

POLICE WADE IN AT BSR

THE THREE-MONTH-OLD STRIKE

for union recognition at BSR, East Kilbride has suffered throughout from company intransigence, blackleg treachery, union timidity and Government indifference. The boys in blue have been a further cross for the 850 men and women to bear. On Wednesday, November 12, the guardians of law, order and capitalism, excelled even their own dubious record. As the heavily-guarded buses carrying the blacklegs (who are, we are assured by the *Sunday Times*, 'human') came down a road, several of the striking women sat down in an attempt to stop them. In waded the police. One girl was manhandled across the road and thrown, head first, into a police van. Others were pushed and kicked. The police had, they claimed, been attacked. With such vicious and dangerous missiles as flour bags. Like proud tom cats, they don't like getting their fancy uniforms dirty.

Mass arrests were made, 44 people, 33 of them women, were charged with obstruction and breach of the peace. Two hundred of the now famous 'dancing dollies' of East Kilbride, singing the home-made battle songs which have been such a feature of this struggle, promptly marched on the East Kilbride cop shop and the arrested people were released pretty damn quick.

Three of the uniformed thugs have been charged with assault. We can only assume that the police are wild because, basically, the workers have won. It now looks almost certain that BSR will be taken over by Plessey (a firm which will recognise the union). BSR is going to be organised. All the dirty little kicks and blows which the police have aimed in the direction of the pickets over the weeks have been in vain. Were the lousy scenes of last Wednesday the parting shot from the police?

The fortunate fact* that BSR is to be taken over by a more reasonable (?) firm cannot, however, be allowed to

miss the real issues of this struggle. The idea that shiny new firms coming to Scotland mean, by themselves, an era of prosperity for the workers, has been scotched. The fact is that firms like BSR come looking for cheap, unorganised and usually female labour. In this they receive the cordial support and financial help of the Labour Government.

The Government has played it both ways over BSR. Wilson has expressed his support for the strikers, put a few bob in the strike fund and scuttled off back to London. Judith Hart, the local MP, once asked the women, 'What can we do to help you? Please tell us.' They told her, and she too fled. The response of Barbara Castle has been to send in the Industrial Relations Commission, in the person of *Blakeman*, former labour relations man at Fords and a vicious enemy of the working class. Anyone who hopes for justice from the holy triumvirate of George Woodcock, Will Paynter (former Stalinist and betrayer of the Mineworkers) and car bosses' man *Blakeman*, must be daft. The BSR workers must not allow themselves to be talked back to work by an embarrassed Government whose 'development' programmes have been exposed, without receiving cast-iron guarantees that there will be no victimisation, when Plessey takes over, of the militants who fought BSR.

Similar struggles to BSR are on the cards, particularly in the new towns of Glenrothes and Livingstone. There too, in the shiny new factories built on Government money, employers are hoping to construct a new industrial feudalism, based on non-union female labour. The lessons of BSR must be learnt.

One bright aspect of the fight has been the support received from students who collected money and helped in the pickets. This type of activity must be extended.

Pressure is being put on student

Continued on page 3

COURT PROCEEDINGS

YESTERDAY, MARCH 7, 1971, at Bow Street Magistrates Court, a couple was indicted for a breach of the peace, use of abusive language, and threatening behaviour.

The woman—describing herself as a 'Queen', and a man described as her 'consort' yelled 'scab' while her 'consort' threw polo balls at another woman known as 'Mrs. Armstrong Jones', who was attempting to enter her place of work at the West End of Constitution Hill.

Police Inspector Bully testified that he had warned the woman that her actions interfered with the police in the course of their duty of protecting legitimate workers going about their duty—with the consent of their employers—and that she was trespassing on private property—namely the property of the state.

The woman had nevertheless persisted in her actions and after most unseemly actions she and her 'consort' had had to be arrested. Mr. 'Con' F. Irmed-Liar, QC, prosecuting, called other witnesses, police, soldiers, and passers-by, who all testified to the truth of Inspector Bully's testimony.

The Chairman of the Magistrates, Mr. N. O. Bigood, said that it was time that workers learnt due respect for their employers, and that while no one wished to interfere with the democratic rights of workers to withdraw their labour and

starve, firm measures must be taken against those who tried to intimidate those workers who also wished to exercise their democratic rights and wished to continue working. He felt that an example must be taken in the present instance—especially in view of the fact that in certain other industries such disgraceful intimidation had only recently been suppressed, and one must show the determination of the authorities to prevent all such instances of wanton lawlessness.

