to a supervisor announcing the transfer "why, what have I done?".

It is a condition of service for Grade 1 men that the management can shift them as required. Even the Company's Grading Scheme is such that men can be transferred to the widest variety of jobs. There is gross disruption of the personal lives of workers consequent to this practice of arbitrary transfer, even if only because of the great difference in travelling time between Luton and Dunstable, which are several miles apart. However, in my view, the worst aspect of these transfers is the conscious and constant breaking up of work groups within the factory.

This transfer of men from one job to another is used with great effect against shop stewards. In fact in some shops the men have ceased to elect shop stewards, whose

names have to be given to the management, but elect 'collectors' instead. Men once elected as shop stewards rarely remained in the shop for long. Once a foreman has applied for a man's transfer, no other shop will keep him long. He is regarded as a 'trouble-maker'. One Vauxhall worker told me that 'once a man has been transferred at the request of a foreman, you can guarantee that he will be moved from 10 shops within six months'.*

It has been noted by Vauxhall workers that the technique of either frightening or forcing a man out of the factory (without actually having to sack him) is not only used against shop stewards and militants. It is also quite frequently used against men who are simply popular, or 'have a following' within a shop. These men are presumably regarded as possible foci of opposition groupings.

The management also claim the right to work study any job without consultation, and to give merit awards 'at the sole discretion of the management'. The schedule of qualifications for such 'merit money' includes 'applied intelligence, quality of workmanship, initiative, loyalty, adaptability, cost-consciousness, time-keeping, and long service'. One is tempted to add 'blue eyes'.

Another problem is the repetitive nature of the work. This is

* There have been a number of disputes in the motor industry against the introduction of systems of arbitrary transfer; two cases were the British Light Steel Pressings strike of October 1959, the famous 'Honeymoon Strike', and the struggle at Fords in July 1962.

common to all mass production industry. Anyone who has ever worked at this sort of job will know that it is often not the physical hardness of the work, but the repetition the constant performing of a single operation, which is the most frustrating and exhausting aspect of it. As the shift progresses you gradually tighten up and by clocking-off time it takes some time to 'unwind'. Zweig in his book (loc. cit. p.241) quotes a worker at Vauxhall as saying 'When I was younger, I could not stand the monotony. It made me irritable and dull, sort of scatter-brain. So I left it. Now I don't mind. It doesn't affect me at all.' A very revealing statement. It is this factor which leads to the relatively high labour turnover. During their first 6 months, about 10 per cent. leave or are dismissed. Some men are clearly unable to accept what is euphemistically called 'the realities of mass production'.

An amusing illustration of the management's policy of complete control within the factory were some court cases, reported in the press in February and March 1962. The Dunstable magistrates protested at the continual bringing before them, by Vauxhall, of employees charged with offences such as 'selling cigarettes and tobacco without a licence', 'selling of uncustomed watches', and acting as bookie's runners, etc.

In most factories there is a large network of such 'unofficial' businesses. For example, the Customs and Excise authorities estimate that two million watches are smuggled into England each year, and that most of them are sold in large factories. I don't know what proportion of 'surgical rubber goods' are sold in factories, but it must be a high one. Anyone who works in a factory knows

you can always place a bet, once you know the ropes. The management usually turn a blind eye to these activities. But not Vauxhall.

A rather gruesome example of the firm's sense of values is shown by the fact that on several occasions, after an accident on the production line, the injured man is dragged to one side, the line re-started, before the first aid man is called. There has recently been some agitation within the factory for men to refuse to work in unsafe conditions. Let us hope this campaign for what is normal workshop practice in a number of car factories* meets with success.

3. DIVIDE AND RULE

The Grading Scheme at Vauxhall, which operates with the full agreement of the trade union officials, is a clear breach of the principle of the 'rate for the job'. The men are paid according to the skill which the departmental supervision decides they have achieved. This is a clear break from the normal practice in engineering, in which each type of work has the same rate for all adult male workers doing it. At Vauxhall, men doing exactly the same work can receive up to four different rates.

For example, there are four different rates for production setters varying from 7/7¹/₂d to 8/5d an hour exclusive of merit money, and of the 1d. an hour increment received after two years' service. There are four

*See 'The B.L.S.P. Dispute', by Ken Weller, p. 5.

different rates for rectification fitters, who can receive from 6/11d. to 7/10¹/₂d. There are three different rates for material handlers and store keepers, varying from 5/11¹/₂d. to 6/7¹/₂d., and three rates for production assemblers from 6/11 to 7/7d. ... and so on 'ad infinitum'.

Another feature of the Grading Scheme is the way the various grades are awarded, at the whim of the shop supervision. Some men without previous engineering experience will be put straight on to Grade 1 when they start. Others with exactly the same qualifications, or lack of them, will have to wait up to two years to achieve that honour.

The skill differential is decreasing due to the splitting up of skilled jobs. For example, the old-time toolmaker is a thing of the past. In his place you now have toolroom turners, tool fitters, jig borers, etc. At the same time as this process goes on, there has been a tendency for the wage differentials to increase. A classic application of the maxim 'divide and rule'.

Even if the Grading Scheme were acceptable, its method of application would still be open to question. For example: failing satisfaction about upgrading from the management, a man can appeal to the 'Grading Appeals Committees' which consist of 'three specially skilled men', appointed by the management. However, despite these 'appeals committees', the firm's 'Grading Scheme Handbook states quite clearly that 'All grading is the general responsibility of the Departmental Manager concerned, and his supervisory staff. This is a Management responsibility which is accepted and discharged

fairly by all supervision'.*

I wish I could be as certain of the supervision's 'fairness' as the 'Grading Scheme' handbook is. Again the management, while retaining final control, have managed to spread the onus for inequalities and injustices. They use the craft consciousness of their 'specially skilled' appointed men as a restricting factor. Anyone working in engineering knows that it wouldn't be difficult in any shop to find 'specially skilled' men who regard themselves as the 'cat's whiskers', and who feel that everyone but themselves is grossly overpaid. The thought of appealing to such men for recommendation for upgrading is a very sobering one. To be objective the system is a subtle way of splitting the workers' ranks and of using the more backward elements to help apply the management's own policy. A militant at Vauxhall told me that far from the 'Grading Appeals Committees' putting the views of workers, they were in fact more difficult to convince than the foremen! 'Nothing good had ever come out of them'.

