

Direct Action

**WORLD
LABOUR
NEWS**

**For Workers' Direct
Control of Industry**

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

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May Day is May the First

Seventy-seven years ago, in Chicago, eight anarcho-syndicalists were framed on a charge of throwing a bomb during a demonstration for the eight-hour day. Their trial proved that they were innocent of this charge. Four of them, Parsons, Fischer, Spie and Engel - were hanged. Lingg died by his own hand the night before the day fixed for his execution. Schwab, Neebe, and Fielden, served long terms in jail for a crime they did not commit.

In memory of these our martyrs, the whole international labour movement dedicated the first day of May every year to the celebration of the workers' struggle. On this day the workers would strike work and hold demonstrations.

Soon the Labour Party and Trade Union leaders corrupted the ideal and called the workers to continue work on May Day and celebrate on the first Sunday in May. Old George Lansbury once said that he had been asked to address May Day meetings on nearly every day in May, and one on April 29 and even on June 15, but rarely on May 1. The Communist bosses too join in the corruption of Labours International Day and will join in a march of reformists to Hyde Park, London but not on May Day.

THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION CALLS ON YOU COMRADE TO JOIN IN A DEMONSTRATION OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN HYDE PARK ON WEDNESDAY, MAY THE FIRST AT 3 PM. MAY DAY IS MAY ONE!

T.B.

SYNDICALIST YOUTH PAPER SUPPRESSED

As we go to Press comes news that large quantities of "Nueva Senda", the paper of the Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth in France, have been seized by the police and the paper itself suppressed by the De Gaulle Government. The issue contained a declaration of the Iberian Council of Liberation, which combines the clandestine Spanish and portuguese Libertarian Movements and has been carrying out a campaign of direct action against Franco and Salazar's regimes. This called for a boycott on tourism, announcing that it had launched the operation "Advertencia" against the airlines Iberia and TAP as a warning that they should not be used by those who want to lie on the sun-baked beaches of the Costa Brava and Estoril while the Spanish and Portuguese workers and peasants are subjected to the misery, poverty and tyranny of Fascist rule.

Shanty Towns of Squalor

by two STF comrades on the road in Spain

Our entrance to Barcelona was spoiled by the unpleasant buildings, of shack-like quality, which lay along each side of the railway track. Like an ugly black claw the city suburbs stretched forth and the picturesque villages and green fields shrank away, to leave us with the squalor one usually experiences when approaching any large city by train. Had we fled there and then, we would have escaped the captivating virtues of this city's people, also we should have overlooked, as tourists so often do, the seedier sights in store.

If the visitor is contemplating a trip to rival Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors, he could not do better than tread the offbeat track of sand and binders, between the mounds of orange peel, horse dung and the corpse of an occasional rat, to discover the living conditions of Barcelona's shanty towns. It is not, however, the recommended route for those of nervous disposition, or the very young.

The favourite place to start your tour is where a city sewer empties its contents into the Mediterranean, as its very banks support a settlement of shanty dwellings. As a scenic setting you will be faced with the sea, beating angrily on the beach, barely five feet away from the fragile shanties and, to your rear, the railway tracks and the odd, conspicuous gasometer. Take a deep breath, swerve to the right and stagger forward amid the houses constructed like hen-coops and offering less living space than the average caravan for the huge families who reside within. In Spain both the Church and State discourage birth control, with the result that families of ten are common.

Wending your way through the yards of washing, which swings to and fro across your path, it is possible to give the interior decorations a weighing up through the holes in the walls. Staring through an open doorway, it is obvious that the meagre possessions of these poor people have been used to the best of their ability. Pictures and furniture neatly arranged, a meal of bread and vegetables bubbles in a pan on the stove, while a pet bird twitters in its cage on the threshold. In the street outside the village carpenter assembles and repairs household articles and another craftsman creates cheap trinkets at his workbench, labouring skilfully with the most primitive tools. Women, looking somewhat the worse for wear, embark on shopping expeditions with nylons dangling round their ankles; others wash garments at the trough near the sewer. The young men are at work in the nearby factories, many for a wage as little as 7s.6d a day (see appendix). Everyone is poor, yet if you talk to anyone the odds are that you will be offered a cigarette. So in this slum, where flies flourish and the only instruments for a haircut are a pair of scissors and comb, daily bread becomes the dominating issue, not the Bomb,

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Shanty Towns of Squalor. Continued from page 2.

or who will win the next election. Television and other such gadgets are unimportant here, for loneliness is extinct.