The prisoners were therefore committed for trial at the Old Bailey—request for bail was opposed by the police—and the Magistrate has adjourned the case for one week to allow the police to show good cause why bail should be refused, the couple being temporarily confined in prison.

During the trial a spectator in the gallery suddenly called out that the building known as Buckingham Palace should be converted into a mental hospital and the job concerned in the trial abolished; police removed the offender and later the Magistrates sentenced a man for contempt of court, until such time as he purges his contempt.

Our industrial correspondent writes: The Prices and Incomes' Board vetoed a 25% rise requested for the defendant originally made a year ago, and when

THE GREATEST ANTI-WAR demonstrations in American history have served notice on President Nixon and the Pentagon that millions of young Americans are sincerely and strongly opposed to the continuation of the Vietnam war by one single day.

The Moratorium and the days of demonstration last weekend showed a strength of feeling and a degree of organisation which could leave no doubt in Nixon's mind that what he is faced with is no longer the expected opposition of 'extremists', but growing disgust at his delaying tactics on the part of people of all political opinions and of none, of moderates and even of patriotic squares.

Everyone who has ever had anything to do with demonstrations knows perfectly well that the people who actually take part in them are only a small minority of the numbers sympathetic to the cause. Not that we need to be too concerned about numbers, which prove nothing about the rightness or wrongness of the cause, but they are important inasmuch as they impress the opposition and the uncommitted.

DIGNITY AND SELF-DISCIPLINE

The tactics of the American demonstrators were impressive in themselves. The March of Death, with each marcher carrying the name of a dead GI, quietly and with dignity placed in a coffin and carried through the streets of Washington, must have brought home to many of the 'silent majority' that Nixon leans on, just what the cruel and pointless struggle in Vietnam is costing the US in terms of young men's lives.

Demonstrations have several functions, but the most important should always be to convert the unconverted. Provocation and the mindless shouting of slogans seldom if ever do this, although they may have other uses, like attracting attention when your numbers are small. But the American demonstrators did not need this. They had numbers, and there is nothing more impressive and moving than a huge crowd behaving with dignity and quietness and self-discipline—especially when death and the mourning of the dead is what it is all about. Fortunately this mood prevailed. There was little chanting of the 'Victory to the Vietcong!' variety which has marred similar demonstrations in this country and which, while it tells us a lot about the chanters, does nothing to convert the unconverted. On the contrary, open sympathy with the enemy, with the very ones who are killing the vast numbers of dead who are being mourned, immediately brings hostility to a demonstration.

If public opinion is being wooed, then we have to remember that public opinion is nothing more than ignorant conformity. The silent majority are the unthinking mass of solid citizens, the apathetic, security-minded, square, conforming don't-knows who, grumbling, pay their

the 'Queen' persisted in her request, the Government announced that 'Princess Margaret' had offered to do the job at a sum believed to be considerably less than that requested by the 'Queen' and her 'consort'; and at the same time declined to recognize as a bona fide trade union the Royal Association of Crowned Heads, Consorts and Relatives which the 'Princess' declared to be a breakaway union in contravention of the Bridlington Agreements. The 'Queen' and her supporters then declared there was to be a lockout. It is believed that she has been unsuccessful in attempts to win international solidarity action.

taxes to send their sons to the slaughter and accept with pride the posthumously - awarded campaign medal.

These are the ones whose complacency has to be dented. To bend their ears with cries of 'Victory to the Vietcong!' is to strike terror into their fatty hearts. But to make them think that their sons died in vain—that their sacrifice is for nothing, this is the way to get them wavering in their support for the establishment.

'PEACE WITH HONOUR'

Richard Nixon himself, after all, is helping in this task. By some sleight of hand he got himself elected with the understanding that he was going to bring the Vietnam war to an end. He has gone so far as to bring back some soldiers. He is seeking some formula for 'Peace with Honour' in a situation so dishonourable that it would be a fit subject for cynical laughter were it not for the fact that every time he squirms another hundred young men die.

But what Nixon has done is to betray at top level America's loss of morale. Shaken and bewildered by their inability to win a war against relatively poorly-equipped Asian peasants who, by all military standards, should have been wiped out years ago; conscious of growing world disgust and contempt, even your silent majority of middle Americans wants out. They would like to crawl away and lick their wounds in some dark corner. But when you are a mighty world power you live in the spotlight—and everybody is going to laugh when you take a pratfall.

