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THE

Syndicalist

FOR WORKERS' CONTROL

Vol. I No. 3

Twopence

Resist Redundancy!

THERE is no need for us to outline all the difficulties which are supposed to be facing this country. All that talk about the drain on our gold reserves, the dollar gap, the balance of payments and so on and so forth, does not need to be repeated here. We are all heartily sick of it all.

There is one point we must always bear in mind, however, when we hear all this jargon, and that is that the recurrent crises are crises of capitalism. The troubles that beset us are problems of payments, trade, markets, exchange, currency, and although we as workers are told they are problems of production, they are really problems of the cost (in money) of production.

After all, there are no problems of productivity in the textile industries. The warehouses are bursting, the machinery is there and the workers would be only too pleased to get on with the job. But the textile manufacturers just cannot sell what is already produced. And it is not as though there is no need. Millions of people are in need of new clothes, sheets, or furnishing materials, but cannot afford to buy them.

It is even the same with food. We are now being informed that Cuba has a surplus of sugar (two years ago, Mr. Webb "feared" this would happen) but because it is a dollar area, we cannot buy it. Canada, we are told, has plenty of food to spare, but, again, we cannot buy. Cuban businessmen are now considering the restriction of production of sugar. Perhaps we shall again have the spectacle of wheat being burned in a world in which over 60 per cent. of its population live on a starvation level.

But when it comes to re-armament—then there's no inability to buy. Governments all over the world can always be relied upon to secure an abundance of planes, tanks, guns and bombs, with which workers will knock hell out of each other. It's only food, clothing and houses that are too difficult to make, too expensive to buy.

Crazy, isn't it? But even more crazy for workers to accept the problems of capitalism as their concern. They are not. It is not our responsibility if capitalism does not work. Let those who benefit from it sacrifice to maintain it. For us, capitalism only means exploitation

and degradation. Why should we struggle to keep it going?

Anarchists and Syndicalists believe that production and distribution should be administered for the benefit of all. Capitalists believe they should be run to make profits for them. Workers must choose between these concepts.

If they choose the former, then obviously we

must consciously fight against any bad effects of the profit system now. We must realise that we cannot allow workers to be thrown on the dole because the boss says he cannot afford to keep them on. An unemployed worker is not only in trouble himself, he is a threat to every worker with a job, and the first interest of the working-class to-day is to prevent redundancy—the polite name for unemployment—from growing any further.

Our mining correspondent points the way when he demands a return to the five-day week in the pits. The workers in any industry threatened with redundancy should put immediate bans on overtime and piece-work. This is likely to show up the inadequacy of the time rates, so the demand for a living basic wage will follow. If unnecessary stocks begin to accumulate, then cut down the hours of the working day—with no reduction in pay.

The point is that stocks will not accumulate if goods are distributed where they are needed, but the economists and the capitalists are not concerned about need. They will point out that the measures we have put forward are impractical and would only lead to higher costs of production. In other words, that the system cannot afford a permanent decent standard of living for the productive workers.

So much the worse, then, for the system. The only answer in that case, is for the workers to take over production and distribution themselves and run them on a basis that is not at the mercy of market fluctuations. The textile workers in Lancashire could do this to-day; they could occupy the mills, start up production themselves and by cutting out the parasites and working on a non-profit basis, could all make a decent living and produce goods cheap enough for anyone to buy, until such time as we can abolish money altogether.

Capitalism has only one answer to its own problems: rearmament and war. That cannot be the workers' answer. This should be the overthrow of capitalism and its defence mechanism the State, and the establishment of a sane order in society—production for need and not for profit. The workers have the strength to do this—why don't they use it?



"... and some of the lazy blighters actually want more money without more production."

Unionism

The Docks

A Pool Man Appeals to the Perms

LONDON.

THE first signs of redundancy in the London docks have appeared in the East India Dock, Blackwall.

The firm once again responsible for this attack on the workers is that famous firm of Messrs. Scruttons Ltd., whose greatest failure was the victory of the Tilbury dockers who won their fight against Permanency two years ago.

The number of men involved so far is only eight, but that is just a beginning. These men are permanent employees, which goes to show that even the Perms can get the Cosh.

