

INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORRESPONDENCE

English Edition

SPECIAL EDITION

Vol. 18. No. 24

17th May, 1938

The Cause of Spain is the Common Cause of the Whole of Progressive and Advanced Mankind

[Letter from CP of Spain to Comrade Stalin & his reply](#)

[A Geographical and Political Description of Spain, Juan Renau](#)

[Catalonia, Llobregat](#)

[Spain From 1808 to 1936, Cesar Falcon](#)

[1936: From February to July, From the Election Victory of the People's Front to the Fascist](#)

[Insurrection, M. Navarro Ballesteros](#)

[The Forces of the People's Front in Spain, Mariano Perla](#)

[Important Declaration by Negrin](#)

[Letter from Jose Diaz to the "Mundo Obrero"](#)

[A Year of Heroic Struggle of the Spanish People, Georgi Dimitrov](#)

[From Militia to Regular Army, Dolores Ibarruri \(Pasionaria\)](#)

[What Has Been Done for the Culture of the Spanish People, Jesus Hernandez](#)

[The Gigantic Efforts of the Spanish Government to Transform the Countryside, José Silva](#)

[Terrorism and Starvation in the Hinterland of the Fascists, Juan José Manso](#)

[Trotskyists in Spain – Open Agents of International Fascism, Francisco Anton](#)

[Guerrilla Warfare in Rebel Territory, Lorenzo](#)

[Madrid – Spain's Pride and Example, Martinez Carton](#)

[The Anti-Fascist Heroes of the Spanish People, Eusebio Cimorra](#)

[The Role of the Women in Spain's War for Freedom and Independence, Emilia Elias](#)

[The United Socialist Party of Catalonia, J. Comorera](#)

[Towards A United Party of the Proletariat, Pedro Checa](#)

[The Nationality Problem in the Spanish War for Liberation, Arlandis](#)

[The Youth of Spain Occupies a Place of Honour, Santiago Cari llo](#)

[The Trade Unions in Spain, Antonio Mije](#)

[The Fascist Incendiaries and Intervention in Spain, V. Stern](#)

[The Cause of Spain is the Cause of Progressive Mankind, T. Mayo](#)

[The Soviet Union and Spain, A. Claire](#)

[The International Brigades, André Marty](#)

[The Communist International in the Fight for International Unity, Franz Dahlem](#)

[If We Fail the Spanish People Now, Who Will Help Us?, Harry Politt](#)

[Jose Diaz, General Secretary of the C.P. of Spain](#)

[Dolores Ibarruri, "Pasionaria"](#)

[Joint Programme of Action of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party of Spain](#)

[Election Manifesto of the Left Bloc](#)

[Chronicle of Events](#)

[List and Explanation of Some Names and Abbreviations](#)

On October 16, 1936, the C.C. of the C.P. of Spain addressed to the "Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its great leader, our dear Comrade Stalin," the following

telegram: –

“In the name of the Spanish people, which has drawn so closely to the fatherland of Socialism, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain, whose members are fighting in the front ranks against the mutinous generals and fascists who are supported by international fascism, sends greetings to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and especially to the great Comrade Joseph Stalin, the beloved leader of the international proletariat, the director of the work of Socialist construction in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, and ardent defender of peace.

“The Spanish people feels itself strengthened in the hard fight which is still going on, by the solidarity of the peoples of the Soviet Union and promises not to cease the fight for a moment until fascism has been overthrown in our country, whereby international fascism will also be dealt a hard blow.

“Our people, which is sacrificing its life in the fight against fascism, wants you to know that your brotherly aid has increased its enthusiasm, given new energy to the fighters and strengthened its belief in victory.”

Stalin replied to the telegram from the Central Committee of the C.P. of Spain with the following telegram: –

“Madrid. To the Central Committee of the C.P. of Spain.

“To Comrade Jose Diaz.

“The toilers of the Soviet Union are only fulfilling their duty by rendering every assistance within their power to the revolutionary masses of Spain. They realise that the liberation of Spain from the oppression of the fascist reactionaries is not the private affair of the Spaniards, but the common cause ,of all advanced and progressive mankind.

“Fraternal greetings,

“J. Stalin.”

II

A Geographical and Political Description of Spain

By Juan Renau

Of the three southern peninsulas of the European continent, the Italian, the Balkan and the Iberian peninsula, the latter occupies the extreme western position between two seas, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Its situation, commanding the entrance to the Mediterranean, has been the cause why, throughout history, violent collisions have taken place on its rugged soil between invaders and the natives of the country whose unquenchable love of independence has characterised them throughout History. Key of the “Mare Nostrum” – the name Roman imperialism gave to the sea washing the eastern shores of Spain – this peninsula is the naturally fortified gateway to the great sea routes which served for the building of empires, and along which European capitalism advanced to the domination of India and the Far East. Consequently one must always take into account these geographical factors when making a general survey of the various economic movements of expansion in Europe, and this is just as necessary in the present concrete case if one wishes to ascertain the causes of the war of invasion now being waged by German and Italian imperialism in Spain.

The territory of the peninsula is divided between two States; Spain and Portugal, but both geologically and ethnically it embraces a single people and a uniform soil.

The *total area of Spain*, including the Canary and Balearic Islands and the African possessions, equals approximately one-twentieth of the European continent, i.e., about 507,000 square kilometres. Its contour is roughly pentagonal. Its coasts are very regular for the most part with the exception of certain regions in the north and north-west, where the coast-line is indented and shows numerous deep inlets similar to the fiords of Finland, Sweden and Norway. They are the famous bays which penetrate into the valleys of the Cantabrian chain of mountains running down to the sea.

The whole peninsula is a promontory rising 660 metres above sea level.

The eastern part is the highest, and from there it slopes gradually towards the Atlantic, thus facilitating the uniform course of the rivers, which flow in a horizontal direction and parallel with each other until very near their mouths they suddenly bend and direct their course to the south.

Geologically Spain has nothing whatever in common with the European continent. The Pyrenees, one of the major mountain ranges of Europe, separate the two completely. The various mountain ranges cross the immense central spaces obliquely, thus corresponding to the course of the rivers whose valleys alternate with the steep sides of the mountains.

The *most important rivers* are in the order of their length: the Tagus (1,008 km.), the Douro (937 km.), the Ebro (927 km.), the Guadiana (801 km.), the Guadalquivir (680 km.), the Júcar, the Segura, the Mino and the Turia.

The rivers of the centre differ in their course from those which have their mouths in the Cantabrian system. These leap from obstacle to obstacle in their torrential course while the former roll along through immense plains.

The physical map of Spain presents an interesting peculiarity to the observer. Great mountain chains divide it into horizontal zones, throwing into relief the two Castilian tablelands separated by the central system, the vertebral column of the peninsular, on whose most prominent ranges, *Somosierra* and *Guadarrama*, the first battles of the heroic militiamen against the fascist rebels were fought. Spain is the most mountainous country of Europe after Switzerland; it includes, in addition to the central chain the Cantabrian chain, the Galaic chain (Portuguese), the Iberian mountains, the Pyrenees, that mighty wall of peaks covered with eternal snow which separates Spain from France, the Catalan ranges and the Betic systems of which the Penibetic borders the southern coast of Andalusia and continues across the straits of Gibraltar to North Africa. The most prominent ranges of the latter constitute the Sierra Morena and the Sierra Nevada.

The Spanish *coasts* are, as a rule, rocky. Smooth beaches are found only in the East.

The Iberian peninsula is one of the few spots where in a territory only one-twentieth of Europe, one may find the most varied climatic conditions, from the tropical heat of the Andalusian region through the intense cold of the tablelands to the perpetual spring of the eastern Mediterranean coast.