'Peace with Honour' is a purely political concept, being not concerned with peace and impossible to reconcile with honour. It is a euphemism for squalid horse-dealing—the sordid deal which will eventually, one supposes, come out of the interminable Paris 'peace' talks. When these latter began, incidentally, we demonstrated our cynicism by prophesying their failure, until such time, that is, as both sides decided the war had served its purpose. We pointed out that for both the Asian Communists (together with Russia) and the Americans, the Vietnam war fulfilled very useful purposes and both sides had their reasons for keeping it going. It has been interesting to note recently that whenever the Americans, for whom the war has now genuinely outlived

its usefulness, try to cool it, the Vietcong step up their offensives, making it more, not less, difficult for the 'doves' of Washington to influence the Pentagon.

THE PERSON INVOLVED

So the decision must be taken out of the hands either of the doves of Washington or the hawks of the Pentagon—or the politicians of Saigon or Hanoi. Last week's demonstrations show conclusively that very large numbers of American citizens have already decided where their country's honour lies. They do not want peace to be bought with thousands more dead American conscripts. They want their sons and lovers back where they once belonged. Back home.

If the vast majority of the demonstrators were young then there is this much to be said for them: they are of the same generation as the young GIs doing the fighting and dying in Vietnam. And the young GIs should be asking themselves what the hell they are doing there, when the whole world knows that, short of starting a nuclear war in Asia, American victory in Vietnam is impossible. They are being used, and their deaths are being used, purely in a holding operation while the politicians haggle for bargains like vultures at a rotting carcass.

There is still one voice we want to hear raised against the Vietnam war: that of the American soldier. Simply to wear black armbands, while their contemporaries demonstrate in the cities back home is not enough. The American forces can surely no longer believe in the war in Vietnam; they must now—if honour means anything!—take action against it.

The GI is the person involved. He it is who does the shooting and gets shot. He it is who uses napalm, drops the bombs, perpetrates the atrocities, destroys villages—and gets killed or mutilated for his pains. We now know—and he now knows—it is for nothing in terms of honour.

The only honourable thing for American soldiers to do is to come home. Leave the war, leave the fox-holes and the fighting, the raping and the killing. Walk away from it. Run away from it. Fight your way out if need be. Seize helicopters and planes, cars, trucks and trains. Ring down the curtain in the theatre of war and come home!

JUSTIN.

'Irish' Election Aftermath

THE FUSS and feathers has subsided over the election of Mr. Halloran for North Islington and he is not going to resign his seat even though his nomination was 'fiddled'.

There has now come to light an even more murky story of the Candidate for North Islington Who Never Was. The delay in getting details of this is part of the story. The prospective candidate was a Mr. McCabe, who was backed by the Irish Civil Rights Solidarity Campaign, an organization which claims to have the backing of People's Democracy based in Belfast.

When Mr. McCabe's candidature was snatched from the ring, it was stated in so many words that since the Labour Party's policy on Ireland had now improved it was a pity to split the Labour vote. Facts were otherwise.

A letter was sent from Joseph Quigley, liaison secretary of People's Democracy in Belfast, on October 15 to the Steering Committee of the ICRSC. This was kept back by some factions for almost a month and was (literally) seized from a comrade who was present and she proposed that the contents be discussed at an emergency meeting. This has never

been held. The letter in brief says that PD does not, contrary to ICRSC's statement, support Mr. McCabe and asks for its name to be dropped from any propaganda. Furthermore PD totally disassociates itself with the ICRSC in London because of faction fights and enterism. Further accusations by PD are made in the letter as to the whereabouts of certain funds. The letter continues with an allegation that ICRSC urges an 'all-class catholic alliance... which should be totally unacceptable to socialists'. The letter concludes, 'We stress that this letter should not be construed as an attack on rank and file members of ICRSC, many of whom have worked strenuously in support of civil rights. It is our opinion that many of them will be as disturbed as we are at the machinations of certain individuals and the manipulation of their idealism for politically sectarian motives. We are fighting in the front lines here and people are getting killed.* We feel that we deserve better support from England's left-wing.'

JACK ROBINSON.

*October 15, 1969.

HOW MANY TIMES have you heard politicians and political commentators refer to 'our' exports, or 'our' industry, or 'our' country? How often have workers been told that it is unpatriotic to strike and thereby harm 'our' balance of payments? And how long have the Tories been promising us a 'property-owning democracy', and the Labour Party equality and 'social justice'?