Now the Pool men in London are anxiously waiting for the next move by the London Dock Labour Board, and to all Perms, wherever you are working, we say: take warning at what is happening and return to the Pool with the rest of the boys. Let us get united again and help each other to defeat the terrible boss!

A.G.

Death of a Union

MANCHESTER

FOR Syndicalists, the death of a trade union has a definite medical interest; an autopsy will help us to recognise the fatal disease *Government By Representatives* on the frequent occasions when it occurs in our working-class organisations.

We wish to record with a mixture of smugness and sorrow the demise, after a life-long illness, of the Association of Scientific Workers—its 5 to 10 per cent. of commies have captured it. Here's how it was done—compare with the Bolshevik capture of the Soviets prior to October, 1917.

The previous year's E.C. had 6 C.P.ers out of the 13 national members and officers—46 per cent. The list of candidates for these posts for next year contained 15 Joes out of 22 (or 68 per cent.) so that it was an impossibility for the conference to elect an entirely non-C.P. E.C. In spite of the fact that the C.P. stooges among the 180 "delegates" were only 40 per cent. or so (the writer estimates) these, of course, voted solidly while the other "delegates" voted, in ignorance

of the intrigue and counter-intrigue, for both C.P. and non-C.P. candidates. The result was a net majority for the C.P. candidates, so that the first ballot resulted in the election of 10 Joes out of 15, or 67 per cent.

The second ballot, after elimination of small fry, brought the sweets of office—10 out of 12, or 83 per cent. of the *ex-officio* and national members were C.P. stooges! In addition, of the three delegates to the T.U.C., two of them wear a party line across their toes.

The President is, of course, invariably elected unopposed since he is chosen on prestige value (past names being Blackett, Boyd Orr, Haden-Guest, and now Prof. Powell), but it is becoming more difficult to find distinguished stooges prepared to put themselves on the blacklist of half-a-dozen governments. Lord Haden-Guest's retiring address, significantly delivered by post, was quite curt and demanded an enquiry into reasons being given for resignation by members leaving.

De mortuis nil nisi bonum—but it was a lousy union anyway.

ERG.

A New Labour Movement

NO matter how revolutionary a political party or small group may deem itself to be, and even regardless of whether or not they happen to agree for the moment with the principle of workers' control (which in the end

Industrial Action

The strength of the working-class lies in industry, and if they want to achieve the industrial aim of workers' control, they must keep their strength to themselves where it is most effective.

Political parties have gulled the workers into believing that their emancipation can be achieved through political action, but all the experience of the working-class struggle shows that it is the politicians who get emancipated, while the workers are just left with the work.

The syndicalists therefore state that the weapons of the working-class are those of direct action. If we want to gain control of the means of production, we must work at the point of production, to weaken the hold of the boss, and to gain experience ourselves, so that they can be taken over and used by the workers themselves.

The means of direct action are the strike, in all its various forms (lightning, stay-in, etc.), the boycott, sabotage (go-slow, work-to-rule, etc.), culminating in the social general strike, when the entire working-class says that it will no longer work for the boss, but will only work on its own terms, under its own control.

If our political opponents say that these methods have been used and have failed, we can only reply that as far as this country is concerned, these methods have not yet been used to anything like their fullest extent. They remain the only means by which the workers can use their strength to its proper advantage. Political action only dissipates that strength in a desire for political power, which has never yet been used for freeing the workers from their economic bondage.

Bakery • • • • •

The Baker and His Critics

GUERNSEY.

IT seems queer to me, but whatever job one does, and however long one has been at it, there is always someone, with only a nodding acquaintance with the work, who can tell him what to do.

Take bread-baking, for instance. The cook who can make anything in the cake line from a currant bun to a wedding cake; the master-baker who sleeps while his employees earn his keep for him; the yeast man; the travellers for the various flour-milling firms who are always telling us how many loaves we should be able to get out of a sack of flour; all those others who hawk around several kinds of powder known in the trade as "bread-improvers", and finally those good folk of the general public who seem to imagine that good bread can be made only after nightfall and see nothing in a fellow human working all night throughout

proves incompatible with political action), they retain their support of the trade union movement. The labour movement in this country enjoys an unparalleled position in that it has no effective rivals, and can even afford the luxury of petty and malicious attacks on small workers' organisations (such as on the Mutual Aid Society at Euston) which have only come into being as unions in order not to leave people who have been expelled from the union unorganised in an organised industry. This all-embracing scope of the labour movement affords great opportunities for those seeking power; far better, in their view, to take part in its activities, become officials and control this vast organisation than to think in terms of a new movement.

