

SYNDICALIST PROGRAMME

the immediate issues in **FACTORIES, YARDS AND MINES**

THERE ARE SIGNS that the workers are awakening from their three years' sleep. Strikes are occurring everywhere, these strikes are short, but their lightning spontaneous character, their diversity of location and industry and their portent of the future struggle make them important. Nor are they to be considered as insular British phenomena; in France waves of strikes are beating against the new and old rulers. And not in France alone, but in every country from which news reaches Britain and is allowed breath, the struggle is arising.

To-day the dockers of London and the factory workers of Birmingham; yesterday the shipyard workers of the Tyne and the engineers of Belfast; to-morrow the miners and munition workers of north, east, south and west will join in the struggle which is one in Britain or in France, in America or Asia.

In the growing struggle we must confront not only our traditional enemy the employing class, but also their fifth column in the workers' camp, the trade union bureaucrats and the Communists. It is the latter who are the most vicious, exceeding all records of treachery and viciousness. The employers are quick to protect themselves against the gathering storm. How better insure their peaceful future of profit-grabbing than by attacking now that small band of unconquerable organisers of struggle, who everywhere and at all times have voiced the revolt from the ranks of the workers? And what better tools could they use than their lackeys, the Stalinists?

The present task of the Communist Party is, with the close collaboration of the boss, to plot the dismissal of the militants and drive them from the industry. Here is a quotation from a leaflet issued by the C.P. for internal-party information:

"In the machine shop of a Fleet Street newspaper, a Trotskyite came to seek work. One of our comrades spotted him and immediately got to work to let the other printers know what this man is, a Fascist doing Hitler's work in the working class. The Trotskyite is now out of the shop." (London District Bulletin issued by the London District Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain).

Remember, Trotskyite is the name given by Stalinists to all who seek in any measure to carry out the traditional aspirations of the working class, whether they are I.L.Pers, unattached Socialists, Anarchists or plain unlabelled working class fighters. Remember, all who do not agree with the latest turn of the Communist weather vane are dubbed, agents of Hitler. Agree with the Communist Party or be the victim of their character assassination.

How utterly contemptible, to deprive a man of the opportunity of earning his living because they disagree with his political opinions! How despicable to strike not only at the man, but against his home and the stomachs of his children!

Against such attacks the militants of all groups, or none, must close their ranks and organise their forces, must evolve in struggle a common programme of action. To that end we submit the Syndicalist immediate programme of action in the factories, yards and mines.

UNITY

A common front of all industrial workers who repudiate class-collaboration, against the employers and their fifth column the Communists. For the defence of all militants against victimisation.

FACTORY COMMITTEES.

For the creation of committees representing all the workers in any given industrial unit, factory, mine, ship, garage or railway shop. Where such com-

mittees already exist, as they do in most factories, the chief struggle is to save them for their original purpose, the defence of wages, working conditions and the dignity of the worker. We have to save them from becoming "Works Councils" on which sit an equal number of employers and "workers' representatives" for a monthly tete-a-tete. We have to prevent them becoming the nigger-driving increased production committees of the Communists. Our factory committees must embrace trade unionists and non-unionists alike, drawing the greatest strength from the greatest number.

TRADE UNION POSITIONS

Syndicalists do not seek paid employment as trade union officials. We ignore the siren voices "you can do more good for the movement if you have an influential position". Our place is in the ranks. We do not rise above the workers. We rise with the workers.

A NATIONAL OPPOSITION

On any factory committee where the militants are a minority, they should organise as an opposition, particularly against the Communists. But opposition must not be limited to the committee room. Every issue must be carried back to the benches. By their jerry-wangling the Communists may defeat us in counting noses on a committee, but they can never defeat us when the workers understand the immediate issue. Where the opposition groups or militant committees exist in neighbouring factories, contact among them should be created until we have a national opposition for every industry.

WAGES

The so-called war time truce on wage struggles does not prevent the employers attacking wages piecemeal by cutting bonus and piece-work rates, by "replanning" and "adjustments of staff". The defence of wages against all attacks is the chief task of the factory committee, so long as workers countenance the system of wage slavery.

THE TRANSFER OF LABOUR

The forcible transfer of labour from one factory to another and to remote districts is the greatest menace not only to the liberty of the worker, but also to his wages. For it is mainly from high paid to low paid jobs and districts that the transfers take place. Such transfers are unnecessary to industry. Where conditions and wages are reasonable, labour will transfer itself as it has in the past, filling the vacant places as water fills the hollow hand.

We are against the demand that forcible transfer should be controlled by shop stewards. We are against the forcible transfer in any case. In a number of cases the workers have threatened strike action when some of their work-mates were ordered to another district. Such action is usually successful. Resistance to slavery, not collaboration with the press gangs!

PRODUCTION COMMITTEES

Production committees endanger wages and working conditions for their only purpose is to extract from the workers skins more labour without paying any more wages. They are yet more dangerous, because they speak, falsely, in the name of the workers. Such committees can only result in the smashing of reasonable workshop conditions and the imposition of intensified slave conditions. Yet these production committees cannot control or influence the character or aggregate volume of production; the employers will always withhold essential information from such servile bodies.

In these circumstances we can only oppose the setting-up of production committees. Where they already exist, we must boycott the elections. It is dangerous to suppose we can oppose them from within. Such double dealing, even with good intentions, would put us in self-contradictory attitudes. Only open and direct honesty can serve the cause of the workers.

CANTEENS

The most common grievance of factory workers is the poor quality of food served in their canteens. Often it is quite good food, spoiled by mass cooking and slipshod serving. It has been proved useless to complain to the canteen contractors. The profit motive is too strong for them. By direct action workers in several factories have forced the management to get rid of Barkers and other contractors and have run the canteen through their own committees. Workers should use direct action to ensure that the canteen is run on a non-profit basis, that skilled cooks be employed at adequate rates of pay. In the meantime, workers should demand of the Food Committee, accounts of the allowances of food supplied to the factory canteen, and the figures be checked on the spot. It will often be discovered that a great many meals have entered phantom stomachs.

WORKERS' CONTROL OF INDUSTRY

Syndicalism stands for the control of industry by the workers—producing for use instead of for profit. This is not to us, a vague millennial aim, but a present issue. Always we must be studying how to take over and run the job. But Workers' Control means more than that. Because of the humdrum character of shop steward duties, many potential militants are not attracted to them. Workers' Control, by giving meaning to their daily tasks, by supplying the ultimate aim and purpose, gives each humble task a new meaning and lights the path of struggle with its inspiration.

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THIS PROGRAMME

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By

TOM BROWN

3d. (postage 1d.)

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