Indeed, the mass media has repeated these shibboleths and glib phrases so often and for so long that very few people ever stop and ask themselves: 'Whose country?' or 'Whose industry?' or 'Whose exports?' or 'Whose balance of payments?' But if they did, they would have to admit that the vast majority of the people of this and all other countries have no material or financial stake in the country at all. They would be forced to the conclusion that they had nothing, or almost nothing, to be patriotic about, that they own little more than their skins and the ability to work for someone else. Most of us are not only propertyless in the means of production and distribution, but we own precious little of anything else as well. We have no exports, no industries and no country. And despite the bleatings of the political parties (including such minority parties as the Communist Party and the Nazi Front), the last thing we should be is patriotic. These may sound harsh words to some, but they are true.

Statistical evidence abounds. And although it has been said that statistics can prove almost anything, the findings of a number of quite independent surveys are pretty conclusive over what 'we' own and what 'we' don't own. And 'we' don't own Britain.

According to *The Economist* (15.1.66), seven per cent of the population of Britain owned 84 per cent of all private wealth, while the top two per cent owned 55 per cent of the total. And J. R. Revell of Cambridge University, after considerable research, came up with much the same statistics. We estimated that the top five per cent of the population of this country owned more than seventy-five per cent of all personal property, while only one per cent owned 42 per cent of all such property. In the same year (1966), it was estimated that over 90 per cent of the population—who actually owned less than £3,000—

WHOSE COUNTRY?

had an average holding (in property or cash) of only £107. And this in an era of so-called affluence and the ever-increasing production of consumer goods.

But, you may ask: 'What has the party of social reform, the party of the common man, of the workers, got to say about all this?'

LABOUR PARTY ADMITS

In August this year, the Labour Party's own publication, *Economic Brief*, admitted that, after five years of Labour Government: 'Although the past five years of Labour Government has witnessed tremendous expansion of the social services, major reforms in the tax system and increased growth and efficiency of the public sector, Britain remains a society in which there are very sharp divisions of wealth and income. According to the latest official estimates nearly a third of the total personal wealth—£27,600 million out of £83,700 million—is owned by the richest one per cent of all adults and the richest ten per cent own 74 per cent. At the other end of the scale nearly 60 per cent of all adults appear to have little or no recorded wealth at all.'

Economic Brief continues: 'Income statistics reveal much the same pattern. In 1966 there were 40,000 incomes over £10,000, yet a million families—a quarter of whom had three or more children—had to manage on under £700 a year. Focussing attention solely upon personal income and wealth is misleading. The key process that fosters economic inequality is the process of capital accumulation and the growth of corporate wealth. Huge sums are involved. The total capital funds available to industrial and commercial companies amounted to nearly £4,800 million in 1968.'

'The expansion of company assets, by whatever means,' says *Economic Brief*, 'substantially boosts the potential earning power of corporations. This process has a considerable effect on income and wealth distribution. Only 1.8 million adults (under five per cent of all adults)

directly own industrial ordinary shares. Between them this small group directly own about half the total stock of equity. Their stake in June, 1969, amounted to £15,000 million. Each one per cent increase in overall share prices thus adds a further £160 million to their wealth and since the end of 1966, despite the recent setback in share prices, they have gained no less than £5,000 million.'

Yes, indeed, those people who do own Britain have—despite their usual complaining—done very well out of 'our' Labour Government. But then, Labour's got 'soul' to help them!

Surprisingly to some, no doubt, the proportion of owners to non-owners of wealth in this country has not changed appreciably over the last 70 years. In 1900, about 80 per cent of the real wealth was owned by about five per cent. Moreover, the inherited element in most large fortunes is as significant now as it was over 40 years ago. Today, as in the past, if you choose the wrong parents, then you've had it!

J. R. Revell also reveals that property incomes are even more highly concentrated than property ownership, so much so that the richest ten per cent of the population actually receive 99 per cent of all property income. And *The Economist* estimates that only five per cent of fortunes under £10,000 consist of company shares, compared with 56 per cent of all fortunes over £250,000. Percentage-wise, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer—despite (or because of?) Labour's tax policies.