This "boring from within" has come off successfully in many big unions so far as the C.P. is concerned, and here the Labourites are worried that a few Stalinoids can control vast unions solely because of the activities of a handful of people who happen to attend meetings—exactly the way the Labourites themselves got power, one might mention.

It may be necessary in some industries for revolutionaries to be members of unions, for the instinct for a closed shop is right enough, even if it is being used as a means of dragging all into one union which can discipline them the better. However, we strike at the root of all that is wrong in the labour movement by saying that we do not want to work with the unions but to replace them altogether by a different labour movement. One old myth that used to be put round by socialists was that "no country can have two labour movements"—hence we must make the best of the one we have. But that is not true—some countries have half-a-dozen—and the type we want is that based upon the syndicalist idea.

Syndicalist unions, are not based upon the principle of leadership, officialdom, bureaucracy, control from Whitehall, but upon the very thing that is to-day called "unofficial

his life (which Dr. Scott Williamson once described as "The worst form of punishment a man can have"). All these people like to tell us bakers how to do our job.

The baker, like most other workers, has little or no direct contact with his fellow humans to enable them to understand his problems, or, in fact, for him to have any sympathy for their needs. This is the direct outcome of the class system of society in which we live—the organisation of industry into more or less water-tight compartments and, I might add, the existence of a trade-union movement with its highly-paid officials who have no direct knowledge as to what goes on in the place of work.

The answer is that only when the workers in all industries are working in their own interests through their own syndicates will there be that direct contact between producer and consumer. Only then will such interference as listed above be at an end, as with the wiping out of the middlemen the syndicates would be able to produce what folks needed and satisfy their own interests at the same time.

What criticism still took place would be of a lively and healthy nature, something on the lines of the following quote:

- "1. The critic must have mastered the field of work which he criticises;
- "2. He must know it at least as well as he whom he criticises;
- "3. He must be interested in the success of the work and not its failure;
- "4. His criticism must be done from the point of view of the field of work which is being criticised and not from a point of view which is alien to the field of work in question."

(From *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, by Wilhelm Reich.)

BERT SMITH.

action, and it will be created not by electing its officials and appointing its delegates, but in the same spontaneous way as has characterised all action of recent years.

The other main difference is that syndicalist unionism has a purpose in itself. It does not believe in a political fund to send M.P.s to Westminster so as—it was once fondly hoped—to bring about socialism, because it accepts the fact that both private enterprise and State control have to be opposed. It seeks to prove that industry can be taken over by the workers any time they choose, and to set up the means of taking over industry, which can only be done by the workers themselves.

A new labour movement is certainly coming in this country. It must do, because the old one is becoming a kind of Labour Front, being made more and more official, more and more a part of the pattern of the employing side of industry and of the State (particularly through the labour exchange). Hence something is going to take its place one way or another in the industrial field. Will it be a new political unionism that will go the way of the old in time? Or will it be not trade unionism but syndicalism? A.M.



Talking Points

Closed Shop

ONE of the famous catch-phrases in the trade union movement is the old one about people who "want the benefits of trade unionism without paying for them". The only cause for which a T.U. official can get excited any more is the closed shop: the only thing he will fight for is to see that somebody pays his dues who is getting out of them. Unfortunately, the opposite does not seem to apply. If you do not want some of the so-called benefits there is no way of getting out of them apparently, except by unofficial action.

Let us get away from this myth of 100 per cent. trade unionism; what it seems to mean is simply that there is somebody there to negotiate with the boss, and in return for a few agreements covering rates that could be achieved in any case, union or not, in time of labour shortage (and can apparently be obtained at no other time anyway) the workers are to be disciplined and prevented from acting for themselves in any matter.

