

THE

Syndicalist

FOR WORKERS' CONTROL

Vol. 1 No. 8 Twopence

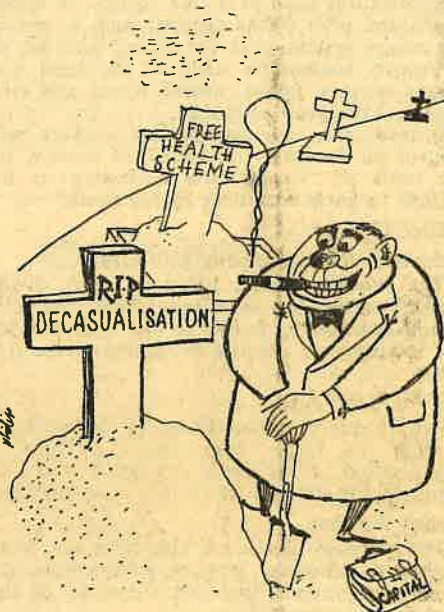
What the State Has Given - The State Can Take Away

What Use Are Reforms?

MANY years ago, the attitude of the ruling class to improvements in the conditions of the workers was summed-up by Leo Tolstoy in a very terse sentence. "The rich," he said, "will do anything for the poor, except get off their backs."

The whole of reformist politics is summed up in those words. None of the parties or organisations who have played their part in the building of the Welfare State have ever had any intention of seeing the State disappear. They have desired to make the economic system of capitalism a little less savage towards the under-privileged, but to abolish the under-privileged altogether—that was not part of their programme. For that would entail, on the other hand, the abolition of privilege, too; the ending of their being able to go good for other people, the disappearance of their power over others.

In these days, when the workers are just not prepared to tolerate the conditions under which our grandfathers lived and died, political parties can only get to power by promising to do something for us. They will never point out that if they were not there in the first place we should be in a position to do things for ourselves, for behind all their "do-good" schemes really lies the insulting assumption that we are incapable of looking after ourselves—that we need them because we are such fools



"Well, that's another one filled in!"

that we would not know what to do if they were not there to look after us.

And so they think up their schemes for making things better for us. Unemployment pay, National Insurance, Health schemes, welfare schemes by the mile. But as for getting off our backs altogether, taking their armies of administrators with them, and leaving us to run our own lives the way we think fit—not on your life!

Let us make clear that we are for the gaining of improvements in our own lives here and now. Not for us sack-cloth and ashes and

mortification of the flesh on the promise of a paradise to come. Nor the theoretical rejection (as a party) of reforms from which we are quite prepared to benefit as individuals. Putting it crudely: we will take what we can get, to be going on with. But whereas the loyal citizen is quite prepared to be satisfied with his lowly position in society, and is duly grateful for any hand-outs he may get, the anarcho-syndicalist asserts that he is as good as the next man and sees no reason why he or his class should do all the work and the boss and his class get all the benefit. If the boss, through pressure from below, shares a bit more of the benefit with him, the syndicalist is still not satisfied, for what rankles with him is the very fact that the boss is in a position above him to decide how much he shall get.

In other words, we fight for improvements in our conditions here and now, but we are not going to be satisfied with anything less than workers' control of the whole economy. We will accept reforms as they come along, but not for one moment will we give up our revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalist society altogether.

Among the workers, those who have been content up till now to support purely reformist bodies, like the trade unions or the Labour Party, should have had enough examples to see how temporary are the benefits that can be won that way.

The present position in the docks is a case in point. It is just about ten years since the de-casualisation scheme was introduced, which, we were told, ended for ever the uncertainty and indignity of casual employment for the docker. It was a typical piece of reformist legislation, with all the usual arguments about how much "better" it was for the docker now that he had his scheme. And, let us admit

Continued on p. 4

'Peace on Earth'

EDINBURGH.

WITH the approach of Christmas, both press and radio, not to mention pulpit, are once again being geared up to churn out the old familiar ballyhoo. Between pulpit and Panmunjon there ought to be enough talk about "peace on earth," etc., etc., to satisfy most people, always excepting of course the workers in uniform who will continue to lie in the trenches.

However, we can rest assured that the troops have not been forgotten. Every man is being provided with free fags and a bottle of beer as a Christmas treat. After that, would any soldier refuse to believe in Santa Claus?