NATIONALISATION OF INDUSTRIES

Many people, particularly during the first post-war Labour Government, believed that the Bank of England, the railways, the coal mines, etc., belonged to them, to 'us'. Labour politicians claimed that, because these industries and concerns had been nationalised, they belonged to 'the people', to 'the nation'. But, of course, they don't. Nationalisa-

tion, with or without compensation, is not social or common ownership, not 'socialism', as many imagined and perhaps still imagine. Nationalisation is State ownership, something entirely different. And, moreover, despite popular belief to the contrary, profitability is all-important. Coal is not produced to use (although, of course, it is used) but for sale with a view to profit. If you or I cannot afford to buy fuel extracted from 'our' coal mines, then we will just have to freeze.

Nationalised and public property, so-called, amounts to around 42 per cent of the total wealth of the country. But, as Robin Blackburn has observed in his essay, 'The Unequal Society', the National Debt actually exceeds the value of all public property by 14 per cent—£28 million as against £21 million in 1966. So you see, all public property, including the nationalised industries, is mortgaged to the private, avowedly capitalist, sector—just like most of the 'Little Boxes' and bungalows which so many of us seem to imagine belong to us, but which really belong to the Building Societies and the finance companies.

Of course, a country or nation is not only bricks and mortar, real estate, car factories or coal mines. It is also people; the people who produce and distribute and administer the wealth. It is tradition and custom and beautiful (and ugly) scenery as well, although it isn't much compensation to the homeless, the unemployed or even an employed worker with a 25-year mortgage, to extol the beauties of the Yorkshire moors, the Mountains of Mourne or the Lochs of Inverness if he cannot afford to visit them. Nor does it matter whether we are 'true-born' Anglo-Saxons (as the Fascists are always telling us that we Britons are) or immigrant 'wogs' if we are unable to pay the rent of 'our' house or apartment.

So, when politicians and political commentators start telling you about 'your' balance of payments, 'your' exports or 'your' country, don't fall for it. 'Cos unless you belong to that very small minority of the population who do own the land, the buildings and the means of production and distribution, you haven't got one.

PETER NEWELL.

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Police at BSR

Continued from page 1 bodies to give a clear lead to students as to what they should do in industrial disputes. As Scotland undergoes what the economists call 'the second Industrial Revolution', it is essential that workers organise to make sure they're not taken for a ride. The brave women of BSR have begun that fight.

PETER THE PAINTER.

*Strikers at BSR have now won full recognition for their union and a phased return-to-work has been negotiated.—EDS.

PADDY FIELDS.

Questions & Answers

A Riddle?

WHAT is the connection between Heal's and the *Guardian* combining together to prostitute and add to a charming drawing and description of Pooh and the Piglet (in an advertisement) and that of the *People* printing a nude photograph of a dead woman? The usual prize is offered to the solver of this problem by one of the editors of FREEDOM. Contributions to reach this office by the New Year (theirs or ours).

OUR REQUIREMENTS—THEIR REQUISITIONS

BRIGHTON Squatters (pictured here) have been served with Possession Orders answerable in eight days.

Here (in the picture) they stand confidently outside their home—now they are served with the orders individually so that may be separated, homeless and once more un . . . ?

How do you feel about all this?

DOES THIS SHOCK YOU?

COUNCILLORS who were elected as Tories will now represent the National Front in Wandsworth Council. The electors should demand their resignation but will they? Is this an exceptional circumstance; who does your councillor represent and who is wearing



whose mask?

A GLIMMER OF HOPE

'WE are good people as good people go' (letter in FREEDOM, November 9, 1969). But we must sort out utopia from present reality so that our desire to impart correct information may bring about the free (anarchist) world we desire to live in.

T.W.J.

Recorrection

I HATE the interminable wrangles that go on in FREEDOM as much as anyone—the fact that I am about to contribute to one could easily have been avoided by the Editors and R.B. checking their facts before putting things in the paper.

Everything I wrote in FREEDOM'S AFB report on Ireland was stated by the Irish comrade who spoke very well on the scene over there. Perhaps R.B. knows more about it than he does—but it is interesting that the Irish comrades have not disowned my reporting of the situation.

Point by point—it WAS stated by him, not me, that IS groups were working inside PD. I did not mean to imply—even by the use of the word 'faction'—that anarchists were anything but an integral part of PD. It was also stated that anarchists were involved with the Derry Squat.

Therefore, R.B., there were no 'misconceptions' for you to clear up—were there? As you rightly said, all this was stated quite clearly at conference—which conference were YOU at?

In fact it was far easier taking minutes at that session of conference—and the

new-found responsibilities, judging by their enthusiastic use of techniques learnt in the rugby scrum.