There is also a 'profit sharing' scheme. This has a share-out once a year. The sum distributed is quite substantial. It is arrived at through a complicated calculation, based on the net profit made by the firm in the given year.

The text of the 'Profit Sharing Plan' issued by Vauxhall starts:

* Details for the section of this article dealing with the Grading Scheme came from the 'Grading Scheme for Hourly Paid Wage Scales' handbook, issued February 1961, with modifications added on March 23, 1962.

'Vauxhall Motors Ltd. has adopted... the following Profit Sharing Plan for the purpose of giving its employees a direct share in any future profit earnings of the Company, and in so doing, to advance further that spirit of cooperation between Management and Employees, which can have such a large effect on our profit figures and the ultimate success and solidity of our Company as a whole'.

The factory is one of the most highly automatized in the motor business. Many millions of pounds have been spent in recent years. This has had very important results within the plant. For example, when the Half Shaft Machine Shop at Dunstable was re-equipped with automatic transfer machines, its production capacity was doubled. The number of workers engaged fell from about 110 to just over 20. Those remaining received the same wages and worked the same hours as before.

4. COLLABORATION: THE M.A.C.

In 1942, to help them dominate the workers within the factory, the management set up the famous 'Management Advisory Committee' (hereafter called M.A.C.). This is a body consisting of 22 'employee representatives' and up to 6 management men. The permanent Chairman of the M.A.C. is the Managing Director of Vauxhall Motors or his deputy. The secretary and his deputy are also selected by the Managing Director. The 'employee representatives' are elected for 3 years, one-third coming up for election each year.

The scope of discussions on the M.A.C. are laid down in its constitution (October 1961):

'The subjects for discussion shall not be defined in any narrow or explicit way, but shall be allowed to embrace any matters that are pertinent to the general well-being and improvement of the Company and its employees, excluding only those matters for the settlement of which an organization already exists. Such matters (as an example, canteen affairs) will only be discussed by the Committee where questions of a larger principle be involved; items of operation being held to be matters which should be transferred to the appropriate responsibility, i.e. in this case, the Recreation Club..... No other matter is excluded from discussion and the Management will supply any information required to the best of their ability'.

While the M.A.C. can pass 'resolutions' by a two-thirds majority, (i.e. 18 out of the 22 employee representatives would have to vote for a resolution with which the management disagreed), the constitution piously states: 'it is hoped that resolutions forwarded will be, as far as possible, unanimous or agreed ones'.

A comment on the M.A.C. by a worker at another General Motors owned factory in Britain *: 'This Committee with elected worker representation can in theory consider any matter, but its recommendations are subject to the approval of the general manager. In fact, while minor matters concerning the canteen or the cloak-rooms may be dealt with satisfactorily, any major advance on such issues as wages, redundancy or hours is extremely unlikely. Nonetheless the company has in the past and does still

* See 'Inside the Frigidaire Strike' by D.C.F. Methane, in 'Trade Union Affairs' issue No.2, p.68.

hold up the M.A.C. as a model machinery for raising grievances. They are forced, on occasion, to meet shop stewards bodies because of pressure from the factory floor, but wherever possible stewards are bypassed. Facilities offered to worker members of the M.A.C. to carry out their duties are far in excess of those accorded to shop stewards, and the obstructive tactics exercised by supervisors against stewards are not applied to M.A.C. members. In short, the situation which existed as regards labour relations until the late '50s has been well defined by a supervisor who explained to one of his subordinates that a master-servant relationship existed. The words he used to make his meaning clear: "I'm the master, you're the servant".

Most active trade unionists reading these lines will note some similarity in function between the M.A.C. and Joint Factory Committees or Joint Production Committees which exist in other factories. The main difference seems to be the role played by the M.A.C. at Vauxhall in collaborating with the management on such questions as speed-up. They even participate in disciplinary action! For example the 'Personnel and Absentee Sub-Committee' of the M.A.C. interviews all workers whose time-keeping, etc, 'is not up to standard'. It then makes recommendations for disciplinary action.

Many managements employ the tactic of promoting 'troublesome' shop stewards wherever possible. At Vauxhall they use a slightly different method of syphoning off 'troublesome' elements. They are elected on to the M.A.C. - or rather some of them are, for it would be wrong to think that all members of the M.A.C. are ex-militants. Far from it. Some of them never were.

Membership of the M.A.C. has a number of advantages. Those elected no longer have to work on the line or at the bench. They have a nice comfortable office in the administration block. Their time is spent on sub-committees discussing whether to discipline a man for being late, whether to whitewash windows in the factory during the summer, or possibly a new colour scheme for the offices. They also spend a lot of time organising inter-departmental sports and social activities.

In fact M.A.C. members are rarely seen by the men they represent. Apart from the advantage of not having to soil their hands with work, they get paid the average wage of the factory, which includes the average overtime (which, of course, they do not work). Another advantage for the M.A.C. member is that his wages are much less affected by seasonal fluctuations than those of the 'ordinary worker'. It is widely suspected at Vauxhall that the average wage they receive is more in the nature of a 'happy medium'. It was noted that even when large numbers of workers were being laid off, the wage packets of M.A.C. members still included large amounts of overtime pay.