While men, after several years' apprenticeship and experience, are thus tied to the rate agreed on between the T.U. officials and the employers, it is quite easy for a young girl to take a few months' course in shorthand-typing and step straight into a job at the same money. If she can get another job at more money, all she does is to drop one and take the other. There is no agreement, no union, no "benefits", no protection—but in the finish more money. Good luck to her. She is behaving as an unofficial striker on her own bat and if she is making £7 a week at it without paying anyone for the "benefit", it is not for the worker earning a similar wage in heavy industry or transport to begrudge it, but rather to reflect on the fact that it is not achieved by negotiation but by independent action, and what in his case cannot be done individually can be done collectively, but not necessarily "officially". INDUSTRIAL UNIONIST.

E.T.U. URGES WORKERS' CONTROL

At last month's conference of the Electrical Trades Union, a resolution was adopted urging workers' control in the industry. The E.T.U. leaders were asked to draw up a scheme by next year showing how they would run the B.E.A.

That should make interesting reading!

THE final answer to the question of transport in transit or to me many years ago who had been appointed detective at the yard mark said to him, "N older man than many here, and you look an to me. You know the business going on here."

Textiles • • • Lancashire

THIS month in the Lancashire "Situation Vac last month was the one cotton mill wanted months ago weavers w ago every mill wanted and Lancashire loom plains, checks, silk and bulged with displayed persuade with canteens, helpers", day nurseries Blackpool or the Festival A year ago, Britain Lancashire's thread, dashed in Jaguars and ences which hoped to unemployed workers in spinning could employ them. Workers from drawn into the mills—Lians, Czechs and Lith unfortunate girls came a raw deal to suffer b weather.

Now the "recession" the managers, and p weavers call it a slum nineteen-thirties. The were reserved during the big money—they have grams and washing-m them are working two

Some people remember poverty and distress t mass unemployment of ber the '20s when there

Standing at two loom five shillings a week. working to draw one v being put out to 'mind morning. The parents rushing home to have dress the children and all between 8.15 and 8 minute late you were l

Railways • • • • •

Railwaymen Aid S

LAST month the NU the Euston Rail Society. This latter was Branch of the NUR aft expelled by the NEC withdrew in sympathy. 28/6/52.)

The MAS is an org women at the point of own unpaid voluntary political basis, concern their interests as worker rank-and-file answer to very much on the rig 750-800 at Euston and

IF YOU LIKE The Syn

Reading.....

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By W. McCARTNEY

Describes the successful struggle of catering workers' union organised in England on syndicalist lines. The author took part in the scenes he describes.

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By PHILIP SANSOM

48 pages

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Pilfering in Transit

LONDON.

THE final answer to all stories about pilfering in transit or at the works was given to me many years ago by an old anarchist, who had been approached by a company detective at the yard where he worked. The nark said to him, "Now I can see you're an older man than many of the people working here, and you look an honest, responsible man to me. You know there's a lot of crooked business going on here. Now I want you to

tell me confidentially something about it." My friend was a bit flabbergasted at first to think that a stool-pigeon should have taken him for "an honest, responsible man" and then he said, "Yes, there is some crooked business going on here. We work all the week and produce what corresponds to a certain amount of labour. But we don't get that. We receive a wage based on what the rate for the job is supposed to be. The difference between those two sums is what is stolen from the workers. Now you know that, what do you

propose to do about it?" It was detective's turn to be flabbergasted, then he said, "What are you talking about? I'm referring to what the workers steal!"

When one considers the huge rake-off taken by the boss, the great hue-and-cry about a few odds and ends (that have in many cases been accepted for years as perquisites of the job, anyway) it hardly seems worth while making such a fuss about it. Without moralising in the matter, there is no doubt that most of it is caused by the fact that throughout management there is general corruption, particularly as regards income-tax expenses, on which the "executive" and business-man can receive so much consideration, but on which the worker cannot even charge his bus-fares, and his contribution is deducted even before he gets his wages.