Possibly the heavy fines have been imposed in an attempt to recoup some of the £60,000 that the taxpayers are expected to have to pay towards the State's defence of Apartheid tours in this country.

Once again we see the leaders of a demonstration, quite understandably afraid for their own necks, wishing to divert the march from its real objective. These 'leaders', thankfully rejected by the majority of the demonstrators, are easy prey from the coercive forces of the State—surely a good argument against any concept of such leadership.

LOUGHBOROUGH LIBERTARIAN GROUP.

Some Morality!

COMRADES WILL HAVE heard of the savage fines dished out to the demonstrators at the Springboks Leicester match. 'Obstruction' at £20 and 'Threatening Behaviour' at £50 shows the attitude of our 'impartial' law. Comrades in court were told by the august preservers of law and order that no matter what they said in their defence it would not be taken into consideration. They were not concerned with the morality of the case. However, when one comrade was charged for getting into the ground without a ticket, it seemed that attitudes changed somewhat. 'We cannot consider this as an isolated act as the fact there was a demonstration in progress is material to the case.' This comrade, it should be noted, was arrested by Rugby Union vigilantes who obviously enjoyed their

Dock Strife Hots Up

THE propaganda war against the dockers over their ban on certain modernised methods mainly in Tilbury is hotting up. Two Conservative MPs in successive weeks have slammed the dockers and got wide publicity in the press. Predictably, only part of the story has been told.

The ban applies to all future agreements for individual berths which involve drastic reduction in manning—until ALL dockers in the Port of London get similar security to those on 'productivity' (reduced manning) deals.

The effect of this has successfully pressured the employers into improving their offer to all dockers to £36 for a 3½-hour week for fully fit men, and £27 10s. for light duty

men. This is a lot better than their original offer of about £25 for a longer working week plus a bonus dependent on productivity.

Without the ban on reduced manning deals the employers could have continued to pay higher rates of pay only to those men on container berths and package timber berths where 15 men do in a day the work of 125 men over two weeks under conventional methods. The rest of the dockers would continue to get just piecework earnings with a minimum of £17 guaranteed.

The press and Members of Parliament have devoted a great deal of publicity to the container berths which have been hit by the ban. They have not seen fit to mention those which were agreed before the ban and are now working normally. At Tilbury alone there are at least seven container services and three package timber berths all working on vastly reduced manning (see picture of a container ship being loaded for America at Tilbury).

The men at these berths are only a very small proportion of the total number of dockers but they have been working excessive overtime. This, coupled with the labour-saving machinery, means they have been doing fantastic tonnages. The fear of the majority of the men is that there will be less and less work left over for them and, as they rely on piecework, their earnings could fall until they get only the £17 guarantee.

It was because of this that the ban was imposed on further reduced manning deals until the rest of the men did not rely on piecework. As can be seen, this has had the effect of greatly improving the employers' offer of a set wage instead of piecework earnings and the dockers are now voting by post on whether to accept it.

Yet Conservative MP, Mr. Ian Lloyd (Langstone), calls this 'a new and much more sinister version of the Mafia, in which industrial blackmail is being substituted for the gun, in which neither management nor trade unions can exercise their legitimate authority, and in which it is quite clear that the State, and the State alone, can take action'.

Of course charges of 'blackmail' and 'holding the country to ransom' are always being levelled at workers who don't do exactly what the employers want. Such a charge from the small minority who own the factories and industry and only allow people to work on their conditions (the owners') is surely the ultimate cheek. If that is not holding people to ransom, what is?

Through firm bargaining and the courage to back it up with action the dockers have achieved a privileged position in the working class.

Maybe other workers should learn

their lesson about militancy and solidarity. It must also be remembered that the dockers' wages do not compare quite so favourably with the managers who tell them what work to do rather than do it.

Mr. Lloyd's remarks about the union being unable to exercise its legitimate authority are completely ill-informed. For it was the union itself (TGWU) that imposed the ban.

As for unions not exercising authority over their members, this is a common statement nowadays. Is it too much to expect in our 'democracy' that it should be the other way round—members controlling their unions? Many seem to think democracy means electing a dictator to decide things for you and tell you what to do rather than electing a representative to act in accordance with your wishes.

Mr. David Mitchell (Conservative MP for Basingstoke) has accused the Government of being dilatory in dealing with the ban.