What of human charity in Spain? For those with money to spare more cultural causes attract, like the church of La Sagrada Familia, begun in the year 1884 and still being constructed on purely voluntary contributions. No doubt it will be a work of splendid structural beauty and an ideal tourist magnet ... but it will scarcely bring peace of mind to the underfed thousands of Barcelona.

Ploughing a path among the multitudes of children, it is hard to avoid reflecting on how many will finish up capable of reading and writing. Evidence of the feeble educational system is clearly shown at every bookstall or newsagents, for the quantity of Spanish-language newspapers is swamped by foreign journals sold to tourists. Everywhere comics and glossy journals abound and stands often sell only picture books and sexy, paper-backed efforts. The typical Spanish newspaper resembles those of the British popular press in its lack of news and abundance of rubbish. Nor is only the talent to read and write deficient. Many waiters find themselves in trouble when adding up a few digits. At the hotel where we put up, the desk clerk was unable to multiply the daily cost of a room by seven, to calculate the weekly amount; she was compelled to add up the separate sums on a scrap of paper.

When an onslaught of cadging juveniles descend, you will have disturbed the occupants of the local gypsy encampment. Here the buildings deteriorate into tents and mothers breast-feed their off-spring on the ground all around. Begging by adults often becomes so persistent that it is hard to resist offering a rude sign in reply. Apart from the gypsies, however, the beggars of Barcelona have now been organised into an army of blind, disabled, crippled, old and poor appealing for sympathy - and at the same time peddling tickets for the Government's National Lottery. These poor people, who perch on street corners to dispose of their tickets cannot compete in the struggle for jobs and have therefore become more fashionable on the thoroughfares of Barcelona than the shoeblack or the lamplighter. What more profitable way for the State to employ its citizens? No nonsense about occupational therapy, making soap, or National Health. Make the deadlegs beg with pride for their State is the moral the Spanish Government seems to have drawn.

When the sea reveals itself, behind the canvas tents, the end of this abject poverty is in sight. Small boats of the village fishermen relieve the monotony of the sea's vast expanse. Minutes later you are on the new, exotic promenade built with tourists in mind, because the sea destroyed the old one. In the future the authorities may consider that the shanty towns are a tourist eyesore, then their inhabitants may get raked out and condemned to a council estate existence. Their do-it-yourself way of life will be disrupted and they will have to conform to the rat race pattern of modern society.

Within the city the only social improvements we could see were extensions to the metro (underground) and an intensive constructional overhaul of the Zoological Gardens. The animals are kept in admirable conditions of cleanliness in their spacious compounds. Feeding takes place at regular intervals.

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Bulgaria's Loss

Nicolas Stoinoff, libertarian, revolutionary syndicalist, conscientious objector, educationalist and one of Bulgaria's men of greatest integrity died on February 4, 1963, age 100.

Born at Choumen on December 19, 1862, of a family of small peasants and artisans, Nicolas Stoinoff lived through a century of social change. Having learned Russian and French at school, he was able, during adolescence, to read the works of European philosophers and sociologists, to become familiar with social, political and cultural developments throughout the world and to develop the views which were to govern his life.

Inspired by the ideas of Rousseau, then in vogue, and finding his vocation in education, he devoted himself to teaching from the age of 17, rejecting offers of more financially rewarding administrative posts.

Loyal to the pure ethical values of Christianity, which he found in perfect harmony with his libertarian ideas, Stoinoff declared himself a conscientious objector - the first in Bulgaria - preferring prison to the trade of hired assassin. A revolutionary syndicalist - also the first in Bulgaria - he founded the General Teachers' Union and organised a general strike against State control of education. Often sacked and persecuted for his convictions and activities, he several times had to change his teaching posts and district of work, though always remaining in the same part of the country. On retirement he himself planted a small vineyard in the open country and lived among the peasants, working until the end of his life. A true internationalist and cosmopolitan, he never isolated himself and kept contact with abroad.