There is a growing disenchantment by workers in the M.A.C., and for that matter in the trade union machines. A little while ago a 'voters' veto' was organized at an M.A.C. election. Only about 5 per cent of the electors bothered to vote. The constitution of the M.A.C. was then changed (by the M.A.C. itself). If there was a poll of less than 15 per cent, the holder would remain in office! A sort of 'heads I win, tails you lose' arrangement. So much for the much vaunted democracy.

- ALL OBTAINABLE FROM: E. MORSE, 68, HILL FARM, WHIPSNADE,
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5. COLLABORATION: THE TRADE UNIONS

The management of Vauxhall do not recognise any special right of shop stewards to represent workers. In fact, they make every effort to by-pass the shop stewards' organization. In this they have received the able assistance of the local officials of the trade unions. In a series of points mutually agreed between the Divisional Organiser of the AEU (J.R.Longworth) and the management, one may read (point 7):

'It was agreed that, in the light of the Company not being a member of the Employers' Federation, and in the particular circumstances of the Company, no full and formal shop steward system or Committee could fairly be operated*(my emphasis, K.W.)

The Management only extend a limited recognition to two unions: the AEU and the NUVB, thus restricting the number of officials with whom they have to keep a 'happy relationship'. This also has the effect of excluding members of other unions from representation.

The firm has a distinct policy of obstruction of shop stewards, quite apart from victimizing them by transfer. For example, if a man wants to call in his shop steward to negotiate on his behalf, it is frequently found 'very difficult' to find a man to stand in for him on the line. Men have had to wait up to three days before the steward was available. At the same time the foreman will emphasize how easy it would be for him to phone up the office block and call down the M.A.C. member straight away.

As far as the management are concerned, Luton and Dunstable are one factory. They allow only one convenor for both plants. This means that Dunstable, which is much smaller, rarely sees him. Another factor is the inter-union strife between the AEU (stronger at Luton) and the NUVB (stronger at Dunstable). This situation is not helped, but is made worse by the actions of some of the local trade union officials.

The AEU Divisional Organizer for Division 20 (which includes Luton and Dunstable) is 'Jack' Ruskin Longworth, a well-known right-wing official, believed to be closely associated with I.R.I.S. and a number of other dubious organizations, such as the English Speaking Union. He spent some time on tour in the U.S. as a guest of this outfit, which is a sort of American equivalent of the 'friendship societies' of the Eastern Bloc. It is used for the same purpose: for rewarding or influencing possible or actual friends, with trips to their respective utopias!

The local official of the NUVB is Arthur Leary. He is one of the few Tory trade union officials (not that it makes much difference which of the major parties they are members of). By a strange coincidence, most of the local officials drive around in nice, frequently renewed, Vauxhall cars.

Partially because of the role of the officials, union membership is low. It was estimated by Zweig (1960) as 60 per cent of the labour force. In mid-1962 it was about 53 per cent. Due to the rapid growth of Vauxhall the percentage is decreasing while the actual number of union members is increasing.

* From 'Something About Vauxhall', page 20.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The dual policy of Vauxhall (on the one hand relatively good wages and conditions; on the other absolute domination of the workers while at work) raises important problems. It raises the problem of the overwhelming emphasis placed on purely economic demands by everyone, from the most extreme right-wing official to the disciples of the most 'revolutionary' Trotskyist sects, from the Communist Party to Catholic Action. In industry the major practical difference between these organizations is whether a wage increase of 10/- or of 15/- is asked. This puts them on the 'right' or on the 'left' of the political spectrum!

This unanimous attitude has played a large role in ideologically disarming (pardon the jargon) shop floor militants. We see the results at Vauxhall. It is time emphasis was placed on demands which raise the question of who controls, demands which challenge the arbitrary 'right' of the boss to order 'his' workers about, without consideration for what they want.

The present tendency in industry, particularly in the United States, is for higher wages, sometimes shorter hours, but for the worker to be exploited to an increasingly brutal degree, while at work. The worker slogs his guts out for 8 hours... then spends the rest of the day recovering. We feel that men have the right to a human existence at work, as well as during the few hours between working and sleeping.

Fortunately, the best laid plans of mice and men gang oft astray. We have the example of the four-week long Frigidaire strike at Cricklewood,

in November 1960, in which 1,000 workers were involved. Frigidaire, like Vauxhall, is owned by General Motors. Its labour relations set-up is similar: it also has its M.A.C. The dispute was over the transfer of a man accused of wasting time during work-study to a lower-paid job (for 'time wasting' read normal working). At the end of the strike the management agreed to the settlement offered them by the shop stewards before the strike began. In his summing up of the dispute, one of those actively involved wrote:

'Frigidaire workers have now, after an interval of time, had an opportunity to see in perspective the recent event and the principal lessons that emerge.

'In the first place the strike did not begin and end with an individual grievance; the underlying issue was that the continued existence of effective trade union organization in the factory was being challenged by the management. Negotiations having broken down, this challenge was met and defeated by direct action on the part of the workers.

'Secondly, a certain myth hitherto prevalent among sections of the trade union membership was exploded. Conflicts between management and workers, it had often been claimed in the past, were primarily due to the general intransigence and personal idiosyncrasies of individual Company negotiators and not to a lack of sympathy with trade unionism on the part of the Company. The strike disproved this theory: it was generally admitted that no board of management was likely to permit its paid officials to wage a four-week struggle at Company expense in order to bolster their egos or indulge their personal foibles.

