

# Freedom

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Threepence

ARE WE REALLY SO WORRIED ABOUT THE

## Vanishing Diplomats

A FEW years ago, Ernest Bevin, while he was Foreign Secretary, declared that he looked forward to the day when passports and visas and all the other impediments to free travel would be done away with and a man might go where he wished when he wished. Such was the situation before the first world war, when passports were issued to V.I.P.'s in order, as their name implies, to facilitate travel by by-passing some of the frontier formalities instead of increasing them.

The day Bevin looked forward to (did he do anything concrete to hasten its coming?) is clearly far off. It is a capital offence to leave the Soviet Union. And the American State Department has already refused to endorse the passports of certain individuals—Paul Robeson, for example—so that they cannot leave the United States. It is said that if Charlie Chaplin, still a British subject, were to leave America, a re-entry visa would not be issued to him, so that he also is effectively prevented from going abroad.

### Britain Also?

At the time of going to press, there is quite an uproar going on about two Foreign Office officials who went to France and disappeared. Of course, we have no means of knowing the details or even the main issues involved in this affair: but the reports suggest an almost ludicrous inflation. Mr. Anthony Eden, for example, asked Herbert Morrison, the Foreign Secretary, if "in view of the wide anxiety outside Britain about the unhappy events", he would keep the House informed of developments?

One pictures the anxious French nation moodily toying with their *croissants*, too upset to go to the bicycle races or buy tickets in the National Lottery. One imagines the

Italians and Spaniards, drawn into little anxious knots, speaking in low tones of these unhappy events, too wakeful to remember the hour of siesta. And in remote Finland, are the maidens who act as attendants at the Finnish baths standing idly by, fingering their birch twigs for lack of distraught customers?

### The Public's Opinion

What is the feeling of the British public on these grave events? If it had not been for that public spirited newspaper, the *Daily Express*, which published a report and so compelled the government to come into the open, the man in Britain's streets would not have had an opinion, and would never have heard of Mr. Maclean or Mr. Burgess. How much we owe to the watch dogs of our free press! (Well, how much?)

One is forced to gauge the importance of the affair, not so much from what officials say, but from the way they say it. At the time of going to press, we attach most significance to the extraordinary insulting comment of a pseudonymous columnist in the *Observer* (10/6/51). This speaks of "nervous and unstable characters"; of an "exuberant and rather exhibitionist personality"; of "the

neurotic fascination of oblivion, mildly implicit in any drinking". Another Sunday paper hinted at sexual perversion, so it seems impossible that they will simply return from a holiday—there would be too many libel actions pending.

In short, it is apparent that the papers and the government know well enough where they are and why. At all events, this knowledge seems to have permitted the press, at all events, to be perfectly reckless in defaming their characters by implication.

No charge has been brought by the Crown against them. But if it is only a matter of time, and if the press knows this, it becomes morally indefensible to blacken their characters beforehand and so prejudice any case well in advance. Such methods smack of the Iron Curtain.

All this, however, is mere speculation. The fact remains that a mountain has been made out of a molehill. And a molehill it remains even if it transpires that they have indeed escaped to Prague or other Russian territory. Our guess is that despite "wide anxiety", wages will be collected on Friday, beer will still be consumed, and working men and women will still be mainly preoccupied with the problems arising from the endless struggle of wages to catch up with the cost of living.

ANARCHIST.

## De Gaulle and the French Elections

(From our Special Correspondent)

WITH a levity in the use of words which hardly helps to shed light on the true facts, the Left press, in the present calm electoral campaign, refers to General de Gaulle as "Fascist".

There are perhaps propaganda reasons for this which an analysis of the facts would not justify, but without confusing the whole issue, it is difficult to speak of Gaullisme as of a fascist movement. It is quite simply a reactionary movement.

For many years, fascism has been considered as the political expression of large capitalist interests, especially in Germany and Italy. Whatever may be one's opinion of this definition, it does not apply to de Gaulle. For instance, in the division of Lille, the "longest General in the World" was obliged to withdraw his proposed candidature as a result of a joint campaign by the large industrialists allied to the socialists. In fact, Bertrand Motte, unchallenged leader of the employers'

circles in the textile industry, has succeeded in achieving the alliance of the S.F.I.O. (Socialists) and the Centre parties, and of even capturing one of the star candidates of the R.P.F. (de Gaulliste). And the object of all this is to forestall both the Communists and de Gaulle.