There is, unfortunately, another side to the picture painted by the popular press and the Fleet Street morale-boosters which rarely gets any mention—the bald statements regarding casualties do not give any idea of the maiming and mutilation suffered by the troops; they merely obscure it. A few of the less popular subjects are desertions, self-inflicted wounds and the spectacle of "bomb-happy" men screaming in terror.

There will be no mention of this side of war from any of our "Korean Correspondents" however, and provided we can forget what are after all only minor discomforts, we can with a clear conscience wish our fellow workers on both sides, A Merry Xmas!

This is "civilisation" in nineteen-fiftytwo and unless we workers start to do something about it we will be next on the list as cannon-fodder. Are you going to do anything about it? If so, you'd better start now.

T.O.M.

Road Transport

Big Journeys and Little Money

LONDON.

ALTHOUGH nationalization did not really make that much difference since the same people controlled it, whether you called the chartered accountant a Bureaucrat or a Capitalist, denationalisation is positively going to make matters a lot worse.

This is because certain concessions have been won during the past few years, concessions which were inevitable in that period of scarcity of labour and ready markets. The Workers listened to their T.U. misleaders and did not press for further concessions when they had the power, but at least they did inevitably get some. There is no doubt that many of the worst anomalies of heavy transport were ironed out, but all that is going by the board with the prospect of denationalisation, and not only are we going back to the "old days" of private transport with all that has been gained since filched away, but matters are going to be even worse than they were before.

Already the old-fashioned long-distance journey is coming back again, and already we

see drivers sleeping in their lorries. Maybe it will be soon the old falling-asleep-over-the-wheel again, as drivers are threatened with the sack once more, for there are always plenty more to take their place and take the enormous journeys, many of which were curtailed first of all by zoning with petrol rationing (which was a blessing in some ways) and then zoning by nationalisation.

The non-nationalised concerns are often throwing it all to the winds and are well back to "normal" with their big journeys and little money, but the denationalised ones will soon follow—and some are hardly waiting for the signal.

Little wonder then that the job is cut up so much on the sidelines of transport. The removal vans are taking on their heavy loads with fewer staff, the class C delivery truck driver becomes an acrobat again, jumping up and down the back at every place he calls.

The alternative is not denationalisation-nationalisation, it is Workers' Control. If workers cannot control this industry let the police endorse the boss's Rolls-Royce licence when the lorry has a slip-up.

BERT.

Some Objections

THE main objection of the worker, especially the family man, is that he feels safe in a stick-in-the-mud trade union and wants no truck with a militant one. He fails to see that a militant policy does not mean one long strike. The walk-out, strike-without-hope is a hallmark of the orthodox trade union, at least in its old days (or even now when grudging recognition). What we propose are original tactics suitable to the struggle. Lightning strikes that produce results, not frustration. And taking advantage of situations, rather than allowing oneself to chase the old crisis carrot.

In complete opposition comes the objection of certain others that syndicalism is only "bread-and-butter issues". It has got a certain importance, after all, but our main answer is that such a struggle continues in industry whatever opinion may be vouchsafed. Our aim is to turn the struggle not only into a more militant one, but to ascertain that it is the means of getting workers' control.

How do we know workers' control would not yield to a party dictatorship? We do not know it would not. We aim to make it otherwise. Parties can, alas, get to power by demagoguery, and if this were not the case, libertarian propaganda would not be necessary. Workers control would not alone prevent a return to State organization which would destroy freedom. But without it there could be no freedom, as if people do not control that which they work upon somebody must be controlling them.

Many objections come from those who say there must be governments, or leaders, or parties, or capitalists, or other control from above. Those who accept these necessities obviously cannot agree with us, but we reject their insistent claim that we must therefore disbelieve in organisation. We do believe in organisation, but by the workers themselves, at the places where they work, to control what they work at. Decentralist organisation—the self-sufficient local community composed of free associations, without Whitehall control.