The rugged surface of its soil, its deep valleys flanked by towering peaks and precipices, give Spain an extraordinary variety of temperatures. In a single spot, as in the Sierra Nevada, one finds an almost complete scale of temperatures. At its foot tropical plants bloom in profusion, while on its heights covered with eternal snow, one meets moss and lichen native of the Arctic zones. To this complete range of temperatures corresponds an infinite variety of vegetation which makes Spain the European country possessing the greatest wealth and variety of plants and which offers the most diverse conditions for the study of the geographical distribution of plant life.

An *essentially agricultural country*, backward in industry compared with other European States, Spain

still leaves uncultivated an immense area within her borders. In the whole north, from the Pyrenees to the Galician “fiords,” stretch *extensive* forests of the northern type; of oak, ash and beech. The two tablelands north and south of the central range are great prairie regions which together with Aragon occupy a great part of the peninsula. The richest region is the East, which embraces the whole agricultural district of orchards and market-gardens which extends from Catalonia to Murcia and Cartagena. This region, one of the most interesting examples of the development of land cultivation, is an extensive area criss-crossed in all directions by innumerable water-courses, ditches and canals which cover the intensely cultivated land with a net of quadrangles.

The wonderful irrigation works go back into remote antiquity. Its beginnings were laid by the exploitation of the soil by the colonising Romans and Arabs, but it was increased and improved by the small farmers and agricultural labourers of the fields of Valencia, Castellon, Murcia and southern Catalonia. The poverty and backwardness of the Spanish people is due less to the natural conditions of the soil than to the disastrous domestic policy pursued by the absolute monarchy in Spain which at one time ruled the world while the misery of the masses depopulated villages and cities.

In the period of Spanish expansion in the 16th and 17th centuries, the number of Spaniards who each year abandoned their homes and their labour in the fields to seek their fortune in the armies of invasion dispatched by Charles V and Philip U, to Italy, Holland, America and the Far East, was estimated at 40,000 men.

This social misery is the reason why, right up to recent times, the number of emigrants from Spain has been so great.

Only 10 per cent, of Spanish soil is under intensive cultivation. Of this cultivated area about 26 per cent, is under cereals which are divided as follows: wheat 8.4 per cent., barley 3.4 per cent., rye 1.46 per cent., oats 1.32 per cent., maize 0.92 per cent. Olives take up 3.31 per cent., of the cultivated area, leguminous plants 2.3 per cent., vineyards 2.7 per cent., fruit and vegetables 1.04 per cent., industrial plants 1.17 per cent., forests 9.1 per cent., meadows and pastures 41.6 per cent.

Of the entire productive area of about 45,600,000 hectares (a hectare is 2.471 acres), only 16,700,000 are under cultivation.

In addition to the neglected condition in which the feudal domination and the monarchy left Spain, another reason for its poverty is the *system of land ownership*. The land, parcelled out in small plots in the north and in the mountain regions, is concentrated in very few hands in the plains. There are 845,000 poor peasants in Spain, who cannot satisfy the most elementary needs with the scanty proceeds of their tiny holdings. Therefore, in order to escape from their misery, they were compelled to enter the service of the big landowners or rich farmers, who by paying starvation wages and using the coercive machinery of the reactionary state (the Civil Guard) maintained fear and starvation on the countryside in the vain attempt to suppress the peasant revolts which had for centuries been so frequent in Spain. The small owner, the poor peasant and the agricultural labourer form the rural proletariat. There are 160,000 small owners who till their own small plots of land. The number of the feudal lords – the roots of feudalism still held firm well into the Republican era – was about 9,000; they were great landowners, lords of enormous domains, of huge estates and of extensive hunting-grounds for their sport and pleasure.

Another very important aspect is offered by the *mineral riches* of Spain. Spain is famous for her wealth of mineral resources, and is indeed one of the European countries possessing the greatest number of mines. True her coal production is scanty, and this accounts for the backward state of Spanish industry. *Coalfields* are found all over the North (Gijon, Mieres, Langrec, Oviedo, Pola, Colunga, etc.) and in the South, in the provinces of Cordoba, near Belmez, Villaharta, Fuenteovejuna, Penarroja, Puertollano, Zafra, Llerena, Montalban and Aliaga (Teruel), amounting to about 8,700 million tons. *Iron* is produced

in great quantities; *iron ore* is found in Viscaya and is calculated at about 50,000,000 tons; further in Santander, Asturias, Leon, Lugo, Huelva Serrania de Ronda, Sierra Nevada, as well, the important deposits in Almeria (Filabras, Bedar, Almagrera), in Murcia (Mazarron), Cartagena, Teruel and Guadalajara.

The principal *copper deposits* are in Huelva (Rio Tinto), extending from the Guadalquivir to the Guadiana, with an annual production of 3 million tons.

Lead, the annual production of which amounts to 182,000-300,000 tons, is found near Linares, in Penarroja, Villanueva del Duque, Fuenteovejuna.

In the production of *mercury*, Spain occupies a leading position in the world, the deposits of Almaden yielding 1,000-1,200 tons per annum.

There are also rich deposits of *zinc*, *tin* and other metals (*silver* in fair quantities, *platinum*, *cobalt* and *nickel*).

The *main industrial centres* are situated in the North and in Catalonia (Barcelona, Manresa, Sabadell, Reus, Tarrasa); blast furnaces in Sagunto (Valencia), foundries, agricultural machinery, motor-cars, shipyards, chemicals, glass, tanneries, textiles, oil factories, etc., in Barcelona, Tarragona, Valencia, Madrid, etc.

Population. As a result of many and continued invasions, the Spanish type is a strongly mixed racial type, but in spite of this two main groups can be distinguished: the Germanic type with reddish blond hair and the olive-complexioned with black hair, the true Iberian, the original inhabitants of the country. This last type is the more frequent and has affinities with the Berbers of Africa. The population of Spain numbers about 24 millions, very irregularly distributed throughout the country, concentrated in the great coastal cities and in the manufacturing centres. Although Spain is thinly populated, if one takes into account the fact that at the end of the 17th century the Spanish population numbered only 5 millions, one must draw the conclusion that it developed very rapidly during the last three centuries. The density of population is 42 inhabitants per square kilometre.

Spain is populated by various *nationalities* (in Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque country), and the various languages are accordingly spoken since time immemorial. The principal language is *Castilian*, a language of great diffusion in the world, as it is spoken by 85 million persons in Spain and in Mexico, Central America, Antilles, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile, Venezuela, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, the Philippines, Marianas, Carolines, Palaos, North Africa, some of the southern states of the U.S.A. and the Balkans (among the Sephardim Jews).

It must not be forgotten that still greater strengthening of actions of solidarity by the workers and all democratic forces of other countries is necessary for hastening and facilitating the victory of the Spanish people who are defending with their blood not only their own freedom and independence but the democratic liberties of other peoples and also the cause of peace. Platonic, passive sympathy for the Spanish people is far from being real aid, while the policy of systematic retreats before fascist intervention, which is becoming ever more insolent, only makes more difficult the struggle of the Spanish people and increases the number of its sacrifices. (From the article: *On the Threshold of 1937* by G. Dimitrov, which appeared in *Inprecorr* No. 2, January 9, 1937.)

Joint action by the working class throughout the world would provide the Spanish Republic and its heroic fighters with not only immeasurable moral aid, but also with colossal material aid. All this would undoubtedly speed up the victory of the Spanish people. A joint onslaught by the progressive forces of the whole world would enable the instigators of the war to be curbed. (From the article: *The Lessons of Almeria* by G. Dimitrov, which appeared in *Inprecorr* No. 25, June 12, 1937.)

The Spanish people are marching confidently to victory despite the tremendous trials and difficulties which they must experience and overcome. The guarantee of this victory consists not only in the courage and self-sacrifice which the Spanish people exhibited in this struggle, and not only in the wide solidarity of the working class and all advanced and progressive sections of society. The guarantee of victory is a most remarkable weapon formed and tested in battle – the People’s Front. Not only Communists, but also other parties and organisations in the People’s Front in Spain understand ever better that this weapon should be guarded. They display the maximum vigilance and determination regarding all those who, fulfilling the behests of the enemy, would try to split or shake the People’s Front from within. (From the article: *On the Threshold of 1937* by G. Dimitrov, which appeared in *Inprecorr* No. 2, January 9, 1937.)