What is important, however, is to see that this excuse of pilferage is not made a general pretext for introducing semi-military discipline, which certain employers, and even T.U. officials, seem prepared to welcome. If the manager is suspected of cooking the books, enquiries are made by accountants in the most genteel way possible. He is not suddenly stopped leaving the office, his portfolio snatched by uniformed policemen, his pockets searched or his home raided. There is no reason whatsoever why the docker, truck driver or railwayman should suffer such treatment which the State can get away with in the Army, but which it is still possible to resist in civilian life. Hence we can only welcome such strikes as are directed against this police action, of which several have occurred recently. Police raids on private homes are not of light consequence; in certain cases they can even mean loss of accommodation even without the person in question being found guilty. In any case, many working-class women find them terrifying, and the whole point is that they can be halted and so can all this Ogpu business of searching people, examining cases, etc. No doubt it helps the police to have a free hand in the matter, and it would be even simpler for them if we all had an identity number tattooed on our foreheads and could be searched every time we passed along the street. A strike for freedom against police action is, we know, going against the stream of the present era, when on all sides everyone wants to strengthen the state, take political power, etc., but for that very reason more credit to those workers who have refused to continue to work subjected to police searches and raids. BERT.

Read :.....

FREEDOM

The Anarchist Weekly, 3d.
From: Freedom Press, 27 Red Lion Street,
London, W.C.1.

PORTWORKERS' CLARION

Organ of the Merseyside Portworkers' Committee, 2d. monthly.
From: Bill Murphy, 25 Harding Ave., Bidston,
Birkenhead, Cheshire.
Freedom Bookshop, 27 Red Lion Street,
London, W.C.1.

Textiles

Lancashire's Change of Life

COLNE.

THIS month in the local papers there was not one "Situation Vacant" in the cotton trade; last month was the same. A few weeks back one cotton mill wanted an office boy. Four months ago weavers were still wanted. A year ago every mill wanted weavers—automatics and Lancashire looms, jacquards, dobbies, plains, checks, silk and rayon—the columns bulged with displayed advertisements trying to persuade with canteens, free transport, "weaver-helpers", day nurseries, and free trips to Blackpool or the Festival of Britain.

A year ago, Britain's bread still hung by Lancashire's thread. Large and energetic men dashed in Jaguars and Triumphs to conferences which hoped to persuade thousands of unemployed workers in Merseyside that cotton-spinning could employ them—but not house them. Workers from other countries were drawn into the mills—Poles, Germans, Ukrainians, Czechs and Lithuanians; one group of unfortunate girls came from Malta, and had a raw deal to suffer besides Lancashire's raw weather.

Now the "recession" has come—that is what the managers and politicians call it. The weavers call it a slump and remember the nineteen-thirties. The tacklers (overlookers) were reserved during the war and have earned big money—they have their TV sets and radiograms and washing-machines—now many of them are working two days a week.

Some people remember further back than the poverty and distress that resulted from the mass unemployment of the '30s. They remember the '20s when there was work—at a price.

Standing at two looms for less than twenty-five shillings a week. Husband and wife both working to draw one wage. Children, babies, being put out to 'mind' at six o'clock in the morning. The parents who lived near the mill rushing home to have breakfast, wash and dress the children and get them off to school, all between 8.15 and 8.45, and if you were a minute late you were locked out. Bread and

jam breakfast, bread and jam dinner, bread and jam tea.

Those were the days! And how some of the bosses in this last brief "welfare-state era" have wished for their return!

Well, they look as though they are here—so what?

When Lancashire's Tory M.P.s and would-be M.P.s are shouting about Japanese competition, and Lancashire's "Labour" M.P.s are blaming it on Purchase Tax or the Commonwealth Conference, it is calculated that the din will cause much confusion in the minds of Lancashire's working people. That calculation may not be fully justified: there are many more signs besides the low percentage poll at elections to indicate that a lot of people are just about sick of the political claptrap that is churned out by both sides. And the Lancashire man and woman knows full well that there is little the government—any government—can do to "put Lancashire on its feet".

The textile slump is world-wide—France has got it, so has Belgium, so has the United States, and so—ay, there's the rub—has Japan! The most ominous sign of Lancashire's decline is that this time the slump has occurred before Japan has become a serious competitor.

Government orders might do a bit of 'pump-priming' in an attempt to stop the rot Keynes-fashion, but Lancashire's productive capacity is too big to enjoy permanent recovery by that method. Obviously there is going to be a pool of labour in Lancashire: the bosses will like that. But will they? Here is what Mr. Eden said at Blackburn: "We must do all we can to find employment in the metal-using industries, which are crying out for workers, for some of these textile workers who are at present out of a job."

"Metal-using industries?"—Yes, of course, we have met it before—"Defence requirements"!