Highly cultured, he contributed to the social and intellectual development of the country, creating people's universities, evening classes for adults, cultural centres, etc. A well-loved lecturer and public speaker, an indefatigable writer, animator of many publications and publishing houses, Nicolas Stoinoff, during a long and fruitful life, knew virtually all the political and cultural personalities of his time and had direct influence on several generations.

Revolutionary by conviction, peaceable and gentle by nature, his words and actions were always free of violence. His goodness and kindness were to be heard in his pleasant voice. But his natural kindness was in harmony with rare firmness of conviction and intransigence towards all injustice. Under the fascist regime, which seized power in 1923, Stoinoff denounced certain crimes in the Press, causing a public inquiry. Under the Stalinist regime he condemned its tyranny, himself writing, at his great age, a manuscript-bulletin, which he distributed, scorning threats by the authorities. The last courageous act was to write, for his centenary, and to reach comrades throughout the world, his memoirs - "A BULGARIAN CENTENARIAN SPEAKS" - that we have just published and which he did not live to see: testament, message and act of accusation against a regime and world bent on interplanetary rockets and preparation

Appeal

TO THE INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

We address ourselves to the International Anarchist Movement, to organized groups as well as individuals, asking their solidarity to engage in an international campaign of protest against the brutal sentences that the Franco regime has imposed on members of our Libertarian organisations in Spain.

We consider that it is the utmost duty of all militant anarchists to be on the alert to do all the necessary propaganda to procure and create a current of sympathy and backing to our comrades who have been accused, without evidence, of crimes ranging from violent insurrection to the publication of clandestine press for which they have been given terms ranging from 8 to 30 years imprisonment.

In the struggle for the freedom of the Spanish people, the libertarian movement has contributed its maximum effort and sacrifice, being the movement that has most resented, at all times, the repressive ferocity of the regime.

Our action has always been, and now more than ever, directed towards the downfall of the Franco tyranny, to obtain the restoration of freedom in Spain, and render possible and effective the struggle of the anarchist movement.

We believe that with the help of our comrades in other countries, we can do something effective to mobilise the rebuke of the world against the dictatorial regime that oppresses our country, exposing its 'justice', and bringing pressure for the revision of our comrades cases in which they were given no chance to defend themselves.

To this end, we invite all anarchists of the world and all the lovers of freedom, to show their solidarity with our comrades by organising all kinds of protests and sending letters and telegrams demanding their freedom to the U.N., U.N.E.S.C.O., the League of Human Rights etc., etc., to interest in this campaign all the personalities of art, literature, and science, to the ends that it will achieve its maximum efficacy.

So too, we appeal to all the international militant anarchists organised or otherwise, to give all their moral support and economic help possible, to continue the fight against the iberian fascism. The Spanish struggle, can and ought to be the flag that will unite the international anarchist movement in the struggle for freedom in the world

C.N.T. - F.I.J.L. - F.A.I.

BULGARIA'S LOSS Continued from page 4.

of thermo-nuclear war, rather than human welfare and international peace.

Our "grandfather", as we affectionately knew Nicolas Stoinoff for more than 40 years, with his splendid life and writings, constancy and loyalty as a militant, leaves a fine example, which gives us the courage to live, believe in and continue the struggle for the new world, to which he already belonged through his own integrity.

BULGARIAN ANARCHIST-COMMUNIST FEDERATION (Union in exile)

BULGARIAN NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR

Patriotism?

(FOR THE GOOSE NOT THE GANDER)

The National Mine Worker's Union of Malaya called a strike of 14,000 tin miners to start on March 23 in support of a wage claim. The union claimed that while wages were low, the year 1962 had been very profitable to the employers. The miners, therefore, claimed a "share of prosperity" in the form of a demand for a bonus of two months wages, such a claim not to be made in any bad year.

On March 21 the union leaders called off the strike, in response to a patriotic appeal of the Prime Minister, "not to aggravate the situation in the country as a result of confrontation by a foreign power."

The employers were not so patriotic, they were adamant in their refusal to compromise, though they made much of their offer of arbitration. The issue to go to arbitration was "is such a bonus a proper negotiation basis?" which was purely academic.