Others, more friendly, ask how we can dispense with so ingrained a workers' movement as the T.U. movement, in our struggle against the present system, though they concede its obvious disadvantages in building a new society. There are three main currents in workers' movements; one, British trade unionism and the labour movements it creates, which have been blindly copied in many countries; two, political socialism, and the political trade unions it creates (seen in Germany first of all, but later in Russia and to some extent in France); three, anarcho-syndicalism and similar movements which stand for a revolutionary union movement free from political control. In relating the history of syndicalism on this page month by month, it has been (and will be) the writer's intention to show that latter current through-

out the last fifty years, in almost every country (including this).

Finally, let us say this. The pressing needs of the day demand an independent workers' movement, based not only upon a phoney organisation that pretends to be a mass move-

AIMS & PRINCIPLES

SYNDICALISM is the expression, in terms of industrial organisation, of the anti-authoritarian ideas of anarchism.

AIM

Syndicalism aims at a free society, in which capitalism, with all its aspects, such as money, the wages system, and the State, with all its repressive institutions such as the legal and prison systems, police, armed forces and civil service, have been abolished.

Instead, free associations of workers will control all functions on behalf of society, on the basis of "From each according to his ability; to each according to his need."

PRINCIPLES

Industrial Organisation, not Craft

The existing unions, based on *craft*, divide workers more than they unite them. Workers should organise by *industry*—one syndicate for one industry—to practise solidarity to the full effect.

No Political Action

Parliamentary action dissipates the workers' strength in futile constitutional argument. Organisation at the *point of production* concentrates our strength where it is most effective.

Direct Action

The weapons of the working-class are those of the strike, boycott, go-slow, work-to-rule, etc. *Direct* action under the *direct* control of the workers concerned.

Experience with these weapons prepares the workers for the Social General Strike, when they lock out the boss class and take over industry themselves.

Control from Below

Organisation through works committees of *delegates*, not representatives, carrying out the wishes of the rank and file and subject to immediate recall.

No Permanent Paid Officials

No delegates elected for more than a fixed, short term, and paid no more than their earnings in their workshop.

Local Autonomy

No central authority dominating the whole organisation. *Decentralisation* gives to the smallest unit freedom to act in any circumstances. Solidarity readily given to all areas, but no control exerted from outside.

Federation

Workshop and factory committees to federate in local and regional committees, then in national committees, to maintain international contact, throughout each industry. All industries to federate on same levels in *confederation* of all workers.

Anti-Militarism, Anti-War

National wars are never fought in the interests of the workers. International solidarity is best shown by refusing to kill fellow workers in other countries. The workers have the strength to prevent war if they wish.

Only the Class-War

The only struggle the workers should support is the class struggle—the struggle against the ruling classes of the world no matter what label they give themselves.

Triple Function

1. To defend and improve conditions *now*.
2. To make the social revolution.
3. To organise production and distribution in the free society.

Workers' Control

Not Boss control; not State control:
WORKERS' CONTROL.

ment, but upon the unofficial strike committees, groups for workers' control and militant action, and other such manifestations of basically a syndicalist nature that we have seen in recent years. There is a positive and growing demand for syndicalism, for workers' control, and for a militant movement not based upon the chance demands of rival parties or rival imperialisms. THE SYNDICALIST exists to try to make that demand vocal. The Committee publishing it do not pretend to be "the spear-head of the vanguard de-dah-de-dah" but solely a means of rallying together this substantial minority in industry, in the hopes that a real union will thus ensue, one based on those Anarcho-Syndicalist principles which this series—sketchy at it may be—has endeavoured to trace, and which in these pages we are striving to amplify and illustrate with positive examples.

In adding to the literature already available, THE SYNDICALIST aspires both to the further clarification and discussion of Anarcho-Syndicalism internationally; and to the spreading of the idea locally, so that a revolutionary syndicalist movement on an industrial basis may take shape and make its contribution to the building of the new society. A.M.

Other series which have been published on Anarcho-Syndicalism include: Philip Sansom's series in *Freedom* (June—Aug., 1951), reprinted as a pamphlet, "Syndicalism—the Workers' Next Step." Geoffrey Ostergaard's series in *Freedom*, Aug. 9, 16., 23, 1952. A.M.'s series on Anarcho-Syndicalism in *Freedom* during 1948.

Your Christmas Carol

From the *New Leader* of June 3, 1938, we reprint the following parody of the Red Flag (still sung by Labour M.P.s when they think of it!) But in the fourteen years that have passed since this appeared, we are not sure the colour hasn't faded from palest pink to palest blue!