So it all fits into the scheme of things: the man or woman in Lancashire is now no longer a spinner or a weaver, he or she is a "unit of labour" transferable to making sarongs, aeroplanes, rubber goods, or bombs, as the government dictates. That, as long as he puts up with it, is inevitably the worker's lot in our new industrial order, our New Society.

Whether there is going to be a pool of unemployment or a wholesale transfer to other industries, the one thing certain is that Cotton—as Lancashire has known it—is finished. And—as Lancashire has known it—it's about time, too! L.B.

Railways

Railwaymen's Mutual Aid Society

LAST month the NUR made an attack on the Euston Railwaymen's Mutual Aid Society. This latter was formed by the Euston Branch of the NUR after its officials had been expelled by the NEC and the whole Branch withdrew in sympathy. (Full story in *Freedom*, 28/6/52.)

The MAS is an organisation of men and women at the point of production, electing its own unpaid voluntary officials, on a non-political basis, concerned only with guarding their interests as workers on the job. It is the rank-and-file answer to TU officialdom and very much on the right lines. Membership 750-800 at Euston and St. Pancras.

IF YOU LIKE

The Syndicalist

DISTRIBUTE IT!

SCISSOR BILL



Guardian of the Soul

30/- and the 5-day Week

THE Executive Committee of the National Union of Mineworkers has decided to ask the Coal Board for an increase in pay of 30/- per week for all adult miners with proportionate increases for young workers. This decision is a direct result of strong demands from all the coalfields throughout the country, calling for substantial increases to meet the rising cost of living. Steeply rising prices, plus the loss of overtime pay for Saturday work, have made the British miners realise with a hard jolt, that their five-day week wage was not in fact a living wage, and that the introduction of overtime working, at a time of

soaring prices, was a cunning device to cloak the actual reduction of the real value of their standard weekly wage. The failure of the working miner to achieve a reasonable standard of living on five days' pay made it easy for the pitmen to be persuaded, against their real interests, to undertake the overtime which concealed the equivalent of a cut in pay. The demand for an extra 30/- a week is a necessary corrective to those union and Coal Board officials who have connived at making the return to a 6-day week a permanent feature.

In demanding an immediate increase, the British miner is struggling to re-establish a living wage for a five-day week, but their

struggle is not aided by the fact that the tide of circumstances is running against them. Six months ago, its chances of success would have been assured, but to-day, with the slump in some industries, unemployment in the textile trades and the slackening off of the demand for coal, stocks of this once rare commodity are beginning to mount, all adding strength to the resistance to a demand for a wage rise.

Whatever the outcome of this recent call for increased wages, whilst there exists even the threat of a lessening of the need for coal, it would be suicidal for the British miners to again accept the return to the six-day week at the end of the summer. The fight for a living wage for a five-day week is the first step to be taken by miners in the battle to defend and improve conditions, now! A battle which must go on increasingly under capitalism until the workers, by hand and brain, in the mines, fields, factories and workshops, free themselves from the restraints of their reformist "leaders", organise deliberately to overthrow capitalism and take the control of industry into their own hands.

JOHNNIE MINER.

Cut Out the Coal Board

EDINBURGH.

AT the recent conference of the Scottish Area NUM, held at Ayr, Mr. J. M'Gowan, New Cumnock, had this to say: "We need direct cuts on the Coal Board side in the first place. If some sections of the Coal Board were scrapped, not one ounce less coal would be produced."

Most miners would no doubt agree with the above statement and probably many would go further and say, "Scrap the lot," but meantime, back to Mr. M'Gowan for a description of the NCB.

"There are more officials attached to certain departments than there were officers defending Britain during the last war. There are more spivs and drones than ever before in the coal business."

That this is true is hardly likely to deter those workers to whom nationalisation appears as a step on the road to a workers' paradise, plain as the facts are. The miners, or at least Mr. M'Gowan, have discovered that nationalisation gets rid of the capitalists, only to replace them by battalions of parasites. The worker, as usual, carries them on his back. That the miners are learning the hard way is bad enough; it will be a tragedy if the lesson is not taken to heart by those who still clamour for nationalisation.

