



November 1952

THE

Syndicalist

FOR WORKERS' CONTROL

Vol. I No. 7

Twopence

Our Interests Are Our Concern. Why Should We— Take it Lying Down?

THE rejection of the outstanding miners' wage claim by the Porter Tribunal marks a new phase in the employers' hardening attitude towards wage claims by the workers in general.

And it gives us an indication of the extent of the new-found confidence of the employers. Even a year ago, the miners were granted an increase without any great show of resistance by the NCB. But circumstances are different to-day. With the textile industry in a state of slump for a year, shorter time being worked in other industries, both manpower and coal stocks have increased in the mines.

This puts the Coal Board in a stronger position—and it is not hesitating to use it. The question that, as workers, we would like to ask is: Why did not the workers take advantage of the position more when it favoured them?

To this there are all sorts of answers—from the capitalists' or the Government's point of view. But not one good one from the workers' standpoint. "Don't embarrass our Government," "National interest," "Close the Dollar Gap," "Export or die"—all the familiar catch-phrases that have made the workers work harder to keep capitalism on its feet.

Now the result can be seen. In 1949, Sir Stafford Cripps told the textile industry that this country could sell every yard of material it produces for the next ten years. Within two years the textile workers had worked themselves out of their jobs—and throughout the world, textiles had slumped. Workers in Germany, Japan, India, were suffering—and even in America the textile employers were moving their plants from the industrial north to the



"I must say the workers are behaving very sensibly these days!"

cheap labour south in order to keep up with the competition.

And the capitalist answer is still the same old one—re-armament. Only now it takes a new turn. Capitalist nations do not only arm themselves, employing their surplus labour on making the means of death—they urge their competitors to arm as well, so that the pressure of competition in the world's markets for consumer goods will be relieved. It was admitted by Anthony Eden in the House of Commons (during the debate on re-arming Germany) that the British wanted German and Japanese industry to be as burdened by re-armament as we are, so that they could not compete "unfairly" in the world's markets. And Sir Vincent Tewson told New Zealand trade unionists the same thing during his recent tour there.

The Mines • • • • • Scots Miners Protest

SOME Scots miners, at least, are not taking the Porter decision lying down. At the time of writing, stoppages have occurred at nine Scottish collieries (resulting in a loss of 4,000 tons of coal) and most of them were recognised as a direct result of the decision, while two incidents were caused by minor grievances, but obviously aggravated by it.

One interesting feature of several of the stoppages has been the fact that the men went home without making any approach to the management. Since the managements of individual collieries cannot make any decisions regarding pay, there is obviously no point in discussing with them anyway—so the men just walked straight out.

Which brings us to the trade unions. Just what are they going to do about the situation which is developing? The answer is obvious, and brief: Nothing! What they will do will only aggravate the situation for the workers, for the trade unions are now in the rut of conformity with the State, feebly agreeing with every major demand of the Government whether Labour or Tory.

The Margate conference showed the extent of the degeneration and corruption of the trade union movement. Before the conference opened, the leaders were quoted as saying "We'll smother them," when referring to the pitiful minority of rebels who challenged the official line. And Deakin, Lawther and Lincoln Evans proceeded to smother all the dissident voices, and carry the day for rearmament, wage restraint and—of course—"no use of industrial weapons for political ends".

Well, the last part suits the Syndicalists very well. For we are not interested in political ends. Our ends are industrial and economic—workers' control of the means of production and distribution. And politics—the art of government—does not figure in our activities.

The danger in the T.U. line, however, is that they encourage workers to leave all action to the political and official union leadership and to do nothing about it themselves. In other words—take it lying down.

The Syndicalists reject this. Our interests are our concern, and every real piece of progress the workers have made has been the result of their own endeavours. Our strength does not lie in Transport House or in Westminster, it lies in our own hands—at the point of production.

If we do not use that strength; if we do as the politicians and the union leaders wish, and "take it lying down", then we shall indeed deserve what is coming to us.