The people's flag is palest pink,
It hangs about the kitchen sink
In Transport House, and there, they say,
It dries the plates from day to day.
*Then raise the pale pink banner high,
Within its shade we'll quietly die.
Though Freedom fade from year to year,
We'll keep the pink flag flying here.*

Look how the tyrant loves its hue—
The War of Class is lost to view;
And while he sings its praise with glee,
He has the Bosses' Men to tea.
So raise, etc.

It waved above us in the fight
To save our Island from the might
Of savage Huns across the sea,
Who threatened our Democracy.
Yes, raise, etc.

It proudly waves above us still,
As once again the call is shrill
To cease dissension in our ranks,
Prepare to earn the Empire's thanks.
Ah, raise, etc.

It suits to-day the Red and base,
Who seem to have no Pride of Race,
To scowl before the rich man's smile
And seek the emblem to defile!
But raise, etc.

With heads deep-buried in the sand,
We shake the bosses by the hand,
And as they smite us in the rear
We know the rosy dawn is near.
Then raise, etc.

GORDON HOILE

Reading

WHO WILL DO THE DIRTY WORK?

By TONY GIBSON

Answers this hoary objection from the Anarchist point of view.

8 pages

2d.

SYNDICALISM—THE WORKERS' NEXT STEP

By PHILIP SANSON

48 pages

One Shilling

FREEDOM PRESS

27 Red Lion Street, London, W.C.1

AMONG those who have the same name—are the students. On groups they are not usually workers to be "overwhelming major working-class homes way between old-age labour.

Their intended, for skilled workers, is obligatory—an a years full-time and to, quite often, seven

This period has grant that averages student takes the comprehensible to him, years genuine approval or profession, he th in wages for doing t at a time when fina to fall on him.

This is what give

History

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The split betwee communists and no Communists was de because of the s

IF YOU LIKE

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Specialist Training on the Cheap

MANCHESTER.

AMONG those hit by the "slump"—as yet unofficial, but just as real as strikes of the same name—are technology and university students. On grounds of inverted snobbery they are not usually felt by the majority of workers to be "one of us", although the overwhelming majority of them come from working-class homes and economically lie midway between old-age pensioners and juvenile labour.

Their intended position is that of highly-skilled workers, for which prolonged training is obligatory—an absolute minimum of two years full-time and three or four part-time, up to, quite often, seven years full-time.

This period has to be lived through on a grant that averages, say, £130 p.a. If the student takes the course when it is most comprehensible to him, that is, after two or three years genuine apprenticeship in his industry or profession, he thereby forfeits £200 a year in wages for doing this socially necessary work, at a time when financial liabilities may begin to fall on him.

This is what gives the vacations their great

importance. Totalling 18 weeks in the year, they originated in the social habits of the aristocracy and plutocracy, to whom the idea of a steady 52-week grind was barbaric. With admirable flexibility they have now become an important financial prop of advanced specialist education.

An unsophisticated youngster may accept 30/- a week (in many cases his first wage) for applying the first year of his Honours electrical engineering course to the development of, say, domestic radios. If he is a bit older and a bit "wiser" he will value money before experience and may bring home a whole £10 a week for a 7-day week of 12-hour night shifts in an ice-cream factory.

But it's all different this year. Students—there are 150,000 of them—are reporting that it is very difficult to get work, unless the candidate has an uncle, etc. In Manchester during the summer, one Labour Exchange had 400 students on its books, which would have been no problem in 1951. In 1952, by dint of badgering employers by phone, 10 were placed. Wall's Ice Cream Factory, with a seasonal production admirably suited to student em-

ployment, regularly took 100. In 1952 they took no students and in fact sacked 70 of their permanent staff. The word was "redundant".

This Christmas no doubt the problem will appear again. It is always rather an anxious time for the student, for the second half of his permission to live does not arrive until mid-January. Consequently the three full working weeks of his vacation could be very useful—if only any employer felt like taking casuals for three weeks!

Even last year was difficult at this time. Fortunately, while the pressure of the courses produces two suicides every year or so among the hundred thousand, no instance has yet been reported of starvation in the streets because students can usually lean heavily on the solidarity of their own environment. It is certainly easier for Bob to borrow from Dad what may be a week's wage than it used to be for Montmorency to borrow from Pater what was an hour's profit! ERG.