Perhaps the Malayan miners will make a patriotic appeal to the landlord when next he calls.

SHANTY TOWN OF SQUALOR Continued from page 3.

The situation of Barcelona's poor is black indeed, but not exaggerated. The Spanish situation is summed up in the guide-book (Spain, Vista Books), when it says: "Nearly half the population owns nothing. But one-hundredth of that same population owns half Spain."

Appendix: It is common knowledge that drunkenness may be cheaply achieved in Spain, but hunger is not so simply satisfied. For most Spanish families life is hand to mouth and in viewing the following rough list of essentials bear in mind that most wage-earners take home less than £3 a week.

1 pint of milk	7d	1 lb loaf of cheap bread	5d
1 lb of potatoes	3½d	Chicken	7s.6d
1 lb of beef steak	5s.0d	1 lb of leg of lamb	3s.6d
2 lbs of oranges	9d	1 lb of apples	7½d
1 lb of bananas	9d	1 lb of tomatoes	7½d
½ lb of cheese	1s.6d--2s	¼ lb of boiled ham	1.6d-1.10½d
Dozen eggs	3s.7d -4/6d	Jar of jam	2.3d-3s.9d

Open Letter to the Labour

Dear Harold,

Leader

Well, what a month it's been. I tell you, the nine of us have been pretty proud round there at the ward meetings - about the way you've been projecting your image, I mean.

We've been with you every inch of the way - "World in Action", all those interviews, the Tories "Entitled to Know" nonsense, your "Time and Tide" articles about your bungalow and holidays in the Scilly Isles (I wish they'd pronounce that some other way, don't you?).

When I say the nine of us, - well like I told you, we've got this troublemaker, but we deal with him I can assure you. You know, he started in the general discussion the other night to criticise your inspiring speech at Cardiff about making Britain great again saying it was old Tory, jingo talk and that he wanted to hear about the workers - well, Councillor Blott soon put him in his box on that one. That was the great advantage, the Councillor said, in having a leader of your cultural calibre to lead the working class - to lift us above the petty, day-to-day struggle and inspire us to great things like making Britain the Toolroom of the World. Like you said, it is a better description than the older phrase, the Workshop of the World. Much better ring about it, I agree.

And we liked all the simple things, too. You know, those homely scenes of your going back to your old school and talking to those contemporaries of yours who just haven't made it like you, who are only postmen now and things like that. They were pretty proud too to be taken with you, and then as I was expressing these feelings, our troublemaking member has to go and make a noise like being sick or something. Some of the workers are just not worth your efforts.

But just one word of advice, if I may suggest, Harold, that when you're P.M. you deal with that Bernard Levin fellow. That thing he said about emigrating if you were ever elected to the Labour Leadership! Well, it's sort of stuck in people's minds even though it was a long time ago and I notice it gets a bit of a laugh every time. Councillor Blott thought it would have been better not mentioned again in your excellent "World in Action" programme. Of course, you know best in these diplomatic situations, but with that and the Scilly Isles

Very pleased I felt, however, about your talk with George R. Thomson, the Financial Editor of Time and Tide. His one ray of cheer for investors - that you told him that you were against dividend limitation. It showed so

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THE FRENCH

The strike of 180,000 coalminers (coalface and surface) has lasted more than three weeks and is the first major social struggle of the Gaullist regime. The miners' power has shattered the social set-up of the past ten years - that of a working class obedient to the Government and unions, whose claims were set aside in the "superior interest" of French capitalist society (notably settlement of the Algerian war). This struggle reflects a group of economic and social conditions and will have political results: the Government and unions must now take into account the profound transformation French capitalism has undergone.

FACE TO FACE Nationalised industry in France, comprising 20% of the wage workers, has formed itself into a strong State bureaucracy, which, under cover of Gaullism, has been in conflict with the old private capitalist sector. The bureaucrats want immediate national planning; the capitalists want the nationalised sector to remain subordinate to their own interests.