But if we begin—now—to build up unofficial movements in mine, dock and factory—and make sure they don't fall into any political hands—then we shall stand some chance of victory in the battles that lie ahead.

Collieries affected: Auchincruive 1-2-3 (Mossblown) and 4-5, near Prestwick; Calderhead, Shotts; Cardowan, Stepps; Bardykes and Blantyre, and Blantyreferms 1-2, Uddingston. Stoppages occurred also at Garscube, Maryhill and at Kinghill 13, Allanton near Shotts, where the reason given was "increase in bus fares".

Small-scale lightning strikes like this up and down the country would have two effects. Firstly, they would cost the NCB more than a wage increase would, and secondly they would fairly shortly reduce the coal stocks considerably, so that if any larger scale activity arises, the Coal Board will be in a weaker position than they are at the moment.

The Scots miners are showing the right answer—in the right way.

The Docks • • • • • Crisis in the Docks

LONDON.

THE last year has been one of mounting crisis in the Docks. Unemployment has been creeping higher and higher at all ports and now the position is likely to be aggravated by the decision of the National Dock Labour Board that employers of dock labour shall pay an increased percentage of their wages bill to the Board.

This is the way the NDLB gets part of the money to pay the £4 8s. basic for non-working dockers. Now they are increasing their levy on the employers from £16 to £22 10s. per £100 wages.

The employers will resent having to pay more to cover the considerable unemployment in the industry, and will probably demand the de-registration of a large number of men now holding books. This will mean the old men, the weak and the militants are likely to be sorted out.

Have the dockers no answer to this? What has happened to the unofficial Port Workers' Committee in London? Completely in the hands of the C.P., it has—presumably—served its purpose for the Party and can now be discarded. The Party line seems a bit obscure just now and they are very quiet in the docks—but whatever they are up to, it means no good for the dockers.

Organisation—Now

A PHONEY organisation, whether political or industrial or allegedly revolutionary, is the easiest thing to build—on paper. An attractive title, an address and what more does one need, apart from a few members? Then you issue stirring manifestoes and nobody is a ha'penny the worse, least of all the existing social order.

We reject this window-dressing organisation, which belongs strictly to the political-revolutionary who imagines his few members are the vanguard of the proletariat, and which has nothing in common with revolutionary industrial organisation, which is simply mocked by any pretence of already having its existence when it has not. When we are reproached for "not giving any lead" then we answer: *The emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves.* This slogan of the First International is good enough for us, and we stress it by pointing out that nobody whatsoever—neither God nor King nor Leader nor us—can emancipate the working-class. The task as we see it is simply propaganda for a revolutionary movement but it is only the workers themselves as a whole who can achieve their emancipation and we can only act, not as Messiahs, but as individual workers.

A revolutionary movement is not a "conscious minority vanguard party" nor a sham labour front, it is the spontaneous action of the workers. When they become revolutionarily conscious, as they are not at the moment, they are capable of forming the most libertarian bodies. At the present time, such bodies spring up in various forms—self-building, unofficial strike committees, and so on—and it is by such spontaneous movement that in time of social change the workers will be able to control their own destinies.

Reading • • • • •

Lessons of the Spanish Revolution

THE study of the revolutions of the past is a necessary part of the preparation for the revolutions of the future. In FREEDOM, the Anarchist weekly, a series of articles is now running, thoroughly investigating and discussing the Spanish Revolution of 1936.

For the Syndicalist, these articles are most important. The Spanish Revolution showed the world how the Anarcho-Syndicalist idea of workers' control could really work, but V.R.'s articles are not merely glorifying those achievements but are critical and objective, pointing out what went wrong as well as what went right.

The Dirty Work

THE problem of how the unpleasant work will get done in a free society continually bothers those who can't believe that workers can be responsible and social beings.

WHO WILL DO THE DIRTY WORK?

By TONY GIBSON

Answers this hoary objection from the Anarchist point of view.