Spain is a European state and has been a democratic parliamentary Republic since April 14, 1931 – a memorable date in our history, because the people through the elections held on the 12th of the same month overthrew the odious dictatorial monarchy of Alphonso XIII, *Primo de Rivera*, *Sanjurjo*, *Martinez Anido* and many other generals whose activities were so disastrous for the Spanish people. The Republican constitution is based on the principles of the League of Nations Covenant and advocates peace between the nations.

Spain was the *first* country which during the reactionary period in Europe after the fall of Napoleon drew up and gave her people *a liberal constitution*. The revolutionary example of the famous Cortes of Cadiz in 1812 was followed and emulated by the contemporary European revolution of Portugal, Naples, Piedmont and certain German duchies. In 1812 the Cortes intended to effect a politico-administrative division of Spain, but this was not done until 1820, when the national territory was divided into 52 provinces.

The most important cities are *Madrid*, now more than ever the centre and capital city, *Barcelona*, *Valencia*, *Seville*, *Bilbao*, *Alicante*, *Santander*, *Vigo*, *Almeria*, *Jaen*, *Ciudad Real* (now renamed *Ciudad Libre*), etc.

The political and social history of the last few years has been full of unrest. From the last years of the dictatorship to the fascist rebellion of July 18, 1936, great mass movements of the people lighting for progress and democracy have followed one after the other in Spain. It is no exaggeration to say that in the trenches of Madrid and Teruel great battles are fought day after day for international democracy. The struggle Of the Spanish people against its aggressors was inevitable. The Republic, far too

benevolent, left its bitterest enemies in absolute possession of the resources of the national economy of the country. A corrupt church, the officers of the U.M.E. (Union Militar Espanola, a seditious military organisation), the bankers and landlords retained their countless millions to do whatever they liked with even after April 14, 1931. With these millions they financed the first expenses of the rebellion until Italy and Germany openly intervened, the disastrous Non-Intervention Pact covering and protecting them. At the present moment, the Spanish people, formed into a mighty People's Army, is fighting for its political emancipation and its inclusion in the world-embracing circle of progress and popular welfare.

Catalonia

By Llobregat

Catalonia is an autonomous region of the Spanish Republic, and as such constitutes an integral part of the same. 1,200,000 inhabitants, is at the present time the seat of the Spanish Government.

In respect of economic and cultural development, Catalonia is one of the regions of the Iberian Peninsula, possessing the most ancient culture. It was in Catalonia that Spanish capitalism had its origin. The occupation of Catalonia by Philip V. in 1714 was the signal for the subjection of the Catalan people to the central feudal Power and for the brutal oppression of its desire for liberty.

The revival of the nationalist movement in the middle of the nineteenth century was more of a cultural than of a mass social nature. However, a few years prior to the proclamation of the First Republic (1873), this movement developed more and more in the direction of a movement for the autonomy of Catalonia within the Spanish state. The lack of unity between Catalonia and the rest of Spain, the tendency to separate Catalonia from the young Republic – a tendency represented by a fraction of the Federalist Party – was one of the fundamental causes of the failure of this great movement of emancipation of the peoples of Spain.

After the fall of the first Spanish Republic, the struggle for the liberation of Catalonia continued all through the reign of the Bourbon kings. Its most significant manifestation was the vigorous movement of 1885. The aspirations of this movement were summed up in the “Memorial in Defence of the Moral and Material Interests of Catalonia.”

The absence of a strong Marxist workers' party in Catalonia on the one hand and on the other the fact that the anarcho-syndicalist movement failed to understand the Catalan national problem, permitted the Catalan bourgeoisie and a part of the landowners to get the movement for national emancipation into their own hands and use it frequently to obtain favours and advantages for themselves from the Bourbons, thus betraying the national interests of the Catalan people. This explains why the movement sometimes took the form of economic resistance such as the tax strike at the end of the nineteenth century immediately after the defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American war.

1905 and 1906 mark a fresh growth in the Catalan national movement. It was against this movement that Spanish imperialism enacted the famous “Jurisdiction Act” directed against the national liberties of



MANUAL AZANA,
President of the Spanish Republic.

Catalonia. This law had the effect of provoking the union of all Catalan political parties in the so-called “Catalan *Solidarity*.”

The attitude of the Bourbon regime and of the feudal castes of Spain towards the Catalan problem is characterised by an eloquent phrase of the Prime Minister at the time, Moret: “The *problem of Catalonia is simply a question of six firing squads*.”

The first large-scale participation of the working class of Catalonia in the national movement was the popular revolt of 1909, drowned in blood by the Madrid Government and known by the name of the “tragic week.”

After the “tragic week” the leadership of the movement passed almost entirely into the hands of the “League,” the party of the big capitalists, financiers and landowners of Catalonia. This party which did enjoy a certain mass support had for its objective a tariff policy which would permit Catalan capital to develop “freely” and at the same time leave it “free” to exploit the Catalan workers and peasants. One of the expressions of this tendency was the formation in 1919 of the “Mancomunidad de Catalunya” (“Catalan Union”), through which Catalonia obtained certain regional rights, the result of which was the development of roads, the telephone service, industrial schools, dispensaries, etc.

When Primo de Rivera carried out his coup d'état in 1923, he was acclaimed and supported by the League, which thus gave fresh proof of its betrayal of the interests of the Catalan people and of the liberty of Spain. However, Primo de Rivera paid little heed to the services rendered him by the Catalan bourgeoisie, bankers and landowners, unless it was to inaugurate a savage persecution of the Catalan people, suppressing even the most elementary manifestations of national feeling (closing of schools, persecution of the Catalan press, imprisonment, assassination of working-class leaders, etc.), refusing to make the slightest concession to those who for the sake of their narrow caste interests had sold to him the Catalan people.

With the advent of the Second Republic (April 14, 1931), the desire for liberty of the Catalan people met with a more favourable reception from the Government. After long discussions the parliament of the Republic voted a statute granting Catalonia her autonomy. This law was ratified on August 2, 1932, by a plebiscite held in Catalonia, which gave an overwhelming majority (over 80 per cent.) in favour of autonomy.

The Statute gave the Catalan people an autonomous Government (the *Generalidad*) and parliament, in whose hands are laid the execution of the laws and decrees of the Republican parliament and Government within the borders of the Autonomous Region. They have, further, the right to legislate in matters regarding agriculture and partly in matters of economy and culture, etc. National defence and financial legislation (with the exception of the finances of the Autonomous Region itself) remained completely in the hands of the Government of the Republic.

The Government of the Generalidad (Catalan Government) is at present composed of three representatives of the “Republican Left,” three of the “United Socialist Party,” one of “Accion Catalana” (a small Republican party), and one of the “Unio de Rabassaires” (a peasant organisation of a syndicalist type). The President of the Generalidad, *Luis Companys*, is a member of the “Esquerra Republicana.”

The Statute, and with it the rights of autonomy, granted to Catalonia by the Republic are to-day, in the gigantic struggle of the whole country and of the whole Spanish people for independence, factors of the greatest importance. They have largely contributed to the fact that from the very first days of the fascist rebellion the Catalan people was not only able to rout the officers who betrayed their country, but also to fight in daily closer unity with the other peoples of the Republic to defeat native and foreign fascism.

However, fascism has not yet despaired of using the weapon of separatism in the effort to break up the

unity of all nationalities of the Republic and thus further its plans of enslaving the Spanish people, together with the Catalan people.

