

Adrema Workers Stand Firm

BY T. REILLY

The engineering workers of Adrema Ltd., have been on strike since May 6th; fighting against the victimisation of eight active union members, four of whom are shop stewards; they need the support of all organised workers.

In the latest statement of the Strike Committee, a copy of which has been sent to the "Socialist Appeal", the following facts are presented:

Following the general return to work after the lock-out imposed by the Engineering Employers' Federation, as a result of the Fuel and Power Crisis, all workers were re-engaged with the exception of three fitters, whom the management stated they could not re-employ owing to lack of work on the fitting sections.

The Shop Stewards Committee consider this statement to be somewhat of a contradiction in view of the fact that 18 fitters who had been re-engaged have since left the company's employment.

In view of these facts, the workers at this establishment are of the opinion that the refusal of the management to immediately re-engage the three workers, is tantamount to deliberate victimisation.

The workers at mass meetings held some eight weeks ago instructed the stewards to place an embargo both on overtime and on the entry of new labour into the works, and also to take all the necessary steps to enable full publicity to be given to the case.

The stewards have secured the support of several M.P.s, including Mr. William Gallagher, who has intimated that he is pressing the Minister of Labour to hold an immediate enquiry into the dispute.

In addition, the stewards organised demonstrations both inside and outside the B.L.F., Olympia, on May 5th and 6th in an effort to bring to the notice of the public the anti-trade union attitude of the firm which is exhibiting there.

On May 7th, the management informed five of the demonstrators that they were dismissed for misconduct (i.e. for distribution of leaflets off the firm's premises). Three of the five brothers are shop stewards.

Hotel Workers : 21 DAYS STRIKE NOTICE

Frank Piazza Still Victimised

The case of the victimised worker, Frank Piazza, has resulted in the union, rather belatedly, handing in 21 days strike notice to the Ministry of Labour.

If the union leaders take this question seriously, they will have to get down to the job of rousing all the London catering workers for the struggle which confronts them. Since October last, when the right to organise was established by the mass strike, the hotel and catering trades bosses have been trying to restore the old position. They have succeeded in some measure because of the failure of the official union leadership to

How the Fighting Fund Stands

MAY, 1947.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|----------------------|-----|----|----|
| Hampstead | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| East London | 1 | 15 | 7 |
| Thames Valley | 7 | 16 | 0 |
| Manchester | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| I.C., Newcastle | 7 | 6 | 0 |
| Newcastle | 9 | 5 | 0 |
| Croydon | 1 | 13 | 4 |
| West London | 12 | 4 | 0 |
| Liverpool | 18 | 3 | 0 |
| Dan | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| London Social | 7 | 3 | 9 |
| Mrs. C. | 2 | 6 | 0 |
| Union Marxist League | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Oakengates | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| all | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | 9 | 3 | 4 |
| | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| to 12th May | £43 | 12 | 4 |

In view of the possibility of failure to get Piazza reinstated, union members should press for the immediate setting up of a central strike committee. All necessary organisational details should be thoroughly studied and assistance sought from the London Trades Council.

Only a widespread effort by all catering workers with help from broader sections of the organised Labour movement, can bring these employers to heel.

For the immediate and unconditional reinstatement of Frank Piazza!

For the Victory of the Catering Workers over their Employers!

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

BY P. NORMAN

London Gas Engineers' Agreement

For eighteen months London gas engineers have, through their union, been pressing for a 44 hour week and a substantial increase in wages.

After repeated threats of strike action, the gas employers have finally agreed to recognise the men's claims.

The joint shop stewards, led by Beeton, submitted to the Executive Committee of Ship-building and Engineering Confederation, what they termed an overall "Comprehensive Agreement" covering wages and working conditions. This "agreement" was their mandate to the Confederation to be secured from the gas employers. Nothing less would be accepted.

After a series of breakdown negotiations, the gasworkers finally, at the beginning of May, gave the gas employers the last chance to negotiate. Finally, the Confederation wrested a 44 hour week and a general increase of craftsmen's wages from 2s. 9d. to 3/- per hour.