8 pages

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SYNDICALISM—THE WORKERS' NEXT STEP

By PHILIP SANSON

48 pages

One Shilling

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But in order that power be not handed over to a new minority, intensive propaganda against political action and personal power is essential. As revolutionary syndicalists we know that it is possible for spontaneous groupings to be linked up in industry so as to form one whole, undominated and decentralised, with economic control through the syndicates and local decentralised activity concentrated in the commune.

Hence we are not forming ourselves into any phoney "militant labour" force now, for we know that such a movement would be a sham. At present our task is solely that of propaganda, but we hope that such propaganda will have the next effect of the forming of industrial groups, so that propaganda may be carried on at the point of production and so become the germ of industrial groups for purposes of unofficial strike action. In turn this may develop into the revolutionary syndicate itself, as has happened in so many cases in particular circumstances. Side by side with the work of syndicalist penetration of industry for the waging of the class struggle and making it a fight for workers' control, comes the task of decentralisation—building up the feeling for a local commune. This can be done by such schemes as squatting and self-building schemes

on the one hand, health schemes is another that has arisen in past years, free schools is something else, and other such matters which ought not to be left to delegated authority in the town council, but taken over by a really revolutionary movement which—organising itself along industrial lines at the places of work—will in the locality unite its efforts for that free local planning that is an alternative to government. Council tenants know full well what such an association means, and how it is not similar to local government but simply in opposition to it.

Those who ask us "to give a lead" prove that they do not agree with our ideas anyway. We know our own failings as leaders and know, too, that given the power we would eventually be much the same as anyone else. What is wrong is not the quality of leadership, but the fact of leadership at all. We put forward the syndicalist method of propaganda—first where it can reach the workers, and then where it can reach them at work. The next task is that of organisation—at the places of work and in the locality—as distinct from rule from Westminster. Such is the germ of the new society which can arise by the taking over of the means of production and the abolition of the means of government. A.M.

History • • • • •

Syndicalism in the Argentine

DURING the great social upheavals of the late nineteenth century, countless thousands emigrated to the American Continent which they regarded as a mouse-hole out of European tyranny ("and, thank God, the mouse-hole is bigger than the room itself," said Heine). In this country we are more acquainted with the disillusion faced by those who went to the U.S.A., but the same applied to South America. In Argentine, the vast numbers of Spanish and Italian immigrants, as well as the large Russian Jewish element, brought with them ideas of revolutionary action which were widespread amongst the proletariat the end of the last century.

Many well-known anarchists went to the Argentine, such as Malatesta, and we may also mention the Irishman, John Creagh (who helped to found the anarchist daily *La Protesta* which lasted in Buenos Aires so many years, despite illegality, and which he at one time distributed riding in a coach, a revolver in one hand and the paper in the other, when the paper was threatened by Nationalist students). This large anarchist movement was originally centred in Buenos Aires, but in the course of its large scale activities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it recruited adherents throughout the country. Faced always with violent persecution from the authorities and rich young students, it hit back in the same manner, and preserved itself only by such determined action.

In order to make an effective onslaught on the capitalist class, the anarchists determined to organise a revolutionary syndicalist movement at the point of production. They built the F.O.R.A. (Workers' Federation of the Argentine Region) which had become one of the largest anarcho-syndicalist unions in the world, and which has faced repeated persecution and suppression, managing nevertheless to survive by determined action and even to keep bringing out a daily paper. The F.O.R.A. has never compromised, and when the socialists began trade union organisation which brought the spirit of compromise and class-collaboration into industry, the F.O.R.A. even though it became a minority movement, remained revolutionary and had no dealings with the State or Capitalism.

The many general strikes and clashes prior to the first world war are too numerous to

outline. The last great clash came in 1919. A general strike called by the F.O.R.A. had paralysed Buenos Aires and other ports. This was practically completely successful, but the Nationalist gangsters tried a new tactic. Previously they had gone into the workers' quarters shooting up strikers—which was always replied to by bomb-throwing in the aristocratic quarters. In 1919 they began a pogrom in which it is not known how many hundreds of Jews were killed, on the pretext that this was a strike inspired by "Soviet Jews". The F.O.R.A. called the strike off in order to prevent the pogrom, and in this large-scale defeat of the workers thousands of arrests were made, but—needless to say—not of the Nationalists.