'Finally, it is a widespread practice among U.S. owned firms in

Britain to arrogate to themselves an exclusive right to fix wages and conditions of work. The majority of Frigidaire workers have now understood how essential therefore it is to make careful selection of and give strong support to shop stewards, who must be from the ranks of those who see that their main task is to check and defeat the company's insistence on its 'rights' and who will exert pressure to the point where the present management policy of unilateral administration is abandoned and the principle conceded in full that workers have the right to state and negotiate towards fulfilment of their demands'.*

The lessons I draw from the Frigidaire strike is that 'you can fool some of the people all the time, and all of the people some of the time. But you can't fool all of the people all of the time'. The very heavy investment made by Frigidaire in 'co-partnership' came to nothing over a particularly crude form of disciplinary action (which militants would call victimization).

The only guarantee against arbitrary actions by the employers is the strength of the workers' own organization. The intelligent employer (and a lot of them aren't) would often sooner concede advances in wages and conditions - which he would have to give sooner or later, in any case - with the aim of undermining the basis of workshop organization. This in its turn would allow him far greater freedom of action in the factory. When a real issue comes along, for example a large scale redundancy, there would then be no organization to challenge his 'managerial rights'.

Managers are basically interested in control. Most of them would sooner pay reasonable wages and have absolute domination (although these don't necessarily go together) than pay low wages and consequently have a constant struggle and a strong shop stewards' committee on their hands.

It is highly significant that militants at Vauxhall claim that every improvement in wages and hours, obtained through struggle at Ford's, is more or less automatically conceded, without a struggle, by Vauxhall, six months later.

It seems to me there are a number of points worth pursuing at Vauxhall. I make them purely as a contribution towards developing a real programme aimed at strengthening the shop floor organization. There are many militants at Vauxhall who are of course much better qualified than I, both to analyse the situation there, and to develop such a programme. This article hopes simply to initiate a discussion.

The issues I feel important, I give below:

(1) The development of a campaign against the arbitrary 'right' of the management to transfer men from one shop to another, or even from the Luton plant to Dunstable and back again. Such a system is almost unheard of in a reasonably organized factory. It is based on an absolute disregard for the effect of these upheavals on the personal life of the worker. It is a planned breaking up of work groups, as they begin to develop group loyalties. It also allows the management to isolate militants at will, and to break up groups which are prepared to struggle to defend or improve their wages and conditions.

* From 'Inside the Frigidaire Strike' by D.C.F.Methane, in 'Trade Union Affairs', issue No.2, pp. 75-76.

(2) The ending of the right of the Company unilaterally to speed up the production line. It should be firmly established that there can be no increase in the tempo of production without the agreement of the men. Surely the speed at which a man is forced to work is a matter for him to decide? Closely linked with this issue is the challenge to the barbaric system of work-study and measurement. This practice of timing each gesture of the worker down to fractions of seconds, leads to a soul-destroying organization of work, without any flexibility such as could take into account the individuality of the worker.

(3) The establishment of 'the rate for the job'. Each job should have a clearly defined rate. Everyone doing the same job should be paid the same rate. This is the normal system. To have up to four different rates for people doing the same job, as well as being unjust, is an obvious invitation to supervisors and their collaborators 'to help their friends and punish their enemies'.

The 'qualifications' imposed by the 'merit money scheme' have in most cases no relation to the right of the worker to receive a fair wage. This should be based purely on whether he is doing the particular job. 'Loyalty', 'cooperation' and 'stability' should have nothing to do with whether he gets the correct wage. A man shouldn't receive a bigger wage packet because he stands to attention when he hears the name Vauxhall.

(4) Forcing Vauxhall to recognize the Shop Stewards Committee as the only negotiating body. The recognition of the right of the men to be in any union they fancy, and the recognition of stewards elected by them.

The establishing of facilities for stewards, not less favourable than those accorded to any other 'representatives'. The ending of the system of private discussions between management and trade union officials. The clear establishment that officials can be called in only by shop stewards, and that the shop stewards concerned are present at all negotiations and discussions between officials and management.

This recognition of the Shop Stewards Committee would at the very least lead to a drastic revision, if not abolition, of the M.A.C. As a very minimum all union members would have to withdraw from all bodies which have functions connected with discipline, i.e. the Personnel and Absentee Sub-Committee of the M.A.C. and the Grading Appeals Committees. All decisions of these bodies would have to be treated as if they had been made by the management in the normal way. The stewards would then have to protect the interests of the workers against the decisions of these bodies.

None of the ideas put forward above are very original. In all cases they are general practice in reasonably organized factories. I offer them with the greatest diffidence. 'Solidarity' would welcome all contributions to a discussion around these ideas, as well as any criticisms, additions or comments on this article from workers at Vauxhall or elsewhere. We hope to publish these (with the writers' permission) in a future issue.

Lastly I would like to thank all those people, workers at Vauxhall and elsewhere, who were so patient and helpful. I must emphasize that responsibility for all errors and opinions in this article is mine alone.

Jehovah's vanguard

A psychiatrist speaking on television recently pointed out that English puritanism grew up during the industrial revolution, when it became necessary to discipline individuals into becoming competent factory workers. The Protestant churches had taken an active part in the bourgeois revolution. They assisted the industrial revolution by preaching that sex, drink, leisure - and everything that took man's interest away from work - was evil. Only by abstinence and hard work would man arrive at the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Bolsheviks, in order to discipline their peasantry into becoming industrial workers, adopted the same kind of puritanism. It is interesting to examine this puritanism insofar as it affects the upbringing of children. Margaret Mead, the anthropologist, wrote an interesting book on this subject a few years ago.* She gives numerous examples from Russian sources.

In a model of an exemplary family, a Soviet mother is made to say: 'All the children obey me. My eldest son, who returned from the front a lieutenant, will do nothing without asking my advice, will go nowhere without having told me'.