It is most characteristic that the most shameless advocates of separatism in Catalonia have from the very beginning of the war been the Trotskyist agents of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini, the so-called P.O.U.M., who, when the United Socialist Party of Catalonia launched the slogan: "One United People's Army of the Republic Under a United Command!", and fought for it, accused the U.S.P.C. of having betrayed the national interests of the Catalan people and opposed to the correct slogan of the U.S.P.C. the counter-revolutionary splitting slogan of a "Revolutionary Catalan Army." Certain sections of the Catalan nationalists within the Republican parties, led by elements of doubtful anti-fascist convictions and by direct agents of Mussolini (such as Dencas, former leader of the "Estat Catala," who was a guest of Mussolini in Rome for a considerable time), also represent separatist tendencies which to-day is a direct weapon used by fascism against the Republic in its struggle for independence.

Of course, the overwhelming majority of the Catalan people understand perfectly well that the liberty of Catalonia is being defended in Madrid as well as in Teruel, on the southern fronts as well as in the centre and in the east. They understand that the slogan of separatism is a fascist manoeuvre destined to weaken the front of the common struggle of all the nationalities of the Republic, and appreciate the value of the slogan issued by the first national congress of the United Socialist Party: "*Catalonia cannot be free if fascism is victorious in Spain; Spain cannot be free without the assistance of Catalonia,*"

Geographically, Catalonia represents about a quarter of the part of the Spanish Republic free of fascist domination and invasion. Its area is 32,049 square kilometres, with about three and a half million inhabitants (including refugees). Catalonia is the most industrialised region of the whole Spanish Republic. According to the data of the 1930 census, there were in Catalonia:

605,371	persons	occupied	in	industry.
362,873	"	"	"	agriculture.
147,205	"	"	"	trade.
70,270	"	"	"	the free professions.
26,850	"	"	"	the armed forces.
823,353	"	"	"	domestic work or without occupation
755,380	"	under 15 years of age.		

These figures show that in 1930 the number of persons occupied in industry in Catalonia was double the number occupied in agriculture. At the same time the great number of persons occupied in trade and the free professions calls attention to the great importance of the petty bourgeoisie. Finally, the considerable number of persons occupied in agriculture (in their overwhelming majority share-croppers and small farmers) shows that although Catalonia is a pre-eminently industrial region, the peasants play a very important part there.

Catalonia occupies the first place in the engineering, textile and chemical industries of Spain. Of the 2,064,596 spindles of loyal Spain (in the rebel zone there are only 20,026 spindles), Catalonia possesses 1,927,465. Of the 73,340 looms available in loyal Spain (the rebel zone has only 7,273 looms), Catalonia possesses 59,191.

In the most important branches of industry the number of workers is as follows: —

1. Textile and allied industries
2. Engineering
3. Building trades
4. Transport (rail, land, sea, air)
5. Chemical industry

6. Printing trades
7. Gas and electricity
8. Food supplies and agricultural industries
9. Fuel and lighting material

The figures shown above indicate that the fundamental industries of Catalonia are engineering, including the mechanical and electro-technical industry, textiles, building and chemical industries. This means that Catalonia, from the economic point of view, the point of view of productive forces and from the point of view of the concentration of working-class masses, fulfils the fundamental conditions needed to turn the country rapidly into a strong prop of the whole Republic in its struggle against fascism, into one of the mightiest bases of the armament industry, which the glorious Army of Republican Spain needs so badly.

Although in Catalonia industry predominates over agriculture, the latter represents considerable wealth. Before the War of Independence, about 80 per cent, of the Catalonian peasants tilled the land of the banker-landowners, in their great majority fascists. The peasants paid the owners in kind and in rent for the use of the land, in rent or in kind generally a third and up to 40 per cent, of the harvest. The Government of the Generalidad has abolished these burdensome payments and have given the peasants the right of free use of the land which they formerly tilled as share-croppers and farmers, their only obligation being to pay the State the same taxes as formerly paid by the landowner.

The far greater part of the land in Catalonia is cultivated by the peasants and their families; only a small part is under collective exploitation. The number of agricultural labourers was always very small in Catalonia, and to-day this figure has dwindled even more because a part of these workers has been given land to cultivate, as most of the landowners who used to exploit their land by means of agricultural labourers have abandoned their estates and joined the military-fascist rebellion.

The war and the people's revolution have awakened and drawn into political activity hundreds of thousands of workers in the towns and on the countryside of Catalonia. Before the war the working-class movement was almost entirely dominated by Anarcho-Syndicalism, with its trade union centre, the National Confederation of Labour (C.N.T.) and its leading Anarchist nucleus, the Anarchist Federation of Iberia (F.A.I.). In addition to the C.N.T. and the F.A.I., there were various working-class parties and a great number of more or less autonomous trade unions in existence whose influence, however, extended only to a minority of the working class. Among these political parties the most important were the *Communist Party of Catalonia* (affiliated to the Communist Party of Spain) and the *Socialist Union of Catalonia* (not affiliated to any political party of Spain or any international organisation).



LUIS COMPANYS,
President of the
Generalidad of Catalonia.

A section of the working class and a very considerable section of the peasants were until the beginning of the war under the influence of the strongest Republican party existing in Catalonia: the "*Republican Left of Catalonia.*"

With the war and the greater activity of the popular masses, roused by the gigantic struggle for independence, and with the extension of the people's revolution the position formerly existing in the working-class and peasants movement and in the anti-fascist movement in general has undergone a

considerable change. The war of independence and the people's revolution have caused in the first place a tremendous influx of the masses into the working-class organisations and in the second, a profound process of unification is taking place within the working-class and anti-fascist organisations and movement.

In the first days of the war four small parties of the working class formerly existing in Catalonia (the Catalan Communist Party, the Socialist Union of Catalonia, the Catalan Federation of the Spanish Workers' Socialist Party and the Catalan Proletarian Party) merged into one under the name of "*Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia*" (P.S.U.C.) which accepted the programme and the statutes of the Communist International, and on its formation affiliated to the Communist International through the Communist Party of Spain.

The creation of the P.S.U.C. which now numbers 65,000 members, its correct political attitude towards the fundamental problems of the war and the revolution, its fraternal co-operation with the Communist Party of Spain have contributed considerably towards accelerating the unification of the trade union movement in Catalonia. The *U.G.T.*, which on the eve of the fascist rebellion numbered about 40,000-50,000 members in Catalonia, has increased that figure to 500,000, partly through the absorption of a great number of autonomous unions, many of them organisations seceded from the C.N.T. in 1932 and partly by recruiting considerable masses of workers until then not organised in any trade union.

The *C.N.T.*, for its part, has also absorbed a number of autonomous unions and many formerly unorganised workers and has at present about 450,000 members in Catalonia.

As for the extent of its influence among the fundamental sections of the working class, the influence of the great trade union bodies is about equal in the textile and chemical industries; in engineering the *U.G.T.* is in a majority, while in the transport services, especially in Barcelona, the *C.N.T.* has strong roots.

The trade union movement being thus partly unified, the unity of action established between the two great trade union centres *U.G.T.* and *C.N.T.* now existing in Catalonia – a unity of action which is an accomplished fact in certain big factories and in various branches of industry and whose complete realisation is on the way – marked a most important step forward towards the unification of the working class and is a powerful contribution to the consolidation of the anti-fascist People's Front.

The *C.N.T.* which in the beginning and during the first months of the war opposed the formation of a united People's Army of the Republic and which in certain localities attempted to put into practice its "Libertarian Communism," which for a long time had advocated a uniform wage and a family wage, which tolerated within its ranks "uncontrollable" elements, has made progress on the basis of the experiences of the war. To-day the *C.N.T.* is in favour of the united People's Army, rejects the uniform wage and has introduced a much better discipline into its ranks.. At the same time the responsible bodies of the *C.N.T.* in Catalonia have pronounced in favour of united action between the *U.G.T.* and *C.N.T.* and with certain reservations in favour of the anti-fascist People's Front as well. This evolution of the *C.N.T.*, favourable to the successful prosecution of the war and to the consolidation of the people's revolution, opens new perspectives of a fruitful co-operation in Catalonia of all anti-fascist forces in a strong and wide People's Front.