Faced after World War I with the "glamour value" attaching to the Communists by virtue of the Bolshevik victory in Russia, and the compromise tactics of the Socialists, as well as increasing Nationalist influence over working people, the anarcho-syndicalist influence naturally waned in proportion to what had gone before. However, it maintained a prominent position in working-class circles despite the bloody dictatorships that disgraced the Argentine in the post-war period, and is strongest amongst the port-workers. Despite the tightening of the Nationalist grip, thanks to Socialist defections and Communist treachery (the Commies' attitude to the dictatorship wavering according to Soviet diplomacy), anarcho-syndicalism remains alive in the Argentine even under the Peron régime, and had it not been for so many workers abandoning the revolutionary camp, the methods that sustained the workers against so many pre-world-war-I dictatorships would have triumphed against the present dictatorships.

The main contribution made by the Argentine workers to the methods and principles of anarcho-syndicalism has been the lesson of how a movement can become large without compromise and without yielding to the various attempts at permeation or liquidation by the politicians, opponents and false friends. Likewise how the workers can hit back at repression and not suffer silently the destruction of their organisation nor the type of police and fascist attack on working-class quarters during industrial disputes.

WHAT is wrong with the world? It is not have a lot and find it neatly. In referring to the Amalgamated Stevedores Union, the writer is not holding deserving of attack selecting them because in his possession are typical of many saying this, there is point to as harsh as just that there is no say what unionism is conducted.

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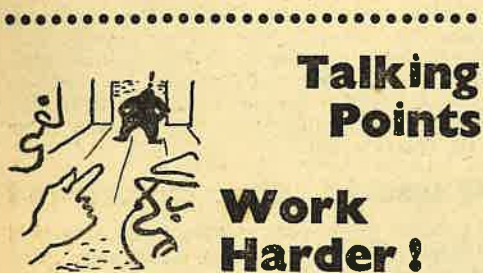
IF YOU LIKE The S

What's Wrong With the Unions?

WHAT is wrong with the unions? Why not have a look at the union rule book and find it neatly set out?

In referring to the rule book of the National Amalgamated Stevedores & Dockers, the writer is not holding them up as particularly deserving of attack in this respect, but solely selecting them because this is the rule book in his possession at the moment. The rules are typical of many and most unions, but in saying this, there is no particular rule one can point to as harsh or needful of change. It is just that there is nothing in the rule book to say what unionism is, but only how a union is conducted.

We are told from the beginning that penalties will be strictly enforced, and many people



It seems to be a favourite theme that "we are down and out because the workers don't work hard enough". The newspapers solemnly quote foreigners saying how slack the British worker is compared with his Continental or American counterpart and put this forward as the reason for "our non-recovery". Nothing more contrary to fact could be stated, but as Hitler said, the bigger the lie the more it is believed.

Continental workers work harder than here for the simple reason that they have to do so. It is true that they do not break off for tea, but then they cannot do so. They may have shops open all night, but if the assistants did not work such long hours, others would take their place. Demands for Saturday afternoon work are met, but not because the average Continental worker could not do with the time off as much as us.

The whole point is that they work harder not because they are better off, but because they are worse off. Why then should one give up the only visible sign of the betterment we have achieved over them? Let us on the contrary show them how to step themselves up by equal insistence on rights.

"But what about America? How could we become such a rich country if we don't work hard?"

"America is a very rich country but the people are so damn poor," an ex-immigrant once told me. America's riches certainly come from her workers but they do not reach them, and while they may have a higher standard it is not because of the way in which they work, but solely because of technical resources. We can all work like slaves for years and we will be none the better for it, because what we produce does not come back to us. For all the jibes and sneers of journalists in their armchairs, we know that one crisis follows another like a donkey after a carrot, and nothing gets better. We are witnessing the downfall of capitalism, so let us work in our own tempo and preserve our few hard-won social gains however "obstructive" they may be called.