In relation to children it is stated that parents must be unrelentingly vigilant, exacting and consistent in disciplinary demands and in the imposition of duties. While parents should show warmth, affection and understanding, they should not permit excessive intimacy, which might undermine their authority. Parents must not be all-forgiving, for conduct deviations in children cannot be tolerated. Parental indulgence interferes with proper upbringing and turns a child into a despot at home and into a difficult child in the school collective. Obedience is seen as the first step towards developing a disciplined will.

Another manual of instructions to parents states: 'The best training is in the accurate, scrupulous fulfillment of daily modest ordinary duties. Children must know exactly their bedtime, time of play and preparation of lessons. Sexual education must consist in the development of the intimate respect for sexual questions which is called chastity'.

The Bolshevik attitude towards children is also an indication of their dislike of spontaneous inventiveness among the masses: 'The educator does not permit inventions which may create in children incorrect

* 'Soviet Attitudes towards Authority'. Tavistock Publications Ltd., 1955.

representations, incorrect attitudes to life', and 'In the process of play, parents should give the child as much freedom of action as possible, but only as long as the play proceeds properly'.

Margaret Mead remarks, however, that the housing shortage and other social conditions make it unlikely that even this intensive propaganda has ensured this Bolshevik 'ideal' in the bringing up of children. Possibly, this is one of the reasons why Khrushchev dreams of putting every child into a Boarding School.

In order to understand how the top leadership is officially said to gain (and maintain) its superior capacity to lead, Margaret Mead turns to the folk-lore which was developed during the late twenties and early thirties. In this the figures of Lenin and of Stalin were fitted into traditional folk-lore.

The people are pictured as gathering together 'from the old to the middle ones, from the middle ones to the young ones and asking "Who should be ruling?". And they all spoke the same speech, they all chose one Vladimir Il'ich, the Leader Lenin, and they entrusted all of Russia to him, to the Leader Lenin and his helper, with the entire Bolshevik Party'. Another revision of an old folktale, about three brothers searching for Truth tells how one went to the factory 'to seek for Truth', for 'there you will find out more rapidly what it is. You hold it in your hand'. And 'Lenin's Truth' found in the factory 'went over the whole world... And in October of the seventeenth year, the Truth announced itself, started to speak in a loud voice and ring over the entire world'.

Throughout the folklore, as in the Party histories, the plot is the search for the Truth. So there arises an emphasis on the ideal leader's undeviating, absolute following of the Truth and from this Truth he obtains his power. As Margaret Mead points out, this is a religious conception and is not based upon a materialist conception of history.

In much Soviet writing there is talk of a Party 'soul' as in the following: 'Our secret is something that many chairmen underestimate and which our Party always puts at the head of everything. It's ideological education of the people. The organization of labour, agricultural technique, connections with science, all these are very important matters, but at the first difficulty they become empty ciphers if there is no Party soul in the collective farm'.

As another indication of the spiritual, rather than material, content of Bolshevism, Margaret Mead examines the conception that throughout society all are expected to play a model-setting role. The Leader is considered as the perfect model. He has obtained complete vision of all things. In this way, all eyes are turned towards the top, making it possible to mark out a line of spiritual ambition not unlike that available in religions without a priesthood (a characteristic of Russian sects). In these, each true believer can approach nearer and nearer to perfection.

When the British Communist Party was founded it adopted the same methods of organization as those of the Russian Party. At a later date, the Trotskyists organized themselves in the same manner. In so doing, these vanguard groups completely ignored the fact that they lived in an advanced, industrial country, and not in a country where political opposition was illegal and the Industrial Revolution had not been completed.

As Margaret Mead has shown, the whole idea of the 'vanguard' party, guiding and directing the masses, has become a 'religion'. It operates in the manner of all religions: it actively participates in preventing the masses from undertaking their own emancipation. It is little wonder that the vanguard groups with which we are 'blessed' in this country so resemble Jehovah's Witnesses or the more exclusive brands of Plymouth Brethren!

SHILLELAGH

DO YOU NEED A HOME?

Don't form an action committee to demand low-cost housing...
Send your wife and kiddies to her mother's and

JOIN THE ARMY!

DO YOU WANT REGULAR PAY & JOB SECURITY?

Don't get together with the other members of your union to secure workers' control of the factories... Let Big Business run the country while you

JOIN THE ARMY!

DO YOU WANT TRAVEL? EDUCATION? ADVENTURE?

You too can crawl through the swamps of some romantic, moon-lit isle, to plunge a knife in another man's back...
You too can leave a leg on a landing beach, or your eyes at some new 'turning point of history'...
You too can have a soldier's grave...

JOIN THE ARMY!

ARE YOU FED UP WITH THE WORLD?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP BLOW IT TO HELL?

JOIN THE ARMY!

Above ad. from 'Alternative', the banned American radical magazine. Sent to 'Solidarity' by U.S. Banbombnik J. Stewart, Chicago.

about ourselves

In May 1961 we met our co-thinkers from France, Italy and Belgium (see 'Solidarity' vol.I, No.8). The groups agreed a text which we have now produced as a pamphlet entitled 'Socialism or Barbarism' (10d., post free, from E. Morse). It is a basic statement of our assessment of the changes in modern capitalism and of the need to break from bureaucratic politics.

Our supporters in the Gravesend - Dartford area have now formed themselves into an autonomous group, meeting regularly. From this issue on, they intend to produce their own local supplement to 'Solidarity'. Activities by supporters in Kent have led to further (and as usual rather stupid) attacks on 'Socialism Reaffirmed' and 'Solidarity' in the 'Dartford Reporter'. We are alleged to be 'thorns' in the hide of the local CND bureaucrats.

A Canadian socialist magazine called 'Press' has published an article on the Cricklewood 266 bus dispute, based on the report in our last issue. We have also been sent the very interesting outline of basic principles adopted by the libertarian tendency in the American Young People's Socialist League (YPSL). These ideas are very similar to our own.

