

22nd June
1966

Price 3d
No. 4.

LUDD

NO SELL - OUT

SEAMEN STILL LEAD

ONCE MORE THE WORKERS ARE BEING ASKED TO TRAIPSE AROUND TO THE GOSSIP-MILL AT WESTMINSTER WITH THE REQUEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT CUT ITS OWN POLITICAL THROAT. OF COURSE THE POLITICIANS WILL HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO THE WORKERS. A LOAD OF SWEET PLATITUDES ABOUT THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, ENGLANDS PRESTIGE ABROAD - ALL OF WHICH MEANS PIE IN THE SKY FOR THE SEAMEN AND LUNCHES AT CLARIDGE'S FOR THE SHIPOWNERS. THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF DECIDED THAT THIS WAS A STRIKE AGAINST THE STATE. WHY? BECAUSE THIS JUSTIFIES THE USE OF THE FULL FORCE OF THE STATE AGAINST THE SEAMEN! TO GO TO WESTMINSTER NOW IS RATHER LIKE ONE GENERAL ASKING ANOTHER TO STOP FIRING THOSE NASTY GUNS AT HIM. A GOVERNMENT WHICH STATES THAT IT IS NOT PREPARED TO BUDGE HAS TO BE SHIFTED AND THE WORKER HAS ONLY ONE WEAPON TO SHIFT IT WITH - SOLIDARITY IN ACTION, NOT JUST WORDS. ACT!

UNHOLY ALLIANCE

The national press, the shipowners, the Government and the T U C have all joined hands against the seamen. There is an obvious lesson to be learnt from this - if less than half of the seamen are on strike and this reduces the Government to hysterical witch-hunting, solidarity in action from other workers would have assured victory by now.

WASTE

This is the tragedy of lobbying - it diverts energy into the wrong channels. It creates hope where there is none. Men go home thinking that they have done a good turn for the striker, when in fact all they have done is put off having to make a real decision.

IN PAWN

The whole trouble is that there are so many political factions amongst the workers; ignoring those factions who wish to climb to power on the backs of the workers (or have already arrived), there are many other militants who have spent so many years arguing that they can't see the wood for the trees. The need now is solidarity. The battle is a defensive one against the Prices and Incomes Policy. The Labour Party will not move because it cannot move; it has pawned itself and the country - and as usual the workers are expected to get them off the hook.



MR SMALLPIECE - BIG MOUTH FOR CUNARD

STILL IN DOCK

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S :

Following our EBANI story in the last issue of LUDD, it seems that the Tilbury lockgatemens didn't give Mr. Harrall (the local T & G official) the chance to pull the wool over their eyes for a second time: on hearing the KODINA, an Elder Demster ship, was attempting to sail short handed, the duty watch had her stopped for twelve hours until the strike liaison committee could be informed - the ship was then blacked.

Someone is learning fast and it isn't Mr. Harrall.

WORKERS' ACTION COMMITTEES

With the continued opposition of the Labour Government, the shipowners and the T U C General Council, the seamen have only the solidarity of the organised rank and file left to back them.

The story of the T U C General Council's violent opposition to the claims of the N U S, its whole-hearted support for the discredited Prices and Incomes Policy, gets dirtier every week the strike goes on. Mr. George Woodcock, T U C general secretary, MR. Vic Feather, assistant general secretary, and members of the T U C Finance and General Purposes Committee, do not even attempt to conceal their incitement to strike-breaking and black-legging. They want to smash the picket lines. They want to lash the seamen back to work. So much do these self-appointed trade union leaders hate the seamen that if they had their way they would have all militant seamen and all those rank and file trade unionists who support them keel-hauled.

CAPTAIN BLIGH

If the film "Mutiny on the Bounty" is ever remade there is no need to look far for a person to play Captain Bligh - this role could be admirably filled by George Woodcock. The difficulty, however, would be to find someone at Transport House to play the part of "Mr. Fletcher Christian".

As for the actors to play the part of press-gangs to drive unwilling men to sea, we need look no further than the leader writers of our national press. A more sinister gang of cut-throats you could not imagine.

However, it cannot be said that a serious alternative to the "official" anti-strike movement has developed. Let us be blunt: the seamen's strike committees are lagging behind the militancy of the rank and file seamen. It is true that members of the strike committees have gone out to other trade

(continued over)

L U D D is produced by a group of workers who feel that the Seamen's struggle is also their's - and that the complete solidarity of the working class can ensure total success in this strike - and by solidarity mean actions as well as words and money.

The name L U D D is taken from an early working class movement which believed in direct action. In their day their action took the form of breaking the machines which were threatening their lives - we have no wish to break machines, but we do have a great interest in breaking bureaucracies - of any kind.

Any profit made on this broadsheet will be donated to the Seamen's Strike Fund.

To date our profits have totalled five pounds - this has been sent to the seamen's strike fund.

37 days later

As the seamen from all over Britain arrive to lobby the House of Commons today, complete solidarity has been expressed by all sections of their union. Mr. Wilson's stupid smear, the last desperate attempt of an anti-workers' government to smash a successful strike by means of a smear-campaign against its members, has obviously failed.