When one sees the posters calling for productivity, one invariably thinks of the retired colonel who turned to his fellow club-member in St. James's and said, "Y' know, Cholmondeley, old boy, I've been standing at this window the last two hours watching those blighters at work and they haven't lifted a spade."

IF YOU LIKE

The Syndicalist

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nowadays join unions not because they want to but because they have to, so here they are introduced to a union because they must, or they would not be able to work, and the first thing that greets them is an intimation that all rules must be obeyed. There must be rules, say the supporters of orthodox trade unionism, but all these rules are rules for the conduct of a friendly society. What have they to do with trade unionism as (presumably) a fighting force in industry?

The objects of the Society are set out:

(1) The regulation of the hours of labour, wages, overtime, meal hours, and of the relations between workmen and employers

(So that there *must* be employers! A syndicalist union would stand for the abolition of the wages system and the taking over of industry by the workers themselves. That would be its main objective, and the relations of workmen and employers to a syndicalist union would be one of constant opposition and demanding concessions by right of strength.)

(2) To resist by lawful combination any infringement of the following rules either by employers or employees.

(The weakness of trade unionism is that it cannot resist totalitarianism—fascist, communist or the new type of Western democracy—so that when the law makes strikes illegal, "lawful combinations" are ruled out. The weakness of this clause, however, is that for the next twenty-five pages of the rule book everything is concerned with *rules over the workers!* There is not one mention of rules that dictate to the employers! Fines, administration procedure, expulsion, penalties, benefits, etc., etc., all relate to the members of the Society, so why talk such nonsense about the rules being equally applicable to both employers and employees? Obviously just to

sweeten the pill by letting the disciplined member think the employer is also disciplined.)

(3) To establish funds to provide for . . . the cost of management . . . and various benefits.

(That the various benefits are all good ones, except that trade dispute pay is withheld in unofficial strikes, cannot be denied, and the trade unions make good and useful friendly societies in many ways. But what has this to do with the principles on which trade unions were formed? Maybe we must put up with the union for the sake of the sum paid to the widow, but then we must have a separate union for fighting the class struggle, i.e., an unofficial one, a syndicalist one!)

(4) And to uphold the general principles of Trade Unionism.

(This in all the rule book is all one can find relating to what the Society is for! Clearly what is wanted is an organisation that can lay down the principles on which not only the wage system can be improved upon and reformed by means of industrial combination, but also how it can ultimately be abolished and a better society substituted for it.)

The outmoded classical conception of trade unions visualizes them only as for bargaining with the employers, and with the substitution of the new idea of treating the unions as part of the State, matters only become worse, not better.

No plan for the waging of the industrial struggle, no means of inspiring enthusiasm but only relying upon a sort of conscription of all and sundry, no idea as to how industrial combination could be the key to a free society.

These ideas are syndicalist and part of a long workers' tradition but not that tradition embodied in orthodox trade unionism.

ANSYN.

Psychology

A Mock Battle

GLASGOW

AT the present time (October 28th) there is to my mind a mock battle going on between the T.U. leaders and the employers. With regard to the £2 wage claim of the unions the employers have offered 5s. 6d. and then 7s. 4d. (they don't lack audacity—to say they are hard-necked would be an understatement—they have skins like a rhinoceros).

Of course they made the offer low enough so that the T.U. leaders could reject it, creating a semblance of opposition. It's all a matter of using psychology to try to outwit the rank and file members of the trade unions. The employers and the union leaders will protract negotiations as long as they can to try to "sicken" the rank and file and subtly persuade them into accepting about ten to twelve shillings.

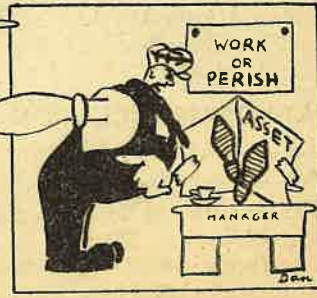
This mock battle is going on to keep the working-class from using militant action. For it is detrimental to both the employers and the T.U. officials for the working-class to take matters into their own hands. Action by the working-class such as perhaps a sit-down strike and a refusal to pay union dues would hurt

the employers and the union officials at the place where it hurts most—at their pockets. It would injure the re-armament programme of the executive committee of the employers—which is the government—and it would jeopardise the livelihood of that other parasitical growth upon our backs, the T.U. leaders.