Bakery

Night Work

GUERNSEY.

BOTH in this island and in England the perpetual bugbear of the baking trade is night-work. It is not a question of working shifts, but it is every night except Saturday, i.e., the working baker is in the bakehouse on all the seven days of the week.

This suits the boss very well. His employees make little or no contact in a social or intellectual manner with people in other social spheres and so are not in a position to pick up all sorts of revolutionary ideas and so on and can thus remain fairly docile.

It has been very difficult to get bakers to organise, even within the reformist trade unions, and indeed their experiences when they have done so have now led to a point where they are sceptical of any organisation at all.

The trade union's "solution" to the night-work problem has for years now been that things should be so arranged that nobody should be in the bakery between the hours of ten at night and five or six in the morning. This brilliant idea cannot be altered through the union branches, but whenever it is suggested either in the branch or on the district board that some other solution should be adopted, one is told that that is not the proper way to do things. It must come before the annual conference. If a branch, however, attempts to do so, the motion is ruled out of order and the assembled delegates (bless 'em) can be relied on not to raise any objection.

What the master bakers would do with the T.U. solution I have a pretty strong idea, in view of what happened under wartime emergencies when many of the bakeries brought in their staff round about 12 noon or 1 p.m. and worked them till 10 or 11 at night.

What a beautiful prospect we have before us in those circumstances! As most of my work-mates who have spoken on it at all have said: "Get out of the old woman's way as best you can in the morning and the rest of the time is work and sleep!"

Syndicalism, i.e., workers' control, is again the only solution to the above problem and it is a job that only the bakers can do for themselves. B.S.

History

Syndicalism in Germany

IN many of the countries we have considered in this series, there was a conscious Anarchist movement amongst the working-class, which made possible the growth of anarcho-syndicalism. On the other hand, in some cases the Anarchist influence in sufficient strength was lacking, and while anarcho-syndicalism as such did not appear amongst the workers in revolutionary situations, revolutionary syndicalism in one form or another appeared.

In Germany after the First World War, a series of revolutionary outbreaks led to the consciously militant and libertarian demand for "Soldiers' and Workers' Councils" which set up control of factories and ships, in particular, and in the case of Hamburg the free system of workers councils was fully developed in those revolutionary days. (An eyewitness account is available in the pamphlet "The Wilhelmshaven Revolt"). Although the term "syndicalist" was not used in connection with these workshop councils, and indeed a large number of the militants called themselves Spartacists, and in some cases anti-parliamentary communists, council communists, etc., there is little difference between basic syndicalist theory and this form of communism in Germany (which had nothing whatever in common with Leninism).

In some cases free communes were declared, and the Munich Commune was regarded by many of its supporters as a free commune to be built up by means of workers' control of industry. Although there was a provisional government of Social-Democrats, and such figures as Kurt Eisner were raised to the Premiership of Bavaria, there was a strong decentralist body of opinion amongst the workers which did not favour a "workers' government" and supported Eisner only because of his policy of South German independence and anti-militarism. He was killed by the reactionaries, and the Munich revolt crushed by Nazi-minded military men (Hitler himself playing a very inconspicuous part and, it is said, not daring to resist the Munich workers' demands of all soldiers who had not demobilised themselves to discard their uniforms. His *Mein Kampf* is silent on what he did in the days of what he eloquently describes as the "Terror").

The split between revolutionary council-communists and non-Bolshevik Socialists and Communists was delayed and finally avoided, because of the strength of the recoiling

serpent of German militarism, which was biting too viciously at the time for such differences fully to come out. However, the mood of the German workers in 1918/1920 was one which has given its own contribution to the formation of revolutionary syndicalist theory.