Two main factors have lowered the standard of living of miners in the nationalised coal industry (11% reduction in five years, according to the unions). Firstly, the development of other forms of energy and the run-down of pit activity, as envisaged in the plan; secondly, the discrepancy between wages in nationalised undertakings and those of expanding sectors (helped by the 1958 suppression of the wage index in the former), which has allowed labour to be steered where profits are higher. For the miners, their struggles are for a higher living standard; for the engineers, they are for a stake in management in a planned, bureaucratic society. The fact that the engineers are to be found at the miners' sides should cause no illusions, but it is one element that favoured the launching of this struggle.

The TU organisations, Communist CGT (with 80% of votes at the elections of delegates), Catholic CFTC (15%) and Social-democrat FO (2-3%) have long held a similar position to the engineers: for broader participation in management of the collieries (they already have administrators), a "national" energy policy, a greater share in drawing up the plans. Their perspective resembles that of the State bureaucracy, though up to now they have not sought to implement it.

The end of the Algerian war was marked by an immediate Gaullist option, coinciding with that of big French capitalism - a swing towards a European economy. This put the national economic and TU bureaucracies in an even smaller minority, but its main effect was to bring a developing conflict with American, British and Russian imperialism. The USA launched an offensive against Gaullist France, insofar as it expressed tendencies towards a third European bloc. The attack was economic as well as political, internal as well as external.

On the TU level, the pro-American unions (FO & CFTC), which had hitherto put a brake on direct action, began to push for a general strike, while CGT

MINERS' STRIKE

by Henti Simon

held back. At the end of 1962, American trade-union officials arrived in France to help organise the social "offensive", which opened with the master-stroke of a fourth week's paid holiday in the Renault agreement. The minimum aim of this campaign is to raise production costs in France, putting French capitalism at a disadvantage and hindering its possibilities of investment. The maximum aim is to provoke a political crisis in France. This, however, must not lead to revolutionary possibilities; strikes must be only surface affairs, permitting "control of the troops" and their political exploitation, with working-class militancy determining the level of this exploitation.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the conditions of the coal-miners, which the bourgeois Press discovers only when a strike takes place. Suffice it to say that conditions are hard in the North. The miners' pay is made up of basic wages, a coal bonus, a production bonus payable six-monthly, a monthly bonus on the basis of 0.80NF (about 1s) daily, a yearly productivity bonus, plus special concessions in housing, retirement and social security. Real wages fluctuate between 400NF (surface) and 800NF (coalface). Although it is difficult to make accurate comparisons, these wages are at least 25% below those of Parisian engineering workers, while Lorraine iron miners, who have been on strike against sacking, get on average 20% more than the coal-miners. It was, therefore, basically a wage claim that pushed the miners into action.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRIKE Although springing directly from political causes, the trade-union swing to social agitation, after years of stagnation and filibustering, was another factor in provoking the dispute. Look at the facts:

In December, CGT and FO seperately organised go-slows, violently attacked by CFTC. On January 18, CFTC decided on an unlimited general strike, that it called alone on January 22 and which flopped. In its turn, FO alone called an unlimited general stoppage, which it cancelled after half-a-day, only 2% of the miners having answered the call. CGT and CFTC, who had decided jointly on a 48-hour general stoppage on February 1-2, called it off on the Government's promise to open discussions on February 15. As the Government offered only paltry graduated increases, CFTC and FO jointly called for an unlimited general stoppage. CGT proposed only a fortnight's agitation on the demands, beginning with a 48-hour general stoppage on March 1-2. At no time in all this manoeuvring were the miners themselves consulted, nor did any of the union organisations give valid account of its activity.

The miners' reply was an unlimited general stoppage from March 1 -- a total strike imposed on unions who wanted only token stoppages.

The Government's reply, when the unions could no longer hold back their "troops", was to issue requisition orders, several times previously used suc-

Continued overleaf.....

THE FRENCH MINERS' STRIKE Continued from previous page.

cessfully to break strikes (railways, underground, Air France). This time the miners ignored them: all workers felt at that moment that they were under attack. The Government was powerless.

The cohesion and militancy of the miners was clear from the strength of their demonstrations, the attitude of their women, the occupation of some pits in the Centre and South, the barricading of roads in Lorraine and in other little-known actions, which the unions not only tried to conceal, but actively fought against, even speaking of "provocations".