The employing class are thriving on the profits derived from the arms race and the T.U. leaders sanction this. The last world war was fought supposedly to end fascism and to create greater liberty and well being. After the war was "won" we had to win the peace. It was the capitalist class who derived the benefit of winning the "war" and the "peace". If the working-class are to gain any benefit they must act themselves, now, instead of trusting their "leaders". They must fight their own battle and cease to be hoodwinked by this mock battle. They can win if they will only rely on their own strength. But this is only one struggle among many to be won, until the last battle is fought when the grave of capitalism will be dug by the social general strike and the workers syndicates will be its tombstone.

R. LYNN.

SCISSOR BILL



That's Different!

Capture the Unions?

I READ in THE SYNDICALIST No. 6 that you accept that the T.U. leaders have been urged to act due to pressure from the rank and file.

Why then, do you advocate scrapping the trade unions? Could not rank and file pressure be used to capture the unions through the shop stewards movement for revolutionary purposes?
Glasgow.

W.E.

Editor's Reply:

We would refer our questioner to the article "What's Wrong with the Unions?" elsewhere in this issue, and also our answer to a very similar question in our September issue.

We said then, "Constitutional procedure and the Rule Book too often put all the trump cards in the hands of the Executive and the militants can be steam-rollered." "Anslyn's" article in this issue has a closer look at the Rule Book of a union which is comparatively militant—and finds all the machinery there for disciplining the rank and file. We think there is no doubt that any revolutionary "ginger group" in the ordinary trade union would very soon be hammered by the Executive—all very democratically, of course—and would be expelled. It's happened too often for us to have any illusions about that.

A word about Shop Stewards, however. There is also no doubt that there is a great field for activity here, but the strength of the shop steward lies in the fact that he is one of the workers in the shop—in other words, a shop steward's organisation is one that is based at the point of production. And therein lies its strength. But in organising workers at the workshop level, to be effective the organisation must cut across union boundaries—no craft divisions, but one organisation for the whole factory irrespective of what differ-

ent unions the workers may belong to.

Could this be done through the unions? No, only in spite of the unions. Shop stewards have organised themselves effectively in the past, and probably will again, but it will be only in the teeth of bitter opposition from the union officials—both national and local.

Another point. In belonging to a union you have to pay the salaries of the leaders. Often that is all the worker does or is asked to do! In other words, you are paying to keep your enemy in the very position where he can do you most damage! You can contract out of the Political Levy, but not out of the Leaders' Levy. Any revolutionary action you try to take has the tremendous weight of the organisation, manned by paid officials, against you.

People who advocate working through the unions argue that it is easier to do so. In our opinion it is a damn' sight harder! And many workers, without consciously syndicalist ideas, are leaving the unions to the Yes-men and taking unofficial action themselves.

What is the point of capturing the unions anyway? The work of reforming them to suit the workers' real interests would mean more work than starting all over again from scratch with new organisations designed to meet our revolutionary needs. Walk out from the unions! Then they will collapse and there will be one barrier less on the road to workers' control.

This does not affect what we said last month about the Engineers' leadership being pushed by the rank and file into the £2 claim. The decision to ask for £2 was made at their annual conference—but it is the leadership who are negotiating with the employers, with what good result we can now see. We prophesied last month that the bosses would probably offer 7s. 6d.—we were 2d. out, they offered 7s. 4d.! And this they only offered because

of the threat of direct action by the rank and file.

But this is on a matter of a wage claim, and we are prepared to admit that the unions are all right for negotiating wage claims—if you don't mind waiting until the original demand is out of date! But for revolutionary purposes, like the abolition of the wage system altogether—well, that's a different matter.

5 Year Plan, 5 Hour Day

WHAT have the Editors to say about the five-year plan in the Soviet Union for a five-hour day? Is this not a step towards greater well being for the Soviet worker?