The charges of left-wing infiltration rebounded on Wilson's own head. All Channel ports are solidly in support, and any other waverers have certainly had their eyes opened by the filth slung by the Wilson Government. Mr. Jack Grey, an official of the N U S, called Mr. Wilson "a stupid, muddled man." He has torn up his Labour Party card.

SIX IN A BED

Mr. Ford Geddes, the well known sea-going philanthropist, made quite a bit of publicity at the beginning of the strike, with his praise of the living conditions aboard the ships of Her Majesty's Merchant Marine. Now far be it from us to criticise such an important man as Mr. Geddes, whom we wouldn't think of calling a liar, but surely someone has been misleading him. During my relatively short sea life (two years), I fancy I saw a little more of conditions at sea than Bro. Geddes. When was the last time Geddes slept six in a room? The stewards accommodation on board the so-called "Queens of the Sea", is, to say the least medieval: situated above the engine-room and beneath the galley, stinking hot and smelling of human sweat, it isn't

Mr. Wilson, who is one of the astutest villains to head a government since Rasputin got his feet under the table with the Empress of Russia, has now resorted to the tactics beloved of power maniacs - the smear. When in doubt throw a bucket of red paint. On Monday, he had a field day, much to the joy of the drunken defenders of our democracy, who ordered drinks all round at 'El Vino's'. The stalwart journalists could now write their stories, without having to leave the Whisky Macs (paid for by such honest defenders of the realm as Cecil King and the Berry Brothers.

The truth is out - the Smear is in. And sub-editors will have a ball with such honest titles as "Red Plot" and "Moscow Gold", etc., etc.

NO COMPUTER

The naive Edward Heath (the only Conservative who makes Sir Alec Douglas-Hume look like a genius) rather stupidly took up Childe Harold's thoughts on a secret ballot of the seamen. Harold shook his head despairingly at the "technical difficulties" that the mighty resources of his empire could not overcome. Mr. Cousins did not even have a computer to spare. (Or perhaps Harold knew the result of the South Shields secret ballot: 609 votes against 43 - triumphant support for the strike.)

However the paint-brush was out and there were "communists" and "trotskists" under every seaman's bed. Agitators on every street corner, secret meetings in cellars, and Left-wing militants taking their orders from Moscow, Cairo and the Duke of Windsor. All in a desperate bid to cause Harold's nightmares and undermine the stability of the Swiss franc.

Oh, you wicked men! Why don't you

fit for pigs. It's a pity the seamen haven't, so far, seen fit to raise much more of a rumpus over these issues. However there's time yet.

Another point not given enough publicity is the actual position of seamen on passengers (supposing a seaman is caught in bed with a passenger - he can be done for breach of cargo and given six months). Seamen are expected, like Uriah Heap, to be terribly 'umble. If a passenger takes a dislike to a steward and reports him for insolence, the steward can be fined up to three days pay; even worse he can be given a bad discharge. Against all these things there is practically no right of appeal. The Passenger is always right and the Captain's word is law. There is no protection given by the union aboard ship - shop stewards are not allowed - he has to wait for, sometimes, up to two years before he comes back to England.

listen to the kindly words of your executioners? How dare you attack our Leader Harold who wants to tighten the screws up a bit?

Think of the tears you have caused his honest lieutenants, Brown and Gunter. Just think how much Bro. Brown has had to drink (weak milk tea, of course) to drown his sorrow at your impettinence, and consider the distress that you have caused to the soft heart of Bro. Gunter.

Go back to work - ashamed of your misdeeds - confess your sins at the next meeting of your local Labour Party and don't get above your station again. Who do you think you are? - Judges? Doctors? - or M.P.'s? Don't you realise that there is a national crisis in Zurich?

When you return, however, there is one question you might ask Mr. Wilson: - very 'umbly, of course: - "if he and Mr. Hogg are so keen on secret ballots, why don't they have them in the Houses of Parliament?"

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UNWRITTEN RULE

union branches, at their request, to explain the seamen's case. It is true that leaflets have been widely distributed.

But it is an unwritten law in all trade union circles that if you want help, you must make the approach. And this widening of the base of support is very urgent indeed.

There has been a spontaneous response from hundreds of shop stewards committees, trade union branches and even, in some cases, union executives, to the appeal for financial assistance.

What we have not seen is the local N U S branches making demands on local trades councils, on shop stewards' committees for the formation of all-in solidarity committees on a nation-wide basis, for mobilising ten million trade unionists who over-whelmingly oppose the Labour Governments Prices and Incomes Policy. We all know that our turn is next; that if the seamen fail to win their main demands, this is defeat for us.

Even on the waterfront, the permanent and close association of the seamen dockers, stevedores, lockgatemens, lightermen in regular joint action committees, is not being carried out satisfactorily. Seamen must demand of their local union branches that such steps to widen the scope of the struggle be taken immediately. The support is there - go out and get it - N O W.

Donations should be sent to the
STRIKE COMMITTEE, National Union of
Seamen, Victoria & Albert Docks,
Connaught Road, London, E.16.

Printed & published by LUDD.
283, Gray's Inn Rd., London WC1.