Overtime Sell-Out

The various E.C.'s of the Confederation, without consulting the workers, betrayed the rank and file on two important items. Firstly, whereas formerly time and a third

had been paid for overtime, now time and a quarter only will be given. Thus the workers in effect, pay for their shorter working week. Secondly, the enhanced rates formerly paid for all working conditions commonly classed as "abnormal", such as height, heat and wet working, now go by the board. Another clause in the overtime agreement breaks a long cherished condition, i.e., originally overtime was based on each separate working day. Under the new agreement a 44 hour week must be worked before overtime rates are paid.

At a meeting of some 2,000 gas engineers at Holborn Hall on Wednesday, May 7, a resolution was unanimously carried calling upon the E.C.'s to reverse these conditions or issue 21 days' strike notice. In the meantime the status quo was to remain.

The need for a preparatory campaign by the gas shop stewards is most necessary if they are to conduct a successful battle with the employers.

The linking of works and shop stewards' committees nationally is a task of prime importance to secure united action for the reversal of agreements that impose such anomalous conditions.

1,000 City of London Workers' Strike

BY N. PENTLAND

Within the past few months, sections of workers in industries covering mining, railways and road transport have taken to strike action as a means of voicing their demand for the right to have a voice in the appointment of persons to managerial positions. The whole of the capitalist press has waxed indignant over this.

The latest of these strikes has recently been fought by T. and G.W.U. members employed by the City of London Corporation.

Beginning with a strike of

Billingsgate market attendants and special police constables over the promotion of a non-union member of the private police force, 1,000 workers went eventually out on strike for eleven days.

Great Solidarity

Following the Billingsgate stoppage, jettymen, gravediggers, road-sweepers, sewerage men and crematorium attendants, all employed by the Corporation, rallied to the side of the Billingsgate



workers in a great wave of working class solidarity, completely stopping burials, roadsweeping and cleaning. The strike committee stated that they put the whole blame for this squarely on the shoulders of the Corporation for its arbitrary appointment of a non-union man to a higher position.

The surprise of the whole strike which completely shook official quarters came when 75 union members operating the Tower Bridge bascules stopped work and publicly supported the City strikers, this being the first time in history that Tower Bridge has not been operated for this reason. By an ancient law of the City the bridge had to remain open for river trade.

Continuing the anti-working class policy of breaking strikes by the introduction of troops, the Labour Government manned the bridge with naval ratings from Chatham. To this, a leading member of the strike committee correctly remarked: "Our district office should have made the strike official."

This act, far from weakening the high morale of the strikers, only strengthened it. For, disgusted with the treatment of workers by the Labour Government on the one hand and its cringing before royalty on the other, 12 workmen preparing the Guildhall for the royal return, promptly downed tools also.

Lesson Of Solidarity

The strike is an object lesson to all workers.

With swift action, one section of workers after another saw the issue at stake and responded with enthusiasm, with a solidarity from which other sections of workers may fruitfully learn.

The demand of the workers to control and manage every sphere of life themselves, is one that must be given prime place by every organised worker.

Embargo On Overtime GAINS VICTORY FOR RAILWORKERS

The 240 railway workers of the Parcel Department at Liverpool Street recorded a great victory when they forced their employers to meet all their demands which were:

- (1) That the number of leading porters be increased from 41 to 62.
- (2) The number of parcel porters be increased from 110 to 140.
- (3) That the 19 second class foremen be re-classified to first class.

18 months of fruitless negotiation got them nowhere. It was when these workers went into action, using their own methods of struggle that a favourable result was achieved. An embargo on overtime and Sunday work forced the boss to capitulate.

T.R.

Letters To the Editor

News From India

SINGAPORE, S.E.A.C. 28.4.47.

Dear Comrade,

Just before I left Calcutta the riots had started there. They were deliberately engineered in order to try and split the ranks of the Calcutta working class who were due to have started a General Strike in sympathy with the Calcutta tram-workers and dockers who had been on strike since February and January respectively.

Although the Stalinist controlled B.P.T.U.C. called off the General Strike, it did not succeed in stopping the rioting. One important point however, is that the main working class areas of Calcutta such as Kidnapur, were not affected by the trouble. It was in the main confined to the middle class and professional districts.