Possilpark, Glasgow.

J.F.

Editor's Reply:

Sounds marvellous! It certainly would be a great step forward, but unfortunately we cannot find out anything about this five-year plan.

We shall do our best, however, to check up on just what has been promised to the Russian workers, and will answer the question more fully next month.

Question the Directors!

A RAILWAY disaster occurs and they hold a court of enquiry. A very funny thing, that—instead of calling the shareholders, or the gentlemen in Head Office, or anyone else whom we know actually controls industry, they question such people as engine-drivers and firemen and signalmen, who, as every right-thinking person knows, cannot control industry, do not merit the salaries paid to the high-ranking officials, have no status in society and obviously don't have any responsibility whatsoever. Clearly if human error occurs it ought to be the holders of railway stock or the people who "run the industry" who should be questioned. But apparently the common workers do count for something—keeping the train on the rails, for instance—the directors have much greater responsibility than that . . . deciding whether the stationmaster should wear a top hat when seeing royalty off at Paddington, for instance.

London.

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST.

Meetings

LIBERTARIAN DISCUSSION GROUP
Discussion Meetings every Tuesday at 7.30.
9, Fitzroy Square, Warren Street, W.1.
TUES. NOV. 25—Jack Rice on
THE RAILWAYMEN'S MUTUAL AID SOCIETY

The story of the Euston van-drivers' action against NUR dictatorship and the founding of the Railwaymen's Mutual Aid Society—an organisation of workers on the job.

The Anarcho-Syndicalist point of view can be heard in:

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LONDON—

Hyde Park, Sundays at 4.30 p.m.

Manette St. (Char. X Rd.), Saturdays at 6 p.m.

Tower Hill, Fridays at 12.30 p.m.

THE SYNDICALIST is on sale at all meetings.

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Politics • • • • •

Look Twice at the Answer!

EDINBURGH.

A MEETING was held in Dalkeith recently in support of the miners' claim for a 30/- increase. As this follows on the heels of a similar rally of Fifeshire miners, signs are not lacking that attempts are being made to prepare the miners for the struggles that undoubtedly lie ahead. So far, so good.

What must be guarded against, however, are the attempts which will be made by the budding politicians and would-be commissars to use the workers as mere pawns in the struggle for political power. That this in fact is the intention of those who comprised the platform part at the Dalkeith meeting was made clear by their speeches, and even clearer at question time! While justifiable attacks were made against Lawther, the N.C.B. and the present nationalisation set-up, the only remedy the speakers could think of (or wanted us to think of), was the old standby, "Get rid of the Tories"! Is it necessary to remind the workers that for more than six years we did

get rid of the Tories. Did we find strikes unnecessary then? Was everything in the garden lovely? Far from it, and surely our memories are not so short that we have already forgotten the reactionary measures taken against us by the Labour Government under the guise of the "national interest". As a miner present pointed out it was the Labour Government which granted the ex-coalowners the compensation which miners are so bitter about, and the "penalty clause" and all the other complaints which the miners have are all traceable to the Labour and Union leaders who made the agreements.

Most of the fault, however, lies on our own doorstep. As long as we are not prepared to think and act for ourselves there will always be plenty who are willing to do it for us—and make a good thing out of it—for themselves. On the other hand, every worker who thinks for himself puts one more nail in the coffin of the smooth talkers—and hammers it home!

"Get rid of the Tories" sounds fine if you are easily kidded, but if we really mean business we will have to get rid of all politicians, and rely on our strength on the industrial field. We must make it clear that we are not out to establish either a "new democracy" or a new bureaucracy and that the workers' movement is no longer a happy hunting ground for power-seekers.

When the question "Do you agree that the workers should be prepared to use their organised strength against any government if they consider this necessary," is answered, not by a plain "yes" or "no", but by the type of evasive reply given by Alex Moffatt, the Lothians Miners' secretary, then it's high time we asked a few more questions—and looked twice at the answers!

T. O'M.

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