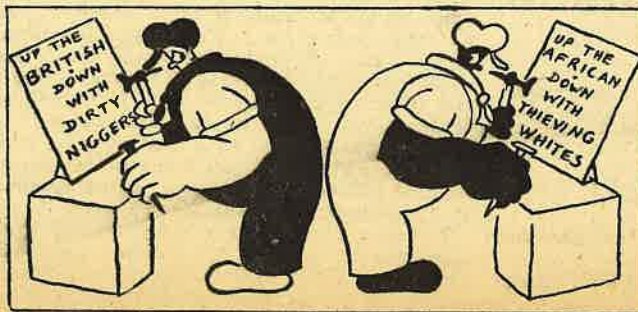
It can be seen clearly from this that in times of revolution the workers can throw up spontaneous movements—similar to the unofficial strike committees here—to control industry when a social change-over is possible. *Such councils, freely federated, approximate far more closely to a revolutionary industrial union than one which is merely a minority movement of a few militants.*

The sailors' committees which took control at Hamburg and overthrew their officers, represented a trend which had been seen in Kronstadt and was later seen in the Spanish fleet.

The general German workers' movement was influenced in later years by the workshop council idea, and in the Ruhr in particular revolutionary industrial movements continued for many years. In Düsseldorf, in 1920, an anarcho-syndicalist movement was begun, the F.A.U.D. (Free Workers Union) but there were also other movements, not syndicalist, such as the Spartacists, whose ideas on revolutionary organization were not dissimilar. A striking example of the syndicalist conception of the social strike was shown by the resolution of the German armament workers in general, when at Erfurt in 1919 they resolved to make no more weapons and to compel their employers to use their plants otherwise. This resolution was maintained for two years, the Anarcho-Syndicalists maintaining it to the last, until replaced by jobless workers driven to strikebreaking.

There are several movements springing up again in Germany and among others we may mention the Independent Workers Union (I.A.U.), organised by the Anarchist group at Mülheim.

SCISSOR BILL



Divide and be Ruled



IF YOU LIKE
The Syndicalist
DISTRIBUTE IT!

Stalin's Carrot

IN replying now to the letter in last month's issue, we hope we shall be forgiven for our admission that we knew nothing about the new Five-Year Plan in the Soviet Union. None of the Stalinists of our acquaintance knew anything about it either!

However, we have been to the source—to the *Daily Worker* office itself—and have discovered that only three issues of the *Worker* have references to the Plan. The glad news was given to the world by the great man himself, Stalin, on the eve of the 19th Party Congress, and it is claimed that the Soviet Union is now ready to make the transition from Socialism to Communism. That is, as they put it, from the principle, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work" to "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs"—the original Marxist slogan.

But this would entail the abolition of the wages system, since a worker's consumption is measured by his ability to buy what he needs—and we see no reference to this. Nor do we see any reference to the equalisation of incomes—the only thing that is definitely promised as being equal is Party discipline; the same for leaders as for the rank-and-file. So rank-and-filers will enjoy the same discipline that Slansky was recently awarded!

The rules of the Soviet Communist Party are being changed—"to lay down the most hard and fast rulings on the working of Party democracy, including free and secret election of leaders." This contrasts rather with the claim in the *Worker* that the Soviet people have already attained the highest standard of freedom in the world. And does it mean that other political parties will be allowed to re-appear and put up their candidates for leadership?

On the five-hour day, our correspondent is being a little premature. Stalin says that the working day will have to be reduced to six hours and then to five, but he does not say when. All the rest of the five-year plan is very definite in its aims, but this is a vague promise. What is definite is that the new plan

means more hard work for the Soviet worker—and in the system that has produced Stakhanovism and the Udarniks, and forced labour on a colossal scale, that is nothing new.

The Plan as published shows the increases in percentages in the number of hospitals, rest centres, etc., that are to be built by 1955 but does not say how many armament works, shadow factories and atom bombs are to be produced. That they will be produced is sure from the statement that one of the Party's tasks is to "strengthen" to the utmost the active defence of the Soviet motherland against the aggressive actions of her enemies" although (somehow) educating the members of its society in the spirit of internationalism!

We could go on pointing out contradictions in the new line—the fact that control of the collective farm is to be centralised, for example, and its property nationalised. That hardly sounds like communism to us.

This is just another carrot in front of the workers' noses. Stalin has already told us that he has no intention of allowing the Soviet State to wither away. And while the State exists there can be no communism in the real sense of the word.

The Crazy Gang

MANY of us may have listened to the comical action of the Crazy Gang on the radio or, better still, have seen their crazy antics on the Music Hall. The radio reminds me of another crazy gang, but this one is far from comic, it is terribly tragic. It deals in men's lives, their health, their limbs. I refer to that much talked of; but still distant "Korean Truce".