One of our Party comrades had some limited success in forming workers' guards to patrol the troubled areas and stop any incidents.

Our Comrade Khan who is the President of the Mill Workers Union is conducting a great fight and has unanimous support of the workers in the area.

From Calcutta I went down by train to Madras. There a general strike had taken place of one day's duration to demand the release of Comrade Antoni Pillai, our comrade who was leading the Buckingham and Carnatic Mill Workers on strike. This is the most important section of the Madras working class. I was unable to see him in prison as he had been removed from the Madras Pen to Ragapatam.

I am now back in the unit preparing to go into transit. On Thursday I went to the East and West Society again. The Stalinists had arranged a debate on "Whether Imperialism was detrimental to Asia." The two speakers were pretty bad and came out with the patter about culture and having to learn foreign languages, etc. The biggest surprise of the evening was when the speaker for imperialism, a pukka white sahib, held up a copy of our Indian paper "The Spark" and commenced to read out part of it. He was attempting to "expose" the anti-imperialists, who he said, were never satisfied because in this paper they are now attacking Nehru, Patel, and even Stalin. I was able to answer him easily.

The World Youth Delegation has arrived in Singapore from Rangoon. It includes a delegate from Russia (Olga), Yugoslavia and France. Our Calcutta comrades exposed the Russian delegate when she was speaking in Calcutta. She refused to answer their questions and left the hall.

If they hold any public meetings in Singapore, I'll certainly be there to welcome them.

I'm a bit short of money at the moment, comrade, as I'm already £23 in debt with the army, so I'll wait until I get back and then I can let the Party have £25 of my gratuities.

With fraternal revolutionary greetings,

GEORGE
P.S. Hope May Day in London is a huge success.

Anti-Labour Policy in Singapore

A "Strikers' Backing-Up Society" has been formed in Singapore by 41 different Trade Unions.

At the first meeting of the Executive Committee of this society, held at the premises of the Singapore Federation of Trade Unions recently, it was resolved that financial help be given to the Singapore Traction Co. employees, who have been on strike for nearly three months, and that an appeal be made to all trade union branches to set up sub-committees to organise a "50 cent. (1d.) Donation Campaign" for the strikers.

This move constitutes a direct reply to the growing anti-labour actions and the callous disregard for the workers' wretched conditions displayed by the Government, the employers, and sections of the local press.

The Government has shown unmistakably where its true sympathies lie. Whenever there is a strike, the Government brings pressure to bear solely upon the workers.

Worse still, indirect pressure has been brought on the strikers by the Government by its countenancing of the use of Japanese war prisoners by the Municipality.

There are growing signs that the authorities and certain professional sections of the employers are attempting to manoeuvre themselves into a position from where they can launch a frontal assault on the workers' right to strike—which right, in the last resort, is the only thing that saves them from unmitigated exploitation. The anti-labour element appear to be particularly keen on enforcing compulsory arbitration. But the workers are preparing to demonstrate through greater unity, solidarity and self-reliance, that they will not brook any form of interference with their elementary rights.

From LEFT and RIGHT

BY AGITATOR

There Was No Unity

ON 6th May, the "Daily Worker" presents a write-up of a new Stalinist war film. Of the excerpts from the theme and dialogue which the "Worker" gives, here is an example:

"Churchill is portrayed as expressing his doubts about Soviet military might and the sufficiency of Soviet reserves, and as saying: 'We shall be glad if you succeed.'"

"The British and Americans then leave."

"Stalin: All is understood... the campaign in Africa, Italy. They simply want to be first in the Balkans. They want us to shed more blood so as to be able to dictate to us later."

At the time when this was supposed to be happening, the Stalinist press was lauding Churchill as the great leader and ally.

"Another scene", according to the "Daily Worker", "Shows the late President Roosevelt in his study reading the latest news and talking to an unnamed Journalist:

"R: How can we help the Russians now?

J: By invading Europe from the West."

R: Alas, this does not depend on me you know.

J: The British dream of a cheap victory.

R: Cheap victory and profitable peace, that is what suits them."