Of the Republican parties, the "*Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*" (Left Republican Party of Catalonia) is the most important. Its influence extends mainly over the urban lower middle class and certain sections of the peasants.

On the Catalan countryside the most influential organisation of a syndicalist type is the *Unio de Rabassaires* (U. de R.) an organisation not affiliated to any trade union centre or any political party and

in whose ranks the P.S.U.C. and the Esquerra Republicana have the greatest influence. Beside the U. de R. the Federation of Agricultural Workers (F.T.T.) which is affiliated to the U.G.T., and the Peasant Federation, affiliated to the C.N.T., group considerable forces. The process of the unification of all anti-fascist forces is slower in the countryside than in the cities but it has already begun by the formation of a co-ordinating committee linking the F.T.T. and the U. de R. It is hoped that the Peasant Federation of the C.N.T. will also join this co-ordinating committee.

One of the main reasons why Catalonia, a region of great industrial productivity and of great agricultural resources, was somewhat behindhand in mobilising its considerable resources for the common struggle in which the Republic is now engaged, was the criminal activity of the fascist agency called *P.O.U.M.*, which did more damage in Catalonia than in other parts of the Republic. The *P.O.U.M.* provoked and organised the counter-revolutionary coup of May, 1937, and in addition to its constant endeavours to set one organisation of the People's Front against the other, has also taken a leading part in almost every fascist organisation of espionage and sabotage discovered up to the present. This was possible because the anti-fascist organisations did not understand sufficiently the true role of Trotskyism, disguised in Catalonia under the label and the pseudo-revolutionary phrases of the *P.O.U.M.* The unified Socialist Party of Catalonia not excepted it has taken a long time for the anti-fascists to come to a clear understanding of the position with regard to this fundamental problem and even now there remains much to be done to increase the vigilance which must be exercised in order to prevent these spies from penetrating into the working-class organisations and the anti-fascist movement.

It must, however, be said that certain progress has been made in this direction. Thus, after the putsch in May, 1937, the elements adhering to the *P.O.U.M.*, by a unanimous decision of all representatives of the anti-fascist organisations forming the Government of the Generalidad, were removed from all official bodies (including municipal bodies) and later the *P.O.U.M.* has, by a judicial decision, been declared outside Republican legality as enemy of the people, of the Government and of the People's Front and as an agent of fascism in our country. The complete liquidation of the work of provocation of the *P.O.U.M.* and of its organisation itself is one of the fundamental conditions of the consolidation of the anti-fascist People's Front in Catalonia.

The People's Front in Catalonia is still feebly organised. People's Front committees exist in many localities and practically the whole of the local anti-fascist masses participate in them; but there is as yet no People's Front committee on an all-Catalonian scale, which, acting on the basis of a practical programme, could co-ordinate the work of the committees scattered throughout the towns and villages of Catalonia, strengthen them and stimulate the formation of such committees in every town and village. *The creation of this strong People's Front movement, closely linked with the People's Front of the Republic and with its respective committees, represents in the present situation the decisive main task of the anti-fascist movement of Catalonia, and is the slogan and chief concern of the unified Socialist Party of Catalonia.*

The victory of the Spanish people over the fascist reactionaries and fascist intervention, and the establishment of a strong Republican Parliamentary democratic regime, relying on a People's Front, will decisively undermine the material political basis of fascism in Spain, and lead to further consolidation of the democratic forces in France, England and other countries. The victory of the People's Front in Spain will be a palpable blow to the aggressive military plans of Hitler and Mussolini. It will, assist the maintenance of international peace, serve as a powerful impulse for unleashing and strengthening the democratic movement of the masses of people within Germany itself, within Italy itself, and everywhere where bloody fascism dominates. (From the article: *On the Threshold of 1937* by

G. Dimitrov, which appeared in Inprecorr No. 2 on January 9, 1937.)

The International Labour Movement now disposes over sufficient forces and means to stop the intervention of German and Italian fascism in Spain and the invasion of China by the Japanese military, and to safeguard international peace. In order to achieve this, however, it is necessary that the tremendous forces and resources of the international labour movement should be united and directed towards an effective and Unswerving struggle against fascism and war. (From the article: *Fascism is War* by G. Dimitrov, which appeared in Inprecorr No. 33, August 7, 1937.)

Spain From 1808 to 1936

By Cesar Falcon

From the beginning of the past century Spain has been a seething cauldron of revolutionary movements. The ideas of the encyclopedists had formed the minds of a number of illustrious sons of Spain and paved the way for the liberalism of a few leading intellectuals and certain elements of the nascent bourgeoisie. During the reign of *Carlos IV, Godoy*, the favourite of the queen and a man of the people, rose to the office of Prime Minister and picked up certain liberal ideas from Count Aranda, minister to Carlos III, under whom he had worked in the beginnings of his political career. This earned him the hostility of the very reactionary palace camarilla grouped around the Prince of the Asturias, the future Ferdinand VII. The conspiracies of the reactionaries and of the feudal lords resulted in 1808 in the military revolt of Aranjuez. Godoy fell, Carlos IV abdicated and *Ferdinand VII* succeeded to the throne.

From that moment can be traced the revolutionary unrest of the rising bourgeoisie and its implacable struggle against feudal-absolutist reaction. At the very beginning of Ferdinand's reign *Napoleon* invaded Spain. The object of this invasion was to secure with the possession of Spain a reliable ally for the struggle against England, but the rule of the reactionaries, who regarded the French as the representatives of the revolution, diminished the aid given to Napoleon after the defeat of Trafalgar. The reactionaries used the popular movement against the invaders to further the cause of Ferdinand VII. On May 2, 1808, when the king was in Bayonne, humiliated at the feet of Napoleon, the masses of the people rose in Madrid. A lot of propaganda has been made in connection with the visit of Ferdinand VII to Bayonne – especially from the pulpits of the churches. The immediate motive for the rising of the people was that the last Infants of Spain who still remained in Madrid with the court were leaving the city. The people gathered in the Plaza de Oriente and prevented the departure of the last of the royal family. The soldiers and a few officer members who had risen from the people joined the insurgents. Captains Daoiz, Velarde, Rovira and Lieutenant Ruiz placed themselves at the head of the rising. Thereupon the Council of Regency presided over by Infant Don Antonio, made a pact with the French commander Murat and the insurgents were routed in the streets of Madrid. During the following days (May 3 and 4,) Murat applied terrible repressive measures, which, as was traditional in Spain, only roused the whole of Spain to rebellion.

The same day the Mayor of Mostoles, a little village near Madrid, issued a manifesto declaring war upon Napoleon. The heroic deed of the Mayor would have remained merely a picturesque episode if the municipal councils of the principal provinces had not adopted the same attitude. On May 20, the war against the French began in the Asturias. The struggle soon spread to Leon, Santiago, Badajoz and Catalonia. Meanwhile Napoleon convened the Cortes in Bayonne and they elected Napoleon's brother Joseph to be King of Spain and gave the country a constitution by which a senate was established, a

state council created and the independence of the judiciary recognised.

However, the war continued throughout Spain with the utmost ferocity. The liberals who took part in the struggle against Napoleon worked actively in order to win a liberal regime as the result of the war. Napoleon himself participated in the war, broke the resistance of Somosierra and took Madrid. In spite of this, the Spanish people continued the struggle.

In September 1810 the Cortes met in *Seville*. The most important decree established the sovereignty of the nation incorporated in the Cortes, its paramount legislative power, and the inviolability of the deputies to the Cortes. These reforms, proposed and worked out by *Torrero*, the member for *Badajoz*, interpreted the real wishes of the masses but met with the irreconcilable opposition of the reactionary elements of the Cortes.