But the prize for the most stupid remarks must go to Mr. Klaas De Waal, a shipping manager in Amsterdam. He said: 'In our world everything is changing except our attitudes, our way of thinking. It is this mental short-circuit that has led to the birth of the hippie, but which also lies behind the refusal of Tilbury dockers to load container ships. The reactions of the beatnik and the docker are precisely the same—a rejection of modern technology.'

All the reasons for the ban outlined above are ignored. It's simply a rejection of modern technology! As if dockers prefer straining their backs and lift heavy cargoes to hooking a crane on to a container (a standardised box containing cargo) and letting the machine do all the work.

As for the employers—they have only introduced modern technology where the profits from it are enormous. They have not gone out of their way to introduce it on such jobs as bags of cement or rock ore where men still lift tons a day with their bare hands. Yet the employers are not accused of rejecting modern technology in these cases.

Even more revealing are Mr. De Waal's remarks on plans to nationalise the docks. 'This is not a communistic country,' he says. 'Mr. Marsh should understand that we are not in shipping or stevedoring because we want to do our job properly for the nation. We are in shipping to make profits.'

Barely two minutes later he said: 'There should be an explicit willingness to co-operate and a real wish on the part of the trade unions to compromise with the national interest in mind.'

In his praise for private enterprise and competition he did not mention that all the shipping lines that run container services between Europe and Australia have joined together to form the single Australian Container Service. In other words competition ceases and a monopoly is established.

Also the unions have 'co-operated'—seven container services and three package timber berths are working at Tilbury. But no, it's the old story—the employers do not have to 'do their job for the nation' but the workers must 'compromise with the national interest in mind'.

'PORTWORKER'.

Freedom For Workers' Control

NOVEMBER 22 1969 Vol 30 No 36

Review : OCCUPATION AT FLINT

AN IMPORTANT side of history is the lessons which can be learned and the application of this knowledge to present-day events and circumstances. History never quite repeats itself.

For this reason, the *Solidarity Pamphlet*, 'The Great Flint Sit-Down Against General Motors, 1936-37*' is an important account, not only in the historical sense, but also as a contribution to the discussion concerning effective methods of industrial action. The preface to the pamphlet says: 'We hope that reinforced by knowledge the current discussion on tactics will soon culminate in some really effective action.'

Workers in this country, miners excepted, have not used the occupation of the work place as a means of struggle. On the continent, where anarcho-sindicalist propaganda and influence was much more widespread, the use of occupation was correspondingly more frequent. Most recent examples were, of course, in France in May 1968 and this year in Italy.

Tactics are important for the choice could either mean victory or defeat for a particular struggle. Certainly they all have their drawbacks and each should be examined critically, assessing their value to circumstances. From a revolutionary standpoint, occupation is a step towards workers' control, for instead of the workers being locked out, it is the employers. The workers gain physical control of the place of work. It is a direct challenge to the so-called right of the bosses to manage and gives those in occupation far greater command of the situation than if they were manning the picket line. It also makes it easier to prevent scabs from moving in

and the presence of expensive machinery will make any employer think twice before taking action to dislodge the occupiers.

Another important aspect which comes over in the pamphlet is that an occupation helps to keep the control of the dispute in the hands of the rank and file and prevents the union officials from getting the upper hand. As such, it is only successful if the rank and file participate fully and remain active in the organising and running of the occupation.

The pamphlet, an abridged version of one published by the Radical Education Project and which appeared in a 1967 issue of the American magazine *Progressive Labour*, gives a good factual account of the General Motors occupation. The main point of the dispute was the recognition and negotiating rights of the United Auto Workers. It was a struggle for industrial unionism, even against the craft unions of the American Federation of Labour. At that time, the bureaucratic tendencies of the Auto Union were not so prevalent, but now it and other industrial unions have become the controllers of labour. Even today the fact that industrial unionism is not just the answer has not been grasped by many trade unionists who still consider this as a path to salvation.

As *Solidarity* points out, the pamphlet should not be taken as a 'blueprint for today's struggles'. What it does is to show how effective the weapon of occupation was on that occasion at Flint.

P.T.

*From Freedom Press, Price 1/-, Postage Extra.