The 'Workers' Opposition' pamphlet is still selling steadily. A number of public libraries have sent for copies. Bulk orders have been received from the USA and France. The pamphlet has recently been translated and printed in Italy. A number of copies have also reached students in the USSR, by rather devious routes.

Our next pamphlet (HUNGARY, 1956) will be ready shortly. Its author, Andy Anderson, has been working on it for over a year. It includes a massive documentation, including texts hitherto unpublished in Britain, on the Hungarian Workers' Councils. It will cost about 2s.

We will soon be printing our first paperback. It will be a book by Paul Cardan on the revolutionary movement and modern capitalism. For this, our most ambitious venture so far, we will need financial help (either as gifts, or as loans, which will actually be repaid within 6 months). We appeal to all readers and sympathisers... both to help us - and to settle their debts!

Above all we need new subscribers. Only in this way can we expand our paper. We hope, in the next few issues, to deal with a number of interesting subjects: 'Peasant Socialism, the Mirs, and the problems of Africa today'; 'The Medical Effects of Speed-up and Repetition work'; 'The Bureaucratisation of CND'; 'The Aftermath of Kronstadt and the Miasnikov Movement'; 'Strikers and National Assistance Benefit', etc. Make sure of a copy. Take out that sub, now.

SKELETON STAFF AT GRAVE'S END

For four weeks, during my summer holidays, I had the misfortune of being a clerk in the Mutuality Club Dept. of the Gravesend Cooperative Society.

The Mutuality Club is in the fine, modern offices of the Co-op bank, in Harmer Street. When one first enters the bank, one is struck by the bright, cheerful atmosphere of the place. But the office is bare of the slightest amenities (except toilets). The Gravesend Co-op is run on a shoe-string. To illustrate this I will give some examples.

Many workers have no proper desks. They have to sit at long, low wooden benches. Chronic backache is common.

The Co-op is short of proper office chairs (i.e. chairs with padded seats and backs). Some unlucky workers are forced to sit on hard wooden seats, which further add to their misery.

There are not enough pens especially red ones which are used for checking. I was reduced to using my own!

There are no fire extinguishers in the bank offices. They are all in the office upstairs. The only exits to the street are via two doors opening onto Harmer Street. Presumably, if these are blocked during a fire, bank workers will twiddle their thumbs until rescued or burnt to death.

Rumours are going around that the main reason for these economies is that the 'divi' is shortly to be raised to 2/- in the pound.

For a $37 \frac{1}{4}$ and a $40 \frac{3}{4}$ hour week * I was paid £5.10.0. The rate is now £5.15.6. These hours were minus the half-hour tea break a day, spent in one of the dingiest rooms (called 'lounge') I have ever seen. The girls in the Check Office were highly honoured. They were paid five bob a week more as they 'used machines'.

The work in the office (as in most offices) was most demoralising. It was more or less the same thing, day in, day out, with only a rare change to another department, if lucky.

Most of the people I spoke to were thoroughly bored with it all. The girls were waiting to get married so as to leave. The boys (there were 3 of us) foresaw no possible future in the job. It is very difficult to get on in the Co-op unless you happen to be a Labour councillor or something. We were going to leave as soon as we found other jobs. It is absolutely false to say, as many bourgeois do, that people of 'lower intellect' want to do menial tasks.

* Co-op workers work alternate Wednesday afternoons and Saturdays.

There was practically no diffusion of labour in the office. Only three girls, for example, could handle a very simple telephone exchange. No attempt was made to teach anyone else to work it, in case of emergency. If one of the girls was absent - or in the toilet - when a call came through, the call would have to wait.

I saw an example of the most piddling piece of bureaucracy I have met for a long time. In Gravesend, the Co-Op has recently changed its name from 'The Borough of Gravesend Cooperative Society' to 'The Gravesend Cooperative Society'. Everything published before this momentous decision still has the word 'Borough' on it. Before one can even start to do any work, one has to scratch out the offending word. It was an offence not to do so, our secretary pompously explained to us. All this involves extra work, wastes time and is annoying. It is particularly annoying when one forgets to do it and has to go back over, say 250 vouchers, erasing 'boroughs'.

In the four weeks I worked there, I never saw such a bunch of demoralised, fed-up people in all my life. They would have given anything to have gotten the hell out of there.

Brian Booker.

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RATES REFUSAL

by ANDY ANDERSON.

On April 27, as already reported in 'Solidarity'* the Dartford magistrates issued a Distress Warrant to the Labour-controlled Rural District Council of Dartford, enabling them to distrain on the property of one Andy Anderson. Andy had refused to pay his Civil Defence rate for 1960-61 and 1961-62. The amount 'owed' was 1/2 for each year (plus Court costs of 9/9).

On May 1, the monthly meeting of the Dartford R.D.C. was abandoned after the Council Chamber had been 'invaded' by 15 Kent supporters of the Committee of 100.**

Here is a diary of what has happened since:

June 30

The Council Bailiff called at Andy's home to execute the Warrant. He said he wanted to take something that would raise £2 - £3 at an auction. He couldn't. Strangely enough, everything in the house was now in the name of Beryl Anderson, Andy's wife.

July 2

Andy paid the rates for the first half of the year 1962-6. But he again withheld the amount earmarked for Civil Defence, i.e. 7d. He sent a further letter to the Council in which he again asked what arrangements the Civil Defence Committee had made for the protection of people in the Dartford area, in the event of a nuclear attack.

July 3

Andy received a summons to attend the Dartford Magistrates Court on July 13. The Dartford R.D.C. had applied to the Court for his committal to prison, for non-payment of 2/4d. rates. The summons stated that the Court would enquire into his 'conduct and means'.