The war compelled the Cortes to transfer to *Cadiz* where in 1812 a constitution was adopted which has ever since served as a programme to all revolutionary activities of the liberal groups and parties. The constitution of Cadiz abolished the Inquisition, created provincial administrative bodies and subjected to State legislation the wealth of the religious communities. Even though these economic and social reforms were tackled timidly enough, yet the reactionaries began a ferocious campaign against the Cortes, and although the liberals had a majority, they did not dare to break with them, set up a revolutionary Government and take into their own hands the leadership both of the war and of the Government. Neither did they dare to destroy the economic basis of the reaction by putting an end to the feudal ownership of the land. On the contrary, they made terms with the reactionaries, recognised Ferdinand VII as king, and elected a Regency Council in which the Church and feudal lords were represented. By so doing they gave themselves into the hands of the enemy.

In 1813 the French were definitely routed. In May, 1814, Ferdinand VII returned to Spain. His very first act was to repudiate the constitution and proclaim the rule of absolutism. There followed a period of fierce repression and tyranny, until in 1820 *Riego* rose up in arms in *Cabezas de San Juan* and was joined by the liberal officers and great masses of the people. Ferdinand was forced to give way. But the reactionaries called in the Holy Alliance to their assistance and sixty thousand French troops, commanded by the Duke of Angouleme, came to Spain, united with forty thousand Spanish reactionaries, to form the army of invasion which has since been called the Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis. The invaders reached *Cadiz*, where the Cortes had again taken refuge, brought back Ferdinand and restored absolutism. The liberal chiefs who escaped the gallows were compelled to fly abroad.

The death of Ferdinand in 1832 and the regency of *Maria Christina* marked the beginning of a new period of moderate liberalism. For this reason the first Carlist war began at the same time in *Navarre*, a civil war admittedly of reaction against the Government. During this period the statesmen whose policy was clearest was *Mendizabal*, Prime Minister in 1835, who introduced a number of bourgeois reforms in economy. The most important of his reforms was the confiscation by the state of the lands of the Church and their sale to the capitalists. But Mendizabal, like other liberal chiefs, in spite of the war against the reactionaries and the betrayal of certain old-fashioned liberals, failed to understand that it was necessary to maintain unity and create a united military and political force. Thus it happened that one year later Mendizabal was overthrown by his own liberal friends.

It was in this period that Spain's American colonies won their independence and the Spanish liberals lost the financial resources and the political support which the American revolutionaries had been giving them. Owing to the necessity of fighting the Carlist rebellion, the predominance of the liberals during the regency of Maria Cristina was maintained until in 1839 the Carlist general *Maroto*, and *Espartero*, the leader of the liberal forces, made a pact in *Onate* and ended the war by the notorious "embrace of Vergara" when the two generals embraced in front of their troops as a sign of their

agreement. In 1840 Maria Christina abdicated and the regency of *Espartero*, a general who rose during the civil wars, initiated a new period of reaction. Thus the reactionaries triumphed within the ranks of the liberals themselves.

The struggle went on, sanguinary, implacable, chaotic, with varying success until at the end of the reign of *Isabel II* the figure of Prim emerged. In 1862 Spain joined hands with France and England in the expedition against the Mexican people. *Prim*, who was in command of the Spanish troops, withdrew them from Veracruz and refused to intervene. This action is characteristic of him and shows him to be a liberal leader of the greatest importance. When Isabel abdicated owing to the liberal rising of the fleet in Cadiz and the insurrection of the popular masses against the monarchy, Prim gave the crown to *Amadeo of Savoy*, the son of the King of Italy, with the object of establishing a liberal monarchy based on democratically elected cortes. Shortly afterwards, Prim was assassinated by the reactionaries and two years later Amadeo of Savoy abdicated after his efforts to unite the liberal forces had proved fruitless.

On February 11, 1873, the Constituent Cortes proclaimed the *Republic*. At this moment the working masses intervened in the struggle. However, a considerable section of the working class was influenced by the anarchists and although Pi y Margall, the most revolutionary of the Republican leaders, wished to come to an understanding with them, the anarchists refused and maintained their tactics of local struggle.

While the reactionaries attacked the Republic in the North and the armies of the absolutists began a civil war, the anarchists remained immovably entrenched in their non-political positions, persisted in their local action and refused to join the common struggle against reaction which was going on within and outside the republic.

The Republicans for their part, like their forerunners, the liberals of the Cortes of Cadiz and the progressive elements of the time, of Queen Isabella, were so afraid of the reaction that they failed to do anything for the peasant masses, left the land in the hands of the feudal caste and, by so doing, preserved intact the forces of reaction. The reactionary generals, led by the notorious monarchist liberal *de Canovas*, destroyed the local movements in province after province until finally Pavia despotically dissolved the Cortes and Martinez Campos proclaimed the monarchy of Alphonso in Sagunto in December, 1874. However, the masses were now more conscious of their interests. The return of the reactionaries could not be managed as it was in the times of Ferdinand VII. Canovas was forced to grant a constitution in 1876, in which, however, the aspirations of the bourgeoisie were still under the tutelage of the semi-feudal lords.

JUAN NEGRIN, <i>Head of the People's Front Government.</i>

In 1888 the *Spanish Socialist Workers' Party* was officially founded in *Barcelona* – a Socialist group already existed in Madrid since 1879 – thus beginning the political organisation of the working masses. The Anarchist groups wasted their efforts in heroic and ineffective action. In 1898 they initiated the sterile movement of the Black Hand in Cadiz which was savagely suppressed by the reactionaries. Other peasant movements, such as the one initiated years previously by the veterinary surgeon *de Ronda*, and later the movement of the smallholders of *Osuna*, were also drowned in blood. The Anarchists continued this kind of local and group struggle without

giving the revolutionary movement a national unity and an organised cohesion. This was the result of the non-political and “cantonalist” ideology which inspired them.

With the founding of the monarchist parties and the creation of trade unions during the first part of the reign of *King Alphonso XIII*, the influence of the Republican parties decreased considerably. Most of the Republican leaders had accepted the restoration, with the exception of *Pi y Margall* and *Salmeron* who maintained their groups; *Pi y Margall* found support among the Federalists, *Salmeron* among the Liberal bourgeoisie of Catalonia and both among the young Republicans who entered the political struggle with fresh vigour.

In 1898, after the war in which the United States deprived Spain of the Philippines and Puerto Rico, the loss of these colonies brought a strengthening of the reaction which increased its armed forces by incorporating with them the armies who had fought in America. A further development was that the bourgeois parties, faced with the growing power of the organised working class, joined forces with the reactionaries and formed with them the Conservative-Liberal parties led by *Canovas* and *Sagasta*, *Maura* and *Moret*.

The working class organisations pursued a very feeble policy. The Socialist Party and the Left were reformist. The Anarchist groups resorted to terrorism. In 1897 *Angiolillo* killed *Canovas* in the Santa Agueda baths; in 1906 *Morral* threw a bomb at *Alphonso XIII* and his wife as they were returning from their wedding. These individual acts merely strengthened the bloc of the reaction and the bourgeoisie, as the latter had by now already lost the leadership of the popular masses.

In 1909 the working masses rose in *Barcelona* against the war in Morocco. The workers fought valiantly on their barricades, but the lack of a consistent leadership prevented them from continuing the struggle to a victorious end. The rising was suppressed and the reactionaries, led by *Maura*, took a ferocious revenge on the working masses. *Francisco Ferrer*, the most prominent Anarchist leader faced a firing party in the fort of Montjuich. Hundreds of workers were murdered in the prisons and in the streets. As a result of the strong pressure of the masses the Government was overthrown and a new ministry formed under *Canalejas*, monarchist Liberal. *Canalejas* appeared anxious to satisfy the demands of the people by a few superficial laws against the religious congregations. He fell a victim to an attempt on his life in November, 1912, although he had prevented the most brutal measures being taken against the participants in a railway strike; it is probable that his death was due to a provocation, the object of which was to unleash an even more extensive campaign of repression against the working-class movement.

