

BILBAO: WHERE BRITISH SHIPS BROUGHT FOOD TO THE BASQUES.

SPECIALY DRAWN FOR "THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS" BY G. H. DAVIS.



A GENERAL VIEW OF BILBAO, LOOKING SOUTH; SHOWING, IN THE DISTANCE, THE HILLS ROUND DURANGO WHERE THE BASQUES MET GENERAL FRANCO; AND THE ENTRY OF THE PORT, THE GOAL OF BRITISH "BLOCKADE-RUNNERS."

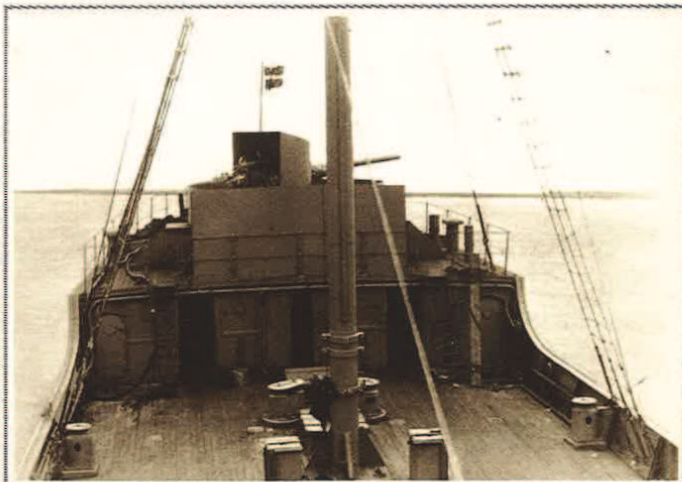
Aspects of the operations round Bilbao are illustrated on a double-page elsewhere in this issue. What has attracted the attention of people in this country is the question of the blockade of Bilbao. On April 9 General Franco made it clear that his forces were determined to make this effective. The British Government, while determined to protect our shipping on the high seas, warned British ships that they should not go within territorial waters in view of the risks from which it was impossible to protect them there. The British steamer "Seven Seas Spray," however, entered Bilbao on April 20 without mishap, seeming to indicate that the

dangers had been overstated. On April 22 three British steamers put to sea from St. Jean de Luz intending to run the rebel "blockade" of Bilbao with cargoes of food. They encountered an insurgent warship outside the three-mile limit, but the presence of British warships prevented their being held up; and once inside the limit they were protected by the Basque batteries and armed vessels. The three vessels safely reached Bilbao; and subsequently other steamers put in there. The British action, it appears, called forth vigorous protests from General Franco's side. Much indignation was also expressed in the German press.

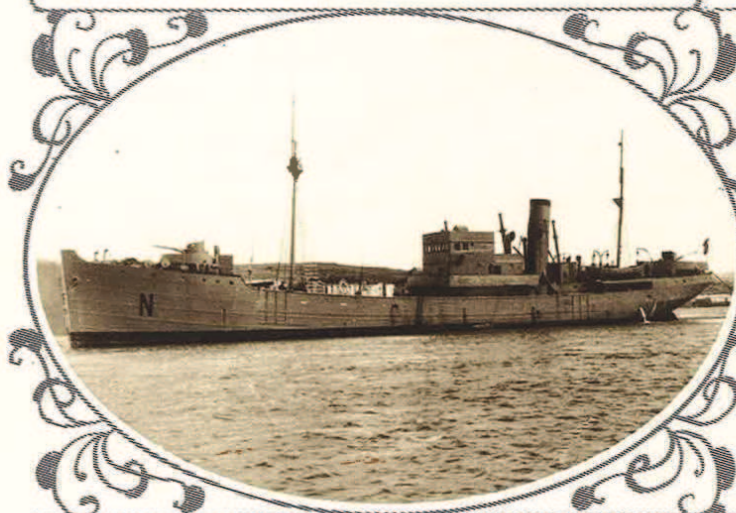
WITH THE BASQUES DEFENDING BILBAO: ARMED TRAWLERS,



IN A TOWN WHICH HAS SUFFERED SEVERELY IN THE FIGHTING ON THE BASQUE FRONT, BEING REPEATEDLY BOMBED BY GENERAL FRANCO'S FORCES: NUNS IN A WRECKED CONVENT AT DURANGO; NOW REPORTED TO HAVE CHANGED HANDS.



AN ARMED TRAWLER IN THE SERVICE OF THE BASQUE AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT: THE FORE PART OF THE STEEL-BUILT "BIZHAYA," EMPLOYED IN PEACE TIME IN THE BANKS FISHERIES AND NOW MOUNTING A 75-MM. GUN.



A BASQUE ARMED TRAWLER WHICH WAS SUNK FIGHTING THE INSURGENTS AT SEA: THE "NAHARRA," WHICH MET THE POWERFUL MODERN CRUISER "CANARIAS" AND WENT DOWN WITH HER STERN GUN STILL FIRING.



THE PIETY OF THE BASQUES, WHO ARE FIGHTING TO MAINTAIN THEIR AUTONOMY: THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF A BASQUE "GUDARI" (SOLDIER) KILLED DURING AN AIR-RAID AT BILBAO.