The Chinese say that their armies are all volunteers, but the Chinese Government will not allow those volunteers captured by other Government armies to go where they wish to, if or when the Korean Truce becomes a fact. Tragic contradiction No. 1.

Now we all know that the armies of the Allied Governments fighting in Korea are not volunteers but are just ordered by their governments to fight there. These same governments are misnamed "United Nations" when they are really United Governments deciding the fate of nations and of armies.

Now these United Governments will not sign a truce in Korea unless the prisoners they have taken from the "volunteer" armies are free to go where they wish when released. Naturally the soldiers of the United Governments that were ordered to Korea would be very pleased to know that their comrades who were captured can go where they wish when released.

But will they?
Tragic Crazy Gang No. 2!
London. W. MCCARTNEY.

Take Over the Newspapers!

A STOPPAGE of work that was not reported, to my knowledge, in the Press, occurred recently in the *News of the World* machine shop. Briefly, it went as follows:

Eight or ten weeks ago, the size of the newspaper was increased. The Chapels went to see the management for an increase of staff but nothing was done. The men decided to strike without waiting for their T.U. officials. The management, however, persuaded them to return to work. The men worked to rule, and the paper is said to have dropped an estimated 3 million copies. *Nothing has been said by the men's representatives.*

The Newspaper Proprietors Association issued a statement saying that if anything like this happens again, they will close down the production of newspapers in London. From my point of view, nothing would be better. It would give us the opportunity to take over the newspapers and to run them for the benefit of the workers—to print the news that we want to read, instead of the news the capitalists want us to read!

London. R.M.E.

[Readers are reminded of an attempt by the Kemsley Press recently to transfer printing of one of the Sunday papers to Manchester. A little direct action by the workers soon made them change their minds! But while there is the "differential" in pay, between London and the provinces, London employers will always have an incentive to get their printing done outside London.—EDS.]

What Use Are Reforms?

Continued from p. 1

honestly, it was better to be guaranteed £4 8s. a week even if there was no work to do. What was demanded of the worker in return for this little piece of security, however, was not often explained to the ordinary public. How he had to knuckle down to discipline that he would never have tolerated under the old arrangements, which, bad as they were, gave the dock worker a degree of independence he has now lost. How the official unions never failed to threaten the loss of the wonderful scheme if the rank-and-file did not toe the line and accept the agreements the unions had made with the Dock Labour Board (without consulting the rank-and-file).

But now the dockers are seeing just how much the scheme is worth anyway. After a year of mounting unemployment in the docks, the employers and the National Dock Labour Board have decided that they can no longer afford to keep the present number of dockers on the register, and about 12,000—16,000 of them will have to find employment elsewhere. So far it is voluntary, but obviously if they don't go they will be kicked out.

So the very thing that the scheme was sup-

posed to do—protect the dockers against unemployment—turns out to be the very thing it cannot do. When there is plenty of work, and the docker doesn't have to "bomp on" anyway, the scheme works all right, but when work is scarce, the scheme collapses!

Add to this the Health Scheme, now anything but free because the (much more important) armament programme has to be paid for, and the temporary nature of reforms in general can be seen. With capitalism in Britain on the decline, as it is to-day, all attempts at reforming it are doomed to failure. It will always be a case of "One step forward, two steps back."

Good intentions are not enough. There is no doubt that the idea behind the Health Scheme, for example, is a good one—that society should protect the individual against misfortune. And there are thousands of old and poor people to-day who are enjoying properly made spectacles and dentures for the first time. But the control was never in the hands of the people themselves. The State was the Sugar Daddy, and what the State has given the State can take away.

This is not the Anarcho-Syndicalist idea of social security. There is no security without freedom, for if we are not free our destiny must be in the hands of those above us and we are at their mercy. The workers in control of the means of production would mean free—and really free—access to all the means of life and all social services—for all. The abolition of the money system would mean that welfare could be administered on a basis of need, with the individual as his own judge of his needs, without the colossal waste of effort entailed in bureaucratic administration.

The only way to secure what reforms have been won is by social revolution. The only basis of a really free economy is workers' control of the means of production.

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PORTWORKERS' CLARION

Organ of the Merseyside Portworkers' Committee, 2d. monthly.
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