In June, 1917, the *Dato* Government recognised the legality of the military juntas, which were organisations of reactionary plotting within the army. In August, the workers’ leaders and the Republican chiefs, stimulated by the tremendous agitation caused among the masses by the Russian Revolution and driven forward by the militancy of the workers, proclaimed a revolutionary general strike organised by Socialists, Anarchists, Republicans and Catalan Autonomists with the object of overthrowing the monarchy. The movement was defeated owing to its lack of unity.

The only group which resolutely went forward in the struggle were the workers, particularly those of Madrid and of the Asturias who fought like heroes. The Catalan Autonomists betrayed the movement. The alliance of the Socialists and Anarchists also broke up. The *Dato* Government reacted by unleashing a terrible campaign of persecution and the principal leaders of the Socialists went to penal servitude for life, while others were compelled to escape abroad.

In 1921 *Dato* died at the hands of the Anarchists *Casanellas*, *Nicolau* and *Mateu*. Soon afterwards *Casanellas* left the Anarchists and joined the Communist Party. In 1923 the Catalan bourgeoisie, together with the army and the king, supported the coup d’état of *Primo de Rivera*. But the reactionaries and the landowners of Madrid took the dictatorship into their own hands and made *Primo*

de Rivera into their tool. Faced with the dictatorship, the Socialist forces were divided among themselves. Some of the leaders, with *Prieto* at their head, wanted to fight the dictatorship and sought a rapprochement with the Republicans and Liberals; others, with *Largo Caballero*, advocated cooperation with the dictatorship.

The *Communist Party*, formed by a secession from the Socialist Party was as yet too weak to lead the masses. In 1930, a bloc of Socialists and Republicans was formed, including a certain number of monarchists converted to Republicanism, such as *Miguel Maura* and *Alcala Zamora*. Two officers, Captains *Fermin Galan* and *Garcia Hernandez* attempted a rising in Jaca but were defeated and executed in Huesca. Two days later, on December 13, a group of Republican airmen rose in Madrid. This movement was defeated, but the pressure of the masses compelled the Government to call municipal elections in April. The people voted in overwhelming numbers against the monarchy and Alphonso XIII had to fly from Madrid in the night of April 14, 1931.

In the Second Republic there was close co-operation between Socialists and Republicans. The reactionary *Alcala Zamora* was elected president. A few laws of social progress were enacted. In this period the growth of the Communist Party began. The Second Republic did not take energetic measures against reaction but, just like the First Republic, it left intact the power of the reactionaries in the country and as a result, the reactionaries and their allies, the Republicans of *Lerroux*, triumphed in the elections of 1933.

The masses prepared for a struggle. The Communist Party emphasised the need for the unity of all working-class forces in order to fight reaction and fascism. In October, 1934, the fascists of *Gil Robles* joined the Government. The masses rose in arms and succeeded in maintaining themselves in power in the *Asturias* for a fortnight. In *Barcelona*, the Government of the Catalan Generalidad was defeated by the military forces of the garrison. The masses offered heroic resistance to the terrible measures of repression of the reactionary *Gil Robles-Lerroux* Government and succeeded in maintaining underground their political and trade union organisations.

In June, 1935, *Jose Diaz*, General Secretary of the Communist Party, made a speech in the "Cine Monumental" of *Madrid*, demanding the formation of a *united front* of all working-class and democratic forces for the struggle against fascism and reaction. In December, the Government of *Portela Valladares* was formed. In January, 1936, a People's Front was formed with a programme of extensive democratic reforms. In the elections of February, 1936, by which the *Portela Valladares* Government hoped to give a parliamentary veneer to its reactionary regime, the People's Front won a brilliant victory and *Alcala Zamora* was compelled to hand over the reins of government to the Republicans led by *Senora Azana* and supported by all the parties and organisations of the People's Front. This was the first time in the history of Spain that all popular forces acted unitedly on the basis of a joint programme.

1936: From February to July **From the Election Victory of the People's Front to the Fascist** **Insurrection**

By M. Navarro Ballesteros

On February 16, 1936, the people won a great revolutionary victory. Reaction and fascism, the bloc of the parties of the Right, were defeated not only at the polls, but in the streets.

On February 16, 1936, the people went into the streets determined to give full expression to their pent-up hatred of the oppressors of the people. The People's Front programme contained a number of items for which there could be no delay. There was one item in particular, which had been the rallying cry during the election struggle of the forces of the workers and Republicans joining in the People's Front: *the amnesty*. At that time there were about 30,000 revolutionary workers in the prisons of Spain. The greater number of these prisoners had been in the jails and prisons since the revolutionary movement in October, 1934.

This amnesty was to be made an actual fact. To ensure this, the masses of the people who were celebrating the victory of the People's Front now took action. In some provinces the prison doors were forced open in the early hours of the evening of the same day, February 16, and the imprisoned workers released. Early in the morning of February 17, big, spontaneous demonstrations took place in the centre of Madrid and in various parts of, the city. Gathering in one great demonstration of men, women and children, rejoicing in the victory of the Republic and the People's Front, and shouting: "*Amnesty, amnesty!*" these huge crowds marched spontaneously to the prison. But the State apparatus had not yet recognised the triumph of the People's Front. Before the demonstrators had reached the prison they were attacked by the Civil Guards. This attack, however, in no way damped the fighting ardour of the masses who resisted the police energetically. By now the demonstration had swelled to over 100,000 persons. In order to prevent the prison from being stormed, the authorities now deemed it advisable to release a number of the prisoners.

These happenings in Madrid were typical of what was going on all over Spain. The people did not wait for the publication of the amnesty decree in the official gazette, but put it into immediate practice. The enthusiastic demonstrations lasted for several days. And this mass pressure caused the *Azana* Government to fulfil another item of the programme of the Left: the reinstatement of the workers discharged for taking part in the October movement.

Other extremely important points of the programme were, however, shelved. Among them was one of special importance: the purging of the Officers' Corps. This was not carried out, nor the points demanding the removal of those civil servants who were in the camp of reaction and fascism, and the disbanding of the fascist organisations. Other important items of the People's Front programme, relating to economics, and providing for the solution of the unemployed problem and a juster distribution of land, were neglected and left to Parliament to decide.

In spite of the conditions under which the elections took place, the victory of the People's Front was enormous: Of the 473 deputies elected to Parliament, about 300 belonged to the People's Front, whilst the remainder were divided among the bloc of the Right and Centre. The People's Front had won a smashing victory. Therefore it must be said that the People's Front failed to make full use of its victory, and regrettably lost time, thus giving the reactionaries and fascists the opportunity to rally again.

The fact that no central People's Front Committee existed, and the lack of a real People's Front policy, were all in favour of reaction, which was thus given a free hand to prepare to take revenge.

And how very free this hand was, in the brief period between February 16 and July 18, 1936, is amply proved by the criminal policy of provocation which reaction was able to pursue during this time, and to express in numerous actions.

The encircling tactics adopted by the reactionary-fascist bloc immediately after the People's Front victory were applied in many forms. From the first days onward, when the Civil Guard and a section of the Storm Guards, influenced by the reactionary elements, turned their Mausers against the workers' demonstrations and made arrests among the revolutionary workers, these forces refused to recognise the instructions of the newly-formed Government. The Republic was further subjected to a large-scale economic boycott. Immediately after the first People's Front Government had been formed, a large

number of well-to-do persons, chiefly members of the aristocracy, hastened to go abroad, taking with them enormous sums of money. The banks promoted in every way this transference of capital. By the time measures were at last taken against this flight of capital and the frontiers closed, the people who wanted to escape had long since gone and with them many millions of pesetas.