Roosevelt's surviving partisans will not be over pleased at the unflattering implication that he was a stooge of Churchill who, apparently, made the major decisions. But, that aside, we now have two astonishing assertions from the Stalinists. First there was no "Allied unity", and the

war, on the part of the British ruling class, was waged for a "cheap victory and a profitable peace." That is in line with what we Trotskyists were saying all along. But the cornerstone of Stalinist policy for four years was the "unity of the United Nations" and support for Churchill and his "just war for freedom."

You may be able to "fool some of the people all the time," Messrs. Stalinists, but surely some of your supporters will call for a balance sheet of your policies in the light of this latest example of cynicism.

In reality, there was of course, no difference in the fundamental strategy of Roosevelt and Churchill in their attitude towards the Soviet Union. Yesterday, the Russian and international Stalinist Press (in 1940), denounced Roosevelt as a war-monger and agent of U.S. imperialism. Tomorrow, they may "discover" again, the truth about Roosevelt as they did about Churchill. The pretence that this or that capitalist politician (particularly Roosevelt) is progressive or is interested in peace, plays into the hands of capitalism and deludes the workers.

'Work or Want' Dept.

DON IDDON, the £5,000 a year New York Correspondent of the "Daily Mail" is not renowned for his progressive views. All the more valuable, therefore, is the

exposure of capitalist inequality contained in his report of his recent crossing on the Queen Elizabeth. It reads in part:

"£1,000 is wagered in the smoking-room every night, and I'm surprised to find the British bidding as strenuously as the Americans."

"This ship is laden down with money, full of fat-faced, cigar-smoking men and minck-clad women. Over the Martins, the champagne and, later, the brandy, they talk heatedly of the workers, insist they're home idle and that the prohibitive tax on tobacco and cigarettes is a damn good thing. After saying this they usually light an enormous new cigar...."

"It is almost as if there is too much of everything here. The menu is as opulent as anything to be found in New York—trout, Salmon, halibut, lobster, shrimps, pheasants, lamb, ham, beef, tongue, steaks and chops, ice-cream, peaches, pineapples, pears, apples, oranges, bananas, thick whipped cream, fancy cakes and biscuits, bacon and eggs, cups of bouillon, cups and glasses of everything."

"I do not deplore it. I merely report it. Each first-class passenger has paid his £100 or more for a one-way crossing, and it is important, I suppose that he gets his money's worth."

Demagogy? Yes. But it seems to point to the fact that, despite the poster campaign of the Labour Government there still remain, as always, a section who neither work nor want. It wasn't for this that the workers put the Labour leaders in power.

Thanks from a German Family

GERMANY, April.

Dear Friends,

I received your food parcel and the enclosed note. Your kindness has really touched us deeply. After so many years of austerity it was as if we had been transported to dreamland. We regret that we cannot press your hand and thank you for your sacrifices. We are well aware that the food you send us is rationed in England.

Our calories have been reduced to such an extent that we are wasting away. In the struggle for our daily bread people here don't hesitate to commit the greatest depravities. Robbery, murder, thieving, prostitution and venereal diseases are every-day occurrences. That is the level to which the German people have been reduced.

The average wage of a German worker is 35-40 marks weekly. Is it then so hard to understand that workers are unable to buy additional food on their wages, and that we waste away on our rations?

Black market price per pound of bread is 18 marks, sugar 38 marks, butter 150 marks, bacon and lard 300 marks, flour 20 marks, coffee 300 marks, potatoes 4 marks. While a tin of milk costs 60 marks and 3 ozs. of chocolate 90 marks.

A second-hand shirt costs 100-200 marks, an ounce of soap 20 marks, a pair of shoes 500-1,000 marks, a new suit 2,500-3,000 marks, and a second-hand one 1,500-2,000 marks.

In short, you can get everything, but not on a worker's wage. From what I have told you you can see how we live, and what it means to us to receive a parcel from you. We will remain grateful to you all our lives.

Yours,
E.A. and Five Children.

Help Our German Comrades!

Send Food

To:-

H. CHASE
256 Harrow Rd.
London - W.2.

Orphan German Children Queue for Food