July 13

At the beginning of the Court hearing, Andy asked the magistrates for an adjournment. His grounds were that the Home Office was investigating the 'irregular' procedure of the Court on April 27.* On May 29, Andy had described this 'procedure' in a letter to the Home Secretary. The Home Office had replied that they were looking into the matter.

* 'Solidarity' vol.II, No.3, page 15.

** 'Solidarity' vol.II, No.3, p.22 and 'Dartford Reporter', May 4, 1962.

Anderson argued that since the present proceedings were a direct sequence to the proceedings being investigated by the Home Office, an adjournment until the findings of this investigation were known was relevant. The magistrate refused an adjournment, no reason being given. The case proceeded. Andy was able to say quite a number of things about the Civil Defence fraud locally and nationally, much of which was reported in the local press.* However Andy was sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment and taken to the cells.

Half an hour later he was released. His wife had gone to the police station and paid the amount in question. The main objective had been achieved. The struggle had shown that a Civil Defence rate refusal can be taken a long way, with considerable local, and some national press publicity. And all this at small cost to the 'campaigner'.

July 24

The Civil Defence Committee of Dartford R.D.C. discussed Andy's letter of July 2. A motion that no reply be sent was carried. This is referred to in Andy's letter to the Councillors, published on p. 27-28.

July 25

Six supporters of the Committee of 100 stopped a meeting of the Labour-controlled Crayford Borough Council, at the Town Hall. For over two months the Council's Civil Defence organization had been under fire - from Civil Defence members themselves! Twelve members had signed a statement calling for 'a full and independent enquiry into Crayford's Civil Defence', which they said was 'nothing more than a social club'. They were supported by one of the full-time paid officials, who had resigned from the organization saying Crayford Civil Defence was a 'public scandal'.

This scandal had hit the front page and leader columns of the 'Kentish Times' throughout this period, but was now in danger of being forgotten.

The six supporters of the Committee of 100 (including Andy Anderson, who should of course have been in gaol) put the affair right back in the headlines. They simply stopped the meeting as soon as the item 'Civil Defence' was reached on the agenda. Two of them distributing leaflets (see p. 27) were removed from the Council Chamber by four rather breathless Council officials. They returned to the Chamber through a side door... and were again removed. The other four began to make speeches, one at a time, about the Civil Defence fraud. The police were called. Three squad cars and one motor-cycle brought 12 coppers, three of them sergeants. A sit-down took place. The six Committee of 100 men were removed. No one was arrested.

August 26

Andy sent a letter to each of the 28 councillors of the Labour-controlled Dartford R.D.C. (see opposite). The contents of this letter were given considerable coverage in the 'Kentish Times' (August 31, 1962).

* See 'Kentish Times', July 20, 1962, and 'Dartford Reporter', 20.7.62.

September 4

At a full meeting of the Dartford R.D.C. no mention was made of the August 26 letter. This little campaign continues. The next steps will be taken towards the end of September.

* * * * *

TEXT OF LEAFLET DISTRIBUTED AT
CRAYFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING.

Civil Defence Fraud.

We demand that at your meeting on July 25, 1962, a public inquiry into Civil Defence be held.

It is clear from press reports that even members of the Crayford Civil Defence Corps know they are involved in a public deception. In May the Chairman of the Civil Defence Committee, Mr. H.J. Morley, promised 'a full investigation' into Crayford Civil Defence. He said: 'I will leave no stone unturned to clear up this matter' ('Kentish Times', 1/6/62). It seems he was so shocked by what he saw when he turned over a few stones that he gave up. No real investigation or public inquiry was ever held. The statement issued later by Mr. Morley's committee was obviously (in the words of Crayford's ex-Civil Defence General Assistant) an attempt to 'white-wash'.

The Crayford Civil Defence fraud is inevitably repeated in every City, Borough, Urban and Rural District Council throughout the country. If they wish to escape the charge of hypocritically deceiving the public in Crayford, all those involved in Civil Defence must resign.

Kent Supporters of Committee of 100.

* * * * *

TEXT OF LETTER SENT BY ANDY ANDERSON
TO EACH COUNCILLOR OF DARTFORD R.D.C.

Civil Defence Expenditure.

It is remarkable that not one councillor has attempted to reply to the letter I sent each of you on January 23, 1962. I suppose it is evident that I do not easily give up. I am still hoping that at least one of you will find it compatible with your idea of democracy to reply this time.

On July 2, 1962, I wrote informing you that I had again withheld payment of that part of my rates which goes towards Civil Defence. I also asked again what preparations had been made for the protection of people

in the Dartford rural district in the event of a nuclear attack on this country. Your Clerk replied on August 3. He said the Civil Defence Committee decided (July 24) they would gain no useful purpose by entering into correspondence with me. The implication of this is obvious. The Committee is not concerned with whether any useful purpose would be gained by the ratepayers and electors. This is an outrageous admittance by the Civil Defence Committee. But the scandal does not end there.

This is the first time the Civil Defence Committee has been mentioned by your Clerk since my correspondence with the Council about Civil Defence began in January 1961! Presumably this was also the first time the Committee has had any business to deal with. But because my letter apparently caused the Committee meeting to last longer than the usual two or three minutes, it is really no excuse for the 'public spirited' members to get so ridiculously upset.

Is the reason for their refusal to answer my questions the crude one voiced by a member when he moved that no reply be sent to me? He said: 'As long as we write to him, he will write to us'. One senses members' torment and indignation that the conservative inertia of the Labour-controlled Council's bi-monthly, 3-minute Civil Defence meetings should be so disturbed by written questions from a mere ratepayer. But what an excuse!

