## TO THE EDITING CHAIRLEN

#### Dear Friends!

The In 8 decided to begin sending around rough drafts of some of the articles its members write either as Front Pagers or columns for discussion by the local committees. This will both give the locals a view of some of the projected articles by the centre and give the centre the benefit of the lecal discussions so that the drafts can be rewritten accordingly before we so to press.

The first exticle contributed by Weaver is here appended for discussion. It is written as presented to the REE and not rewritten afterwards. Therefore it is necessary to state most the suggestion by Esleen to begin on the note of Eisenhower's statement at the time of Stalin's death and the reaction to it on the part of the workers and public in general, and the ore by Franter that the exticle include reference to the fact that Victor Routher who was to have been the European representative of the Ualf promptly left Europe after June 17th revolt and never returned. When the local discussions are in as well the article will first be rewritten.

Milsen stated he could have his column ready in two wasks, sad Watking his review of Indignant Heart, which will procede the serialization of the work on the Magro page will follow. The HER hopes that the locals will do the same and that all this material will not only circulate sheed of simulation but so will discussions on it. That is the best way to begin getting the feel of the paper as a whole, instead of each local concerned with but one special and locate eight of the paper as a whole.

MARTOR

TWO PAGES OF TODAY'S HISTORY THAT HAVE SHOWN THE WAY TO FEEEDOM

On June 17, 1953 the Egst Berlin workers came out in a strike against the Communist rulers. This unprecedented action bogan us a strike against "higher norms", that is, speed-up, and developed into calling for the release of pelitical prisoners and the formation of a new government through free elections. It was the first strike to have occurred in a country under Russian occupation and it thereby changed the political face of Europe.

A few weeks later another "first" occurred that shock the Kremlin to its foundations. This time it was a strike at its own slave labor camp at Vorkuta. This strike, inspired by the Mast German revolt, was even more remarkable than the first in that it was organized underground by prisoners who had no rights whatever and right under the noses of the EKVD (Russian Secret Police).

We now have the story of this other strike in a most remarkable book by a Dr. Joseph Scholmor, an insets there who experienced imprisonment by the Gestape

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for his anti-Mani activities only to be rearroated by the Russian after his liberation for his auti-Russian sentiments. This eyo-witness account of the verticular revolt is distinguished from all other stories of forced labor camps by its passionate and unrelentless struckle for froedom. Even the horrible conditions in these comps stand out not for their terror but by virtue of the princers' sense of humours from their reference to the guards' Tomay guns as "balabakas" to their takes of how Joss meet the new anti-Semitism by writing, next to the word, reticuality, "Indian". It is this humanity, this comradeship, which made living tolerable and united them not alone in the spiration to revolt but the actual planearing and examples of it.

## "Egt in the wildres dreams"

The strike in July 1953 could not have occurred without the previous underground furnation of resistance groups within the camps which were led by the various actionalities of Russia, mainly Ukrainians. Tet the strike as it occurred was sutirely different from the action planned proviously.

Prior to June 17 all the preparations for resistance to the totalitarian relevances were based on the eventuality of war and therefore looked to the Western Pulars to start. When Stalin died here apread through the camp but all that came from the Missubowers and Churchille wase condolences to the leaders who continued the Stalin regime. Once June 17th took place, on the other hand, the Vorkuta prisoners saw that the workers and only the workers, of whatever country, must achieve their own liberation and by their own methods. Must Germany had shown the way and they decided to follow up that strike.

thinking in terms of outward success at all, They were just intextoated by the strike...For all those taking part in it, the strike was simply the first positive definant action of this sort ever to take place within the Seviet Union. And that was enough. It was semething unheard of, something which no one had ever thought possible even in his wildest drongs.

#### The Strike Iteles

Indeed, the most remarkable part of the strike is that it ever took place at all. For most participants it was the first strike they had ever been in. It was the ordinary men in the campa that had to been the day to day burden of the strike. A first they just refused to work. But then they actually organized a public meeting right in the camp. They elected a strike consisting of their cam is which all nations were represented, and informed the camp police that they better withdress because the prisoners themselves were taking contfol of the camp.

The pelice did so, not of course without informing Moncow immediately.

But so did the atrikers—they refused to nest with their direct jailors but included that a representative from the Kremlin be sent down to nost with them. The Russian government sent a commission headed by General Derovianko. His attempt to harmague a public meeting of the innertee proved a failure. The prisoners steed solid, refused to be moved by the better food once their sentences remained the case, and demanded a review of all political trials and removed of berbel wire.

The Commission returned to Messow. Nothing shows so the watertainty and impossarity of these tatalitarian rulers than the caution with which the Government at first dealt with this revolt. The sympathy of the soldiers too were with the prisoners. In the end they did what the Tsar did back in 1912 Lens gold field strikes open fire and shoot down the strikers. But where in East Berlin they recorted to violence quickly, here they bargained and moved cautiously for weeks before the mass shooting.

### Myth of invincibility destroyed

But it had the effect of shalling the Kremlin to its very foundations.

mining institute working in the pit in
A few months later a students from Leningrad immansumments and the they
told them of their strike of which everyone talked in Laningrads interactions
professal effects and the strike of which everyone talked in Laningrads interactions.

"We soon got to know you were on strike," they told us, "The drop in coal was noticeable at once. We don't have any reserves. There's just the plan, that's all. And everyone knows how vulnerable plans are. It destroyed the myth

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that the system was unassailable." One Page of Treachery

Five months after June 1/th one of the leaders of the Russian resistance group met an East German student in Vorkuta and naturally the talk use all about the East German revolt. The Euseian leaders first them grasped the troublery of "the Mest". Not alone had the Sisenhowers and the Churchille sided with the Stalin regime in Euseia as the prisoners here know, minuschichtein propositioners from from the East Corman secondaries on they now found out that even/their safe Allied radios no encouragement to the workers in revolt was sounded. To the prisoners! Subys, the East German students replied, Specause they were affaid that any aggravation of the situation might lead to var.

"But it's clear from the reports from the prisoners that the Respieses were also afraid it might lead to war! Each side was afraid of the non-existent counge of the other?"

The East Corman students resumed their tale that the labor bureaucrate, as well as the West Corman Government, found nothing better to tell the West Berlin workers than to be sure "not to compromise themselves". Finally the Russian resistance leader saw how wrong it was at all to depend on "the West". He said! "These radio stations are controlled by the various governments, aren't they? Well, on June 17 they had to ask the government officials what they were to do. And the government officials have a professional dislike of popular uprising, where they take place. "

# mack in "descertic laple" "The use in the ctreet has the best idea"

The epilogus Dr. Scholmer erites is such more degreesing than the conditions at Vorkuta. For here he was free at last, he thought. He had been one of
some thousands of flave leborers released during the Big Four Ministers Conference.
He had a story of revolt to tell and the press to listen to hig. They listened
but they didn't hear. First, these Russism experts could not understand that a
revolt had occurred: they were ready to discuss abstractions, such as could such
12045 a revolt occur, but not the concrete fact that it has occurred. Then he was given

the line that "the time was inopportune" to tell his story.

Scholmer consintes, they were emplied. The possibility of a rising lay outside thair ranks of accumulation. They had no idea that there were restrance groups in the course.

from the Soviet Union. It esseed to us that the man in the street had the best then of what was going on. The 'experts' seemed to understand nothing."

The min in the street does indeed know more than these experts because the instrict worker, as the American public in general, in its own atruggles with the bereaucrate, inclds and outside factories, inclds and outside inversacious in its own aspirations for a new society and struggle for it feels at one with the function and first forther workers. It is not a question of language. It is a question of experiences and expectations.