EXTENSION OF THE STRIKE - and
ITS CONTROL BY THE UNIONS

On the workers' side, the miners' strike made a deep impression, expressed through financial support and strikes that were not just of soli-

darity. Other sections, who had been carrying out limited activity, swung over to strike action: for wage claims, the fourth week paid holiday, reduction of working hours. In the Lorrain iron mines, the stoppage was complete from March 1 - 15 and work resumed only on withdrawal of sacking notices and opening discussions. The natural gas workers at Lacq called an unlimited general stoppage. The railwaymen called strike after strike, union instructions being amplified and exceeded.

On the union side, the miners' strike, which initially went far beyond TU intentions, was quickly brought under control: a central strike committee was nominated from above; occupation of pits stopped on the pretext of unifying the struggle; the only demonstrations were gatherings in the mining areas themselves and empty appeals to the authorities. CGT denied that a march on Paris was planned by the unions.

Financial solidarity was poorly organised by the unions and active solidarity even worse. To avert a broader movement, the unions called a national 15-minute stoppage that was followed unanimously. But on Wednesday, March 13, when 1,500 iron miners descended on Paris, no stoppage was called and only 5,000 people were on the Esplanade des Invalides to greet them. On the previous day, however, the unions had organised a rail stoppage and on the following day a general stoppage in engineering. Another example: to avert a general stoppage in the postal service, CGT on three successive days called out a tiny minority of workers.

It is therefore fair to say that the unions succeeded in curbing the spirit which had marked the outset of the miners' strike and their defiance of requisition. Up to now they have kept things under control, but it may not stay that way if the strike continues; new actions by the miners could give fresh impetus to other sections.

But the procrastinating role of CGT must not be under-estimated, with its "sensible" replies to the unaccustomed demagoguery of FO and CFTC (motivated by the political considerations mentioned above). This has reached such an extent that CGT was forced to deny having taken part in discussions where they tended to support Government policy. To a comrade who spoke to him of a general strike, a CGT factory delegate replied: "But a general strike would mean revolution - and who would take the responsibility for that?".

THE FRENCH MINERS' STRIKE Continued

This temporising activity by the unions is aided by the fact that, for most wage-workers in private industry no pressing or important demands are at stake: there is full employment, competitive wages for skilled workers and the possibility of concessions without strike action (e.g. the Renault agreement awarded the fourth week's paid holiday without a struggle). Even in the public sector, where a real wage problem exists, the miners' strike did not act as a gunpowder trail, leaving the unions far in the rear, as happened in the summer of 1953. But here again it is difficult to foretell what may happen if the strike continues, though the unions have so far succeeded in damping down the fires by calling small strikes successively in other trades.

On the Government side, there is consequently no deep anxiety: the unions are keeping control of the strike and the Government has, generally speaking, been careful to avoid a show of force that might provoke workers into by-passing the unions.

x x x x x

On the 25th day of the strike, following the breakdown of discussions with the coalfields management, one is forced to these conclusions.

These first discussions had two serious results. In the short term, the miners have been told they could resume work with a 7% increase, instead of the 11% demanded at the outset and only a promise of discussions on the fourth week's holiday and less hours. In the long term, they set the pattern for a new method of averting strikes in a planned economy. On one hand, a new type of arbitration, carried out by the bureaucrats before a strike. On the other, wage increases tied to the national plan, to increased production and to the plan's objectives.

No agreement was possible on the basis put forward by this committee of technocrats, labelled the "Committee of Wise Men". But the important point is that the unions agreed to discuss on that basis and according to the procedure the bureaucrats laid down. This is a step towards closer participation in capitalist planning and the subjection of the workers' interests to it. Such could be the profound outcome of the strike, if the unions finally succeed in maintaining their control.

'Comrade! Blackleg'

When the strike in Asturias was three weeks old, a ship manned with sailors and flying the Polish communist Flag arrived at the port of Gijon in Asturias with a load of coal. The Spanish stevedores refused to unload the scab cargo. The Polish communist crew did, under the protection of Franco's military force.

How Lumumba Died

Patrice Lumumba, Prime Minister of the Congo, was killed by members of Moise Tshombe's breakaway Katangan Government and his body dissolved in sulphuric acid supplied by Union Miniere, Tshombe's capitalist backers. This charge is made by a Belgian journalist, Gaston Bunens, in the socialist weekly, "Germinal".