Or have they a slightly more sophisticated reason for refusing to answer? Is it that anything they say will only embarrass them further - since nothing is being done and nothing can be done in the Dartford rural district (or anywhere else) for the protection of people if there is an H-bomb attack on this country? This would at least be an understandable reason.....

Councillors must know that, as far as Civil Defence is concerned, they are conducting a macabre farce and are therefore involved in callously deceiving the people of the Dartford area.

Yet Councillors have the audacity to accuse me of wanting to break up democracy!* Like the word 'Socialism' (which was used by Hitler, Stalin and Franco to describe their regimes) the use of the word 'democracy' has become ritualistic and incantatory. The proof of your honesty and sincerity lies in your interpretation of democracy.

You try to force me to pay for a service which, through your silence, you tacitly admit cannot be supplied. Is this your democracy? You summons me to appear before the Dartford Magistrates Court (April 27, 1962) 'to show cause why' I have not paid the rate for Civil Defence. But the magistrates will not allow me 'to show cause why'. When I attempt to do what I was summoned to do, I am dragged from the court. Is this your democracy? While I am being forcibly kept outside the court building, the magistrates call my name again, and as I do not 'appear', they issue a warrant enabling you to take property from my home. Is this your democracy?

(cont'd p.30)

* See 'Dartford Reporter', July 27, 1962.

NEWS FROM ZENGAKUREN

ZENGAKUREN, the All-Japan Federation of Autonomous Student Bodies, is a mass revolutionary organization, with a militant tradition of struggle against American Imperialism and the Japanese ruling class. In 1960, it organized strikes and continuous demonstrations, in which many were wounded, outside the Tokyo Diet, against the Ratification of the Japanese - US Security Treaty. These reached such an intensity that the US Government thought it advisable to cancel a proposed Eisenhower visit to Japan.

The Zengakuren have recently called for the establishment of an anti-war International. They are supported in this by the Committee of 100, the Student Peace Union in the US, the Socialist Students Organization of West Germany and many other organizations opposed to both American and Russian tests. On August 17, 1962, representatives of the Zengakuren, including Nemoto, their President, attended the Leningrad Conference of the International Union of Students. On their way, they had demonstrated in Red Square against all nuclear tests. They had been arrested, then released and 'closely watched during the remainder of their stay'.

We publish below an extract from Zengakuren Information Bulletin No.3, describing their discussions with representatives of the Soviet Student Council (SSC):

Soviet Student Council (SSC): Are you fighting against the nuclear testing of any nation other than the USSR? Do you realize that the Soviet Union is not the first country to engage in nuclear tests?

Zengakuren: We are engaged in a militant mass struggle against American nuclear tests. Our slogan in this struggle is, 'Against tests of USA and USSR'. We oppose any nuclear activity by any country, be it England, France or China. Of course, we are fighting against the nuclear armament of Japan. You who sponsor the I.U.S. Congress should have known such a well-known fact.

SSC: Granted, but what country began the first nuclear tests and how many times were such tests carried out before the Soviet Union began?

Zengakuren: That is of no consequence. We accuse all countries engaged in testing of promoting the arms race and of suppressing the working class and people.

SSC: We are glad to hear that you oppose the American nuclear tests and can appreciate your stand against these tests. We lost millions of lives in World War II. This tragedy was due to the fact that our military forces were weaker than those of the Fascists. We do not want to be the second Hiroshima. If during the war Japan had had nuclear weapons at their disposal, the tragedy of Hiroshima would not have occurred.

Zengakuren: We oppose your dangerous view. According to your logic, you encourage the Japanese Imperialists to arm themselves with nuclear weapons. Do you really think that this is an effective way to stop the nuclear race and to prevent nuclear war?

SSC: The best way to prevent war is obviously total disarmament, but the next best procedure is to continue Soviet nuclear tests.

Zengakuren: Your policy, based on such a philosophy, wields an immeasurably harmful influence on the anti-war struggle of the working class. Do you know the slogan that is being used in Tokyo, New York and London to fight N-tests? 'Against tests by US and USSR'. These students and workers attempt to obtain peace not with nuclear weapons but by their own struggles.

SSC: You believe that if the Soviet Union stopped its tests, the working class movement would increase in strength and the imperialists' tests would stop. We cannot be sure of such an outcome.

Zengakuren: Are you suggesting that the workers of the world stop their struggles and support Soviet testing? By holding such a view, you cause dissension among the workers of the world and make them oppose each other. The workers must unite. Soviet nuclear testing does not support peace. It provides America with an excuse to continue their tests and intensify the arms race. Any nuclear testing suppresses the workers of the world and subjects them to the domination of the ruling class. Aren't you yourselves the slaves of nuclear weapons?

SSC: We can appreciate your point of view, but we are of totally different opinions.

Zengakuren: The justice of our views will be borne out by the continuation of the world-wide struggle against N-tests.

SSC: Your opinion sounds quite sincere; continue your work as you like, but don't forget that you are in the USSR now.

RATES REFUSAL (cont'd from p.28)

When you find I have no property, you ask the magistrates to imprison me. You bring me before the Court again on July 13, and I am sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment. (You should note that I have still not paid these rates). All this you do because I will not pay for what you cannot supply and because I refuse to be involved in your deception of the people of Dartford. Is this your democracy?

Your actions do not conform with the idea of democracy held by many people in the Dartford area. Perhaps, if you explain your concepts of democracy, we shall see how you are able to justify your behaviour in this instance.

I am told there are a few of you with integrity and a humanitarian regard for the people whose interests you were elected to represent. To you, I therefore appeal: tell the people the whole truth about Civil Defence. This could be done by individual councillors. It would not necessarily entail advocating the disbanding of Civil Defence (if such councillors are still embarrassed by doing what is right and refusing to execute the Government's fraudulent Civil Defence decrees).

Yours sincerely,

E.T. Anderson.