If—and we express here our opinion—fascism is a movement which unconsciously attempts to resolve the contradictions of private capitalism by installing a State capitalism whilst using all the old driving forces, such as patriotism, and basing itself on a certain number of archetypes such as the chief-warrior, etc. . . . then de Gaulle's *Rassemblement* does not fit that definition of fascism either.

Undoubtedly de Gaulle is the only person able to bring together into one movement essentially divergent interests and ferociously contradictory aspirations. But his favourite references are to Joan of Arc and Richelieu; his surroundings are Catholic and *vieille France* and his best support comes from the traditional malcontents among the lower middle-class.

Such curious personalities as André Malraux and Jacques Soustelle, and the very few working-class militants who

have been drawn in, might lead one to believe that a non-capitalist basis, common to the national-socialist and national-communist movements might exist in the R.P.F. But the nature of the crowds who acclaim the General or who will vote for R.P.F. dispel such an impression. They are average Frenchmen, always attracted towards caesarism forever regretting the "good old days"; frogs thirsting for a king.

The absence of unemployment in France, and of soldiers on leave; the multiplicity of Trade Unions and political parties claiming to represent the working-class are factors which render impossible the birth and development of a real fascist movement.

Let us also remember that de Gaulle can see himself being opposed in the electoral field by the Independents, the M.R.P. (Social Christians) and the Church. Nor does he receive support either from the industrialists or from the Americans.

For the moment, at any rate, he can only rely on the blind malcontents, living in the past. He will collect many votes, but he will not release a tidal wave.

S. PARANE.

## More Dollars for Franco

NOT content with having been responsible for getting Congress to approve a \$62,500,000 loan to Franco, Senator Pat McCarran is now planning to ask Congress to grant a further 100 million dollars loan.

"The people of Spain are sympathetic to us. They are now going through trying times. The nation must be built up internally so the Spanish people can come to our aid in time of trouble," he said.

Administration sources said if Congress approves an additional grant, President Truman probably will accept it because of the international situation and Spain's military importance to the non-Communist world.

But these sources said the Administration will insist that the loan be administered in a way similar to grants to Atlantic-pact and other nations. This would entail sending an ECA mission to Madrid and giving it

authority to deal directly with high Spanish officials.

Coinciding with Senator McCarran's statement is one by one of America's military chiefs, Gen. Omar Bradley on his arrival in Paris last week for Western defence talks, in which he is reported as saying that "from a military point of view" the Atlantic Pact would be strengthened by including Spain. He added, in answer to the suggestion that not only Spain but also Greece and Turkey, should be admitted: "It's my belief that we ought to have as many together as possible to build up the collective defense. The more of us who can be put together, the better we are going to be."

The General appears to have learned nothing from the last war when an ally was defined as anyone willing to kill Germans. Six years later we are choosing our allies in a similar way, substituting "Russians" for "Germans" in the old formula!

## Japanese Exports to Communist China Quadrupled

A REPORT from Washington, dated June 10th, to the *New York Herald Tribune* states that, "Japan's exports to Communist China quadrupled during the first six months of the Korean war."

The report continues: "Although restrictions have recently been placed on the export of strategic items, normal peace-time channels of trade between Japan and China are being kept open and the value of Japan's exports to Red China has continued to increase."

"It has not been considered practicable by the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers in Tokyo to apply to Japanese trade with China the flat embargo laid down in December on American traffic with the Chinese Communists."

"Statistics compiled by the economic and scientific section, SCAP, while still under the authority of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, show that Japanese exports to Red China skyrocketed after the outbreak of the Korean war."

"In the last six months of 1950 these exports totalled \$45,000,000. The statistics show that, despite some restrictions, this trade included items the Joint Chiefs of Staff specified, as early as the fall, were "essential to China's war economy".

"Japanese exports to China of whole categories of secondary strategic materials were banned in December, when allied prospects in Korea looked blackest. Trade was permitted in many items, however, despite the decision in Washington to embargo all American trade with China and to urge other allied nations to follow suit."