DURRUTTI

JULY 14, 1896—

NOVEMBER 20, 1936

VERY LITTLE seems to be available in English about Durruti. Both the time he spent as a fugitive from European and South American governments and as captain of the anarchic army on the Aragon front in the civil war/revolution in Spain are dealt with as footnotes in varied books, presenting few and conflicting anecdotes. So until such time as a linguistic comrade can produce a biography, it must be sufficient to reproduce part of an interview with a journalist from the *Toronto Star*, published in September 1936:

'I do not expect any help for a libertarian revolution from any government in the world. Maybe the conflicting interests of the various imperialisms might have some influence in our struggle. That is quite possible. Franco is doing his best to drag Europe into the conflict. He will not hesitate to pitch Germany against us. But we expect no help, not even from our government in the last analysis. . . . We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall. We will know how to accommodate ourselves for a time. For you must not forget, we can also build. It is we who built these palaces and cities here in Spain and in America and everywhere. We, the workers, can build others to take their place. And better ones. We are not in the least afraid of ruins.'

Guardian.

Let's Join the Human Race!

JOHN TAYLOR, the London Welsh, Wales, and British Lions wing forward, has decided that he cannot play against the South African Rugby Union team for reasons of conscience and politics.

A corporal who went absent without leave in Northern Ireland because he did not wish to open fire on unarmed people, was sentenced yesterday to be reduced to the ranks. The finding and sentence are subject to confirmation.

Corporal Roger Keith Phillips (24), of the Second Battalion, the Queen's Regi-

ment, pleaded guilty to being AWOL.

Making a plea in mitigation, Captain Reginald Palmer read a statement by Corporal Phillips in which he said: 'My absence is entirely my own fault and I have pleaded guilty to the charge. I expect to be punished.'

'I could not in all honesty as a soldier open fire on or be responsible for opening fire on unarmed people which I consider to be my own people who, when demonstrating, attacked me personally or my section, not unless they were armed and fired first. It was only because of this that I went absent.'

Contact Column

This column exists for mutual aid. Donations towards cost of typesetting will be welcome.

Comrade wanted urgently—to translate 'Der Freiheitliche Syndikalismus im Wohlfahrtsstaat'. Box No. 01.

Wanted: Budget and cage for long term prisoner. Phone Ros 01-229 8512.

Anyone interested in forming an Anarchist group in Exeter please contact Dave, 13A Northernhay Street, Exeter.

History Workshop. Saturday, November 29-Sunday, November 30, Ruskin College, Oxford. Oxfordshire Poachers, London anarchists, Paris Commune, Victorian Pubs, Australian Bandits, Shoemaker Chartists, Jude the Obscure. Papers by E. J. Hobsbawm, Gwyn Williams, Ruskin Students, etc. Folk Song, Workers, students, teachers welcome. Sleeping floor accommodation. Details from History Workshop, Ruskin College.

'Synic': Fortnightly libertarian broadsheet information service for the left from Freedom Press and left workshops. Subscription 17/6 per annum. Any articles, dates or orders to: 'Synic', Room 209, Abbey House, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

American anarchist student in England in January, seeks employment, preferably working with communications media. Write Michael Board, 837 College Street, Beloit, Wisc. 53511, USA, before December 1, 1969.

Prisoners for Peace Day. List available from Freedom Press. Send greeting cards of support and solidarity.

Poster Workshop Calendar. Out Now. One Fighting Poster for each month, in black, red and blue. 7/6 each, at least. Send to Alison Waghorne, 9 Lyme Terrace, N.W.1.

Urgent. Help fold and dispatch FREEDOM every Thursday from 4 p.m. onwards. Tea served.

Workers' Mutual Aid pamphlet 1/- each from Freedom Press.

Will anyone who thinks police have exceeded their duty (like vindictively objecting to bail, etc.), please contact Jake at 3 Osborn Street, London, E.1.

Visits Please! Three of five squatters remanded in custody do not have family in London, and would welcome visits. Brixton: Diarmuid Breatnach ('Buzz'); Ashford Remand Centre, Middx.: David Griffiths, Michael Ali. For rota please phone Sonia Markham at RENOWN 2014. (Letters also welcomed.)

Contact wanted with anarchists in Mid-Wales; Eric S. Hetherington, Corbie Lynn, Llanwrtyd Wells, Breconshire.

Bit inf. service 01-229 8219. Urgently requires more crash pads in and around London.

Schools Anarchist Group in Gloucestershire? Contact Kate & Joe, 3 Withy Lea, Leonard Stanly, nr. Stonehouse, GL10 3NS, Glos.

Badges? Contact Pendarves Workshop, 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Camborne; tel. Camborne 3061. Red and Black or plain Black, 2/6 each or 10 for 10/-.

If you wish to make contact let us know.