This mixture of every description of enemies of the people had a special preference for one form of provocation: starving out the workers. For no reason whatever the works and factories in Madrid, Catalonia and the Basque country were closed down. Tens of thousands of workers were thrown into the street. The sole reason was the fascist policy pursued by the employers. And deliberate provocation was the order of the day in the factories remaining open. During the previous two years of reactionary rule, wages had been arbitrarily reduced by the employers, and after the victory of the People's Front the workers gathered once more in their trade unions and demanded new working conditions and wage increases. The employers systematically opposed the demands of the workers. By this means they provoked a mighty strike wave which swept the whole country. Some of these strikes, such as that of the building workers of Madrid for instance, assumed an unusually fierce character and lasted a long time. (The Madrid building workers' strike was still going on when the fascist rebellion broke out.)

Here again the fatal weakness of the Government headed by Azana, and later by Casares Quiroga, became apparent. There was lacking the energy required to break the resistance of the employers and to induce them to meet the just demands of the workers.

The situation was similar in the rural districts. But here the struggle assumed far fiercer forms. In the countryside the strikes led to bloody conflicts between the agricultural workers on the one side and the gangsters engaged and armed by the "caziks" and large landowners on the other – pistoleros and musketeers whose revolvers were always ready. These bands received support from the Civil Guard, whose bloody and sinister history is notorious. But these criminal activities of the caziks (heads of the villages, appointed by the feudal lords and dependent on them) and large landowners, with their bands of pistoleros, did not prevent the agricultural labourers and poor peasants from commencing to confiscate the large estates, or from following the urge which had been in their blood for centuries: They began to take possession of the land which they needed for purposes of cultivation. Their efforts in this direction were, however, neither recognised nor energetically supported by the Government representing the People's Front.

DIEGO MARTINEZ BARRIOS, <i>President of the Spanish Cortes.</i>
--

Characteristic of this lack of Government support for the peasants is the fact that a large number of the governors appointed after the victory of the People's Front were cunning reactionaries, even if they carried in their pocket the membership card of some Republican Party. Here the notorious Governor of Toledo may be mentioned, named "Governor of *Yeste*" because he sent a detachment of Civil Guards against the peasants of the village of *Yeste*, who had confiscated the estates. This detachment of the Civil Guards murdered many of the peasants and subjected others to brutal tortures, not even sparing women. The Governor of Cordoba, *Rodriguez de Leon*, sided openly with the large landowners of the province. The fine gentlemen of Andalusia accorded him every honour, the while waging savage terror in all the villages against the agricultural labourers and poor peasants. The same thing happened in Estremadura and in Castile. Some of the governors openly helped the fascist rebels.

This terror, this series of provocations by the Right, finds its most unequivocal expression in the list of assassinations of persons belonging to the People's Front. The number of workers and persons holding democratic views killed by the murderous bullets of the bands of pistoleros paid with the money of the landowners, the bankers, and the C.E.D.A. (Confederacion Espanola de Derecha Autonoma, the reactionary organisation of *Gil Robles*), and organised by the "fascist movements" known as "Spanish Resurgence" and "Spanish Phalanx," run into hundreds. In San Sebastian, *Manuel Andres*, General Director for Security during the first period of the Republic, was murdered. The Socialist *Malumbres*, chief editor of the newspaper *La Region*, was murdered in Santander. *Pedregal*, a man of liberal views, was murdered in Madrid because he had presided over a court which had sentenced a number of fascists. A few days after this the Socialist *Captain Faraudo*, who had fought on the side of the workers in the revolutionary movement of October, 1934, and was subsequently kept in prison, fell in the streets of Madrid, riddled with bullets. A few days later again the Socialist deputy *Gimenez de Asua* was attacked by fascist pistoleros, and the police constable escorting him was killed. During the whole of this time the mercenaries of the Phalanx and the J.A.P. (Juventudes de Accion Popular, youth organisation of *Gil Robles*' reactionary organisation) were attacking the sellers of the workers' newspapers, especially the sellers of the leading newspaper of the C.P., the *Mundo Obrero*. A number of these newspaper sellers were murdered.

On April 14 a parade of troops was held on Castellana in Madrid, attended by the President of the Republic, *Azana*, and the members of the Government. A number of fascist officers attempted to demonstrate against the Government and the President of the Republic. They had also planned a provocation: a bomb was to explode beneath the platform of the Government representatives. Thanks to the vigilance of the people and to the measures taken by the people's militia, this criminal outrage was frustrated. During the fight which followed, an Ensign of the Civil Guard, named *Reyes*, lost his life. Next day the funeral of this ensign was exploited as pretext for a regular demonstration for civil war. The funeral was attended by all the reactionary and fascist leaders of the garrison of Madrid, the Storm Guards, and the Civil Guard, and by the leading reactionary politicians and their pistoleros. From the Hippodrome, where the Orphan School of the Civil Guard stands, to *Cibeles*, this demonstration carried out a pogrom against the workers, on the lines of the "Black Hundreds" in tsarist Russia. The fascist bands pushed their way, revolvers in hands, onto a building site where about 50 workers were at work, and fired on them. During the whole of the fascist demonstration the fascist officers repeated this kind of provocation. This was already open rebellion.

The Quiroga Government, which had been formed as "government of energy," took no energetic measures to punish the officers and military leaders committing these outrages. Nor was anything done to prevent the rebellion which could now be plainly foreseen. The last victim of the fascist murderers was *Lieutenant Castillo*, a soldier of the people, at the time lieutenant in the Storm Guard. This was on July 12.

The fascist crimes remained unpunished. In the courts of justice it became quite common to see a number of gentry who greeted the court with the fascist salute and their war-cry of "Arriba Espana!" (Spain, awake!). The whole of the courts of justice were in the hands of reactionary and fascist elements. The Supreme Court of Spain, the "Court for Constitutional Guarantees," was in the hands of the men of the "two black years." Three months after the victory of the People's Front this court ventured to make an attempt to cancel a law issued by the Government respecting the reinstatement of workers victimised after October, 1934. *Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera*, leader of the Spanish Phalanx, was brought before the court at that time but only sentenced for possessing arms without a licence, instead of being called to account for the murderous attacks made by his men on workers and anti-fascists, and given a mild sentence of a few months' imprisonment, shouted in court: "With the help of these I shall put everything in order again in Spain." And he pointed to the members of the Civil

Guard surrounding him.

This is the path of crime which was traversed so rapidly by reaction and fascism, and roused to the highest pitch the hatred of the people against the murderers. Demands were made to the Government, in thousands of forms, that they should put an end to their weakness. They were called upon to stop the provocations and crimes. They were called upon to keep their promise to clear out all anti-Republican elements from the High Command of the Army and from the Ministries. The disbanding of the reactionary and fascist organisations was demanded. The Government was called upon to imprison the leaders of reaction and fascism in Spain. At meetings and demonstrations in the North and South, in the East and West of the country, millions of men and women appealed to the Government to put an end to these conditions. When *Lieutenant Castillo* was murdered on July 12, the cry for vengeance which arose everywhere could not be rejected. And when next day justice was done against the most unbridled of the chieftains of Spanish reaction, the hated Calvo Sotelo, this was the last drop which brought the cup to overflowing. The enemies of the people had made every preparation for their uprising, and now they took rapid action.

The Parliament upon which such great hopes had been set that it would speedily carry out the wishes of the people, did practically nothing during all this time. One reason for this was the obstruction practised by the Right. And besides this it was the tradition of bourgeois parliamentarianism to talk a great deal without doing anything positive. Parliament, which might have been such an effectual instrument for the consolidation of the People's Front victory, was converted by the weakness of the Republicans, and especially by the paralysing and pseudo-revolutionary attitude of the Socialists, into a platform for reactionary and fascist agitation. With the exception of a