Under the title, "The Truth about Lumumba's Death", Bunens explains that after Lumumba's capture, Godefroid Munongo, Minister of the Interior, and Jean-Baptiste Kibwe, Minister of Finance, went to see the prisoners, who also included M. Mpolo, Central Youth Minister, and M. Okito, Vice-President of the Senate. Munongo and Kibwe attacked the prisoners, then, in a drunken rage, murdered Lumumba and his two companions.

The journalist claims to have had this version from eye-witnesses, Belgian officers in Tshombe's employ, whom he does not name. Here is the interview with them, as Bunens reports it:

Officer: The Ministers were overcome by a wave of madness and it was impossible to reason with them. President Tshombe was not responsible for what happened. It took place in his absence.

Bunens: But I have seen photos taken by UNO officials, showing Tshombe examining Lumumba, who was on his knees.

Officer: Yes, the President did see Lumumba, then he called a Cabinet meeting to decide about putting him on trial and that, meanwhile, he should be imprisoned at Bunkeya, Munongo's native village. After the meeting, the Ministers celebrated the capture of their enemy, drinking like fish. And the same evening at 11, Munongo and Kibwe went to beat up the prisoners. The latter were in such a pitiful state that they showed no reaction. Then Munongo and Kibwe, utterly drunk, killed Lumumba, hitting him like madmen, before doing the same to Mpolo and Okito.

Bunens: And the refrigerators of the mining company, where it was claimed the bodies had been placed, before staging the escape story?

Officer: Pure invention, for the simple reason that on the same evening, January 17, 1961, there were no bodies any more. The mining company supplied us with the sulphuric acid and the corpses were completely dissolved in it. Nothing remained.

What is the purpose of this belated revelation? To whitewash Tshombe? Neither he nor Union Miniere can escape responsibility for the events that led to the appalling death of Lumumba and his companions.

Open Letter to the Labour Leader

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clearly that you're no extremist - as you said on Telly the share prices of those firms listed in "Entitled to Know" actually rose after you'd spoken on nationalisation. Clearly the big boys of capitalism also appreciate that you're no further to the Left of Centre than Harry Truman was.

Certainly, as you know, and the Time & Tide financier quotes you as believing it, a Socialist election would hit gilts because of inflation fears, and that would leave the market in no shape to absorb new government compensation stock which reluctant recipients would try to flog as fast as they got them. Fixed interest stocks could not stand another dose of nationalisation, and, as the financial editor said, you are well aware of all that. So it's very encouraging to have as leader one so well qualified in economics that even Tory economists have to admire him.

But soon, Harold, you'll be off to Russia and I'll bet you get a good write-up even in Pravda. While you're there I wonder if you could find out for certain that all the tyranny and oppression disappeared with Stalin. And whether there's anything in the reports that you get executed over there if you produce substandard meat pies or if you're found on the fiddle in the people's greengrocery. And this place in Siberia where that Cardinal's just left after twelve years - is it a convalescent home or a concentration camp? And some of the members in our constituency seem to think that it doesn't look too good for the Leader of a democratic party like ours to be hobnobbing with a leader who'd shoot at sight any comrade who wanted to stand against him. Of course I know how vitally important it is to co-exist and all that, but these awkward things do come up time and again.

Well, as I said, it's been an exciting month but you've given us quite a big lift, and I for one, as I go round the Council flats at night collecting the sixpenny dues - the stairs I climb! You've no idea for it's no Hampstead - find my task so much easier because you are out there projecting your image for all you're worth for all of us.

Yours fraternally,

Jimmy Wiggins.

VASSALS OF THE STATE Continued from page 14

member many instances when the Attlee administration thumbed its nose at Westminster's disorderly House. Those who still tell us that "we must have our own people in Parliament" are having a disillusioning time these days. State power is not held by MP's. The power lies behind this paper throne of Parliament.

Ken Hawkes.

Vassals of the State :

"You cannot hope to bribe or twist,
Thank God, the British journalist,
But seeing what the man will do
unbribed, there's no occasion to".