Changing the boss is all nationalisation amounts to and it is difficult to see why socialists, "scientific" and otherwise, get so burned up when this is pointed out to them. Perhaps they are baffled by "science". During the course of his speech, M'Gowan said that it was time the Scottish miners told the Coal Board where to get off. Unfortunately, just "telling" them won't get any results, they will have to be thrown off and they may be harder to dislodge than the capitalists, if we fall for the labour faker's tale about "owning" the mines. The drones in the nationalised industries have their friends in Parliament who will look after them, and when a politician gets behind a microphone, it sounds as if he was doing the work.

Strangely enough, millions of workers seem to have the same impression. "You can't do without leaders," and "Where will the money come from?" are examples of just how the workers are fooled. In spite of this, by making a start on the Coal Board, the miners can give a lead to the British workers which will in turn lead to the time when the workers realise that if the capitalist system, politicians of all shades and their bureaucratic allies were scrapped, "Not one ounce less coal would be produced."

T. O'M.

LETTERS • • • • • Are We Dogmatic?

THE SYNDICALIST can do most useful work by propagating the idea of "Workers Control", but it must open its pages to all who support that idea, and avoid becoming the mouthpiece of a small group.

The aims and principles published in the second issue suggest that it is to put forward a cut-and-dried programme. This, I hope, it will not do. The question of Political Action is a very open one. Both the I.L.P. and the Socialist Labour Party advocate "Workers' Control", but both organisations are very much in favour of using the political weapon.

This and other points should be discussed and brought forward. "Workers' Control" is too important to be killed by dogma. Bournemouth.

L. HANGER.

Editor's Note

It is true the I.L.P. supports to-day parliamentary action and workers' control, but when the former action met with any electoral success far less was heard of the latter, in the McGovern days no less than the MacDonald. Despite its subsequent change from a national party to one of many small left groups, such as the S.L.P. (each undoubtedly entitled to its own "mouthpiece"), there is still a gap between the most radical political socialist and the anti-political syndicalist—one perhaps better seen in practice than by "dogmatising".

SYNDICALIST GROUPS NOW?

I AM very pleased with SYNDICALIST 2. Although I regarded myself as a Syndicalist, I hadn't realised just how useful a specifically Syndicalist paper could be. It has made quite an impact on me.

Could not workers who are Syndicalists begin to form groups now in their factories with workers of like mind, as nuclei for the growth of factory syndicates in competition with the multiplicity of relatively small trade union

branches within each factory? It is not by any means too early to do this. Manchester.

K.M.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

THE June issue asked, "Are the Unions Finished?" Sorry to say, certainly not. How can any sensible person say they are?

True, many advanced workers know that the unions to-day, with their political friends—both Tory and Labour—are not likely to advocate industrial action. The unions were originally a great advance for the workers and the bosses feared them. Now they welcome unionism, for it safeguards their profits. But don't forget that syndicalism, too, could be used by the boss class (Mussolini used it during his power over the Italian workers).

I remember huge meetings advertising the benefits of unionism for the workers, and we must admit that workers are moved more by the spoken word than by the written. In Leeds, for example, little is known about syndicalism. All the more reason they should read our paper, readers might say, which is theoretically true, but it doesn't work out like that in practice. What we need is a series of outdoor meetings with the co-operation of interested comrades in the factories.

Of course, the movement lacks propagandists and money, but the task must be done. I suggest comrades in industrial towns should offer hospitality for speakers for, say, one week at a time, and that we should start a fund to help cover expenses. I know we are all fed up with appeals, but all sincere comrades realise that new movements need a little of both your money and your leisure. In my day, I have given both.

I should like to hear the opinion of your readers on this suggestion, and to show that I will do my bit, I offer hospitality in Leeds for an outdoor speaker.

Leeds.

GEORGE LEAF.

Editor's Note

On our comrade's first point, we think he answers himself. We admitted that, as organs of the State, the Unions were powerful and wealthy, but that as fighting organisations for the workers they were finished. On his second point, we also asserted that there are phoney forms of syndicalism, in the May issue. But if the rank and file consciously guard against the growth of a leadership, their organisation cannot be corrupted from above.

Our comrade's suggestion regarding outdoor speakers is, we think, a good one, but, as he says, we are all fed up with appeals (which is why we are trying to run THE SYNDICALIST without any fund-raising). Nevertheless, if comrades will rally to this suggestion, speakers will be available.

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