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## The Tallymen Defend Their Jobs

THE recent strike of tally clerks in the London docks was denounced (naturally) by the Press as being selfish, unjustified and restrictive. But if the Gentlemen of the Press would only make a small effort to see the situation from the point of view of the men involved, we might be given a clearer picture of the dispute rather than semi-hysterical condemnation.

Like many another dispute, this one started in a small way, but had larger implications, and was originally touched-off by official action by the Dock Labour Board.

The tally clerks are the men who check cargoes in and out of ships while the dockers load or unload, and of course they are keymen. Because more dockers have been taken on to deal with increased traffic in the London docks, the D.L.B. now want to engage more tallymen. But the tallymen say this is not necessary, although they are prepared to discuss the matter.

### High-handed Authority

But just as an old and respected custom was over-ridden in Manchester in the face of opposition from the men and caused the recent lengthy strike there (see last week's *Freedom*), so the authorities in London have high-handedly introduced their decision without discussing the issues with the men. We do not say they have not discussed with the unions, we only say they have not sought the opinions

"The idea of Anarchy had hardly been implanted in the mind of the people when it found so-called gardeners who watered it with their calumnies, fertilized it with their misrepresentations, warmed it in the hot-house of their hatred, supported it by their stupid opposition."

—P. J. PROUDHON

of the workers. And so, in the face of the tallymen's opposition to recruitment of more clerks, the Dock Labour Board tried it on by taking on one new man who, although he was a union member, had not previously worked as a tally clerk.

A simple—almost a trivial—thing. But such small beginnings are invariably the thin end of the wedge. The D.L.B. has announced figures to show that in the last 127 working days up to May 31st, there was a shortage of tallymen on 76 days, and sometimes the shortage was over a hundred. There are over 1,500 clerks in London, and the Labour Board want to take on 80 more men.

Now, the above figures also show that on 51 working days in the period quoted there were enough tally clerks to do the work. Had these extra men been employed then, at least that extra number—80—would have been out of a job. And the figures quoted did not show on how many days the number of tallymen required was less than 80. If we assume the number varied from none to a hundred, an average figure would show that on four-fifths of the number of days when there was a shortage of men, the number required was less than 80. Therefore, there would have been about 60 more days when all the tallymen were not required, making a possible total of 111 days out of the 127 when some men would have been "left on the stones" as they call it in dockland.

So looked at like this, the men's strike-action in reply to the introduction of more labour does not seem so unjustified, does it? The bosses are looking after their own interests—and the tallymen are simply defending theirs. That's fair enough, surely. Admittedly, more gangs of dockers are being created, and the proportion of tallymen to dockers is about 1 to 18. But the men themselves remain unconvinced of the necessity for more clerks at the moment.

### In Defence of Hard Work

On the other hand, it must be said how ridiculous it is that men have to go on strike to defend their jobs. Mechanisation is a similar issue to this, and disputes have arisen in the docks over the introduction of labour-saving machinery. Men have felt their jobs threatened by mechanical loaders, for instance, and have fought to retain the old, hard way of doing the work. This is a direct result of the wage system and of the boss-worker relationship. Workers have to have work in order to live, and anything which reduces the number of jobs available is a threat to their livelihood. Workers can only feel secure while there are more jobs than workers, and the experience of the dockers has already (as Harry Constable pointed out in *Freedom* a fortnight ago) shown them that the employers and the unions are quite prepared to declare dockers redundant in the interests of "efficiency" and "economic" organisation.

The answer to these "restrictive" practices by workers is to abolish the wage system. Then workers will be only too happy to cut down their hours of work, to mechanise for easier working, to share their work with whoever wants to do it. But that cannot be done within capitalism, or the "socialism" of the T.U.-Labour partnership.

P.S.

\* See page 4: THE WAGE SYSTEM.

## NEW PORTWORKERS' PAPER

WE have pleasure in drawing our readers' attention to a new portworkers' paper *Portworkers' Clarion*. It is published by the Merseyside Port Workers' Committee, representing a rank-and-file point of view in opposition to the official unions and employers, and to the Communist influence among the dockers.

The first number has just appeared, produced with all the birth-pangs which usually accompany working-class journals, and it is hoped it will become established as a twopenny monthly. Copies will be available from Freedom Bookshop or direct from:

D. Brandon, 42, Briardale Road, Prenton, Birkenhead, Cheshire.