AT the beginning of April, the Civil War suddenly flared up in the north of Spain, a sector which had been comparatively quiet since the last of the Government attacks on Oviedo. On April 1 General Franco's troops launched a series of heavy attacks, with Bilbao as their objective. Their advance was stoutly resisted by the Basque forces organised under the autonomous government. The Basques, it should be explained, are a predominantly Catholic people; but side with the Spanish Government, which has granted them autonomy. This autonomy, General Franco would take away. The Basque Government has organised its people's military effort under a single command, with their President, Señor de Aguirre, as the head of the Defence Ministry. As we write, this organisation has been effective, since the Basques possess in Bilbao an industrial town capable of supplying war material, as

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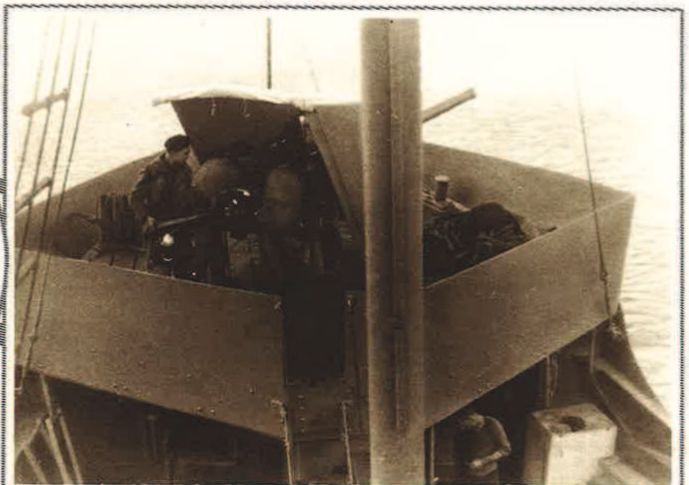
BASQUE LEADERS IN THE FIELD: A GROUP OF COMMANDERS; INCLUDING MAJOR SASETA (WITHOUT HAT), ORGANISER OF THE BASQUE MILITIA—KILLED WHILE LEADING HIS MEN RECENTLY.

well as the arsenal of Euzkalduna. The trawlers illustrated here were adapted and armed at Bilbao; and it is also stated that tanks and aeroplanes have been constructed there. On April 6, General Mola, who commands the insurgent forces in the North, published "a last warning" which was scattered over the area round Bilbao by aeroplanes. This, it seems, announced that the insurgents had "decided to end the war in Northern Spain," adding that failure to surrender would bring destruction to Vizcaya. Weeks of bitter mountain warfare followed. Meanwhile, it was apparent that General Franco was relying upon a close blockade of the northern ports to assist him in wearing down Basque resistance. Speaking in the House of Commons on April 14, Sir John Simon stated that British naval officers on the spot reported that the approaches to Bilbao had been mined by both sides. The question of mines and

SWEPT MINES, AND SERVICES IN THE FIELD AND BARRACKS.



ONE OF THE BASQUE TRAWLERS, ARMED IN THE WELL-EQUIPPED SHIPYARDS AT BILBAO: HOISTING THE RED, WHITE, AND GREEN BASQUE FLAG ABOARD THE "DONOSTIA" (THE BASQUE NAME FOR ST. SEBASTIAN).



GUN-DRILL ON BOARD A BASQUE ARMED TRAWLER: THE 75-MM. (3-IN.) WEAPON ON THE "DONOSTIA," WHICH WAS CONVERTED AT BILBAO AND ARMED FROM THE ARSENAL OF EUZKALDUNA.



CELEBRATING MASS AMONG THE BASQUE TROOPS IN THE FIELD, DEFENDING THE APPROACHES TO BILBAO: EVIDENCE OF THE PIETY WHICH IS CHARACTERISTIC OF THIS PEOPLE.



MASS IN A BARRACKS AT BILBAO: A PHOTOGRAPH WHICH SHOWS THE UNIFORM WORN BY THE FORCES RAISED BY THE BASQUE AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT.



BELIEVED TO BE ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL DANGERS TO BRITISH MERCHANT SHIPS "RUNNING THE BILBAO BLOCKADE": MINES STATED TO HAVE BEEN SWEEPED UP BY BASQUE MINESWEEPERS SOME MONTHS AGO.



HOW THE BASQUES DEAL WITH INSURGENT MINES LAID OFF THEIR PORTS, SO MENACING BRITISH "BLOCKADE-RUNNERS": TAKING A MINE TO PIECES.

the effectiveness of the insurgent blockade has since become a matter of considerable controversy; particularly because a series of British merchant vessels have succeeded in making their way into Bilbao without mishap. The Basque flag, it may be of interest to add, is a white St. George's cross and a green St. Andrew's Cross on a red ground.

'As we write there is news of fresh fighting of great intensity on the Basque front. Claims to considerable advances are put forward by the insurgents. It is reported that Eibar, and Durango have fallen. Guernica, the ancient Basque capital, has been devastated by an air-raid of unparalleled violence.