For once, the entire British Press has spoken with one voice to condemn almost unreservedly the jailing of two journalists, Brendan Mulholland (Daily Mail) and Reginald Foster (Daily Sketch) for their refusal to disclose, at the Radcliffe Tribunal on the Vassall Spy case, sources of information appearing in reports under their names. From Old Auntie "Times" - thundering about the irresponsible and uncontrolled power of the State executive - the the "Daily Worker" there has been a unanimous outcry at this attack on Press "freedom".

And fair enough, too. No libertarian will argue with the principle that the jailing of people on issues of conscience is something to be resisted. And all opposition to the ever-increasing limitations on liberty by the anonymous Executive is welcome. A few points, however, appear to have been overlooked in the general chorus of complaint.

The silence of the same Press during previous cases involving conscience, where those of its own number were not under attack, for instance. Industrial militants jailed for their active part in strike struggles; (Brian Behan after the South Bank building workers' dispute: Paddy Neary during the 1960 Seamen's Strike are two of many examples); Committee of 100 members, imprisoned for their resistance to nuclear mass-murder and many others have done Her Majesty's Pleasure (odd how the law labels its ruling sovereign a sadist) without even a murmur or protest from the editorial pens employed by Cecil King, Roy Thomson, little Lord Beaverbrook and the rest. Sauce for the journalist goose is not suited to the rebel gander.

Some Fleet Street synics, used to manufacturing news themselves, have suggested that the reason the sources were not revealed is that none existed in the first place.

The Vassall Tribunal was, we seem to remember, set up to investigate what appeared to be well-founded allegations of "queer" behaviour in high places at the Admiralty. It was neatly sidetracked into this impasse about the two journalists - and a protective cloak draped over the bared bottoms that had been under attack.

And the illusory power of Parliament, which is continually ignored and bypassed by the Government Departments, is perhaps, the most important aspect. It was shown here by the Tribunal, itself a product of the Executive, and by the negative Government reaction to widespread pleas by MP's on the journalists behalf. The process is not peculiar to Tory Governments, either, as we can re-

Seamen on the Move Again —

The National Seamen's Reform Movement is no more, it seems. It has faded away and with it the NSRM paper "Foc's'le".

The lead for the seamen in the rank and file movement, while the NSRM was in active existence, came mainly from Liverpool. This was because the NSRM originated in Liverpool - at that time the only port with an actively functioning rank and file committee. Since then the seamen's committees have developed everywhere in the UK. Although some districts have not maintained rank and file activity once the national lead of the NSRM was lacking, other districts, the North East Coast in particular, are as active as ever.

The NE seamen have formed the North East Seafarers' United Committee. One of their main aims at present is to stop the cheap labour menace of imported crews. This has not only given an impetus to rank and file committees else - where in the UK, it has created a breakthrough with regard to UK seamen's unity, regardless of colour or creed. A large proportion of the seamen on Tyneside are coloured - Arabs, Somalis, Indians, Pakistanis and so on. These men have their homes and families in the UK, and sail on UK ships under UK conditions, like the rest of us. They see the menace of cheap labour threatening their living, as it does that of all UK seamen - and the NE Committee has become the rallying point for coloured seamen, as well as whites. This is very important where we seamen are concerned. The colour bar has always prevented complete seamen's unity in the past; even in the NSRM. Although coloured seamen could join the NSRM without question, there existed the tacit implication that the NSRM was fighting for the interests of white seamen first and foremost.

This new NE Committee, by welcoming the coloured seamen as equals into its ranks, has given a fine constructive lead to the rest of us in other ports. It has strengthened its backing immeasurably, getting unthrustastic support from every section of seamen on Tyneside - and don't the shipowners and their phoney allies realise it!

I don't know what the NE lads are thinking of doing in the near future in a positive way, regarding ships with cheap labour crews aboard (they are already using NUS machinery to its fullest extent, of course).

The London Seamen's Rank and File Committee is being formed as I write this. It will be linking up with the NE and all other committees now being formed. The "Seamen's Voice" will be playing its part in supporting all rank and file seamen's activity in the struggle, so if you have a mate who's a seaman, make sure he gets the latest news about the seafaring industry by sending him a copy of "Seamen's Voice", 4d post paid from Bill Christopher, 34, Cumberland Rd., Walthamstow E.17.

G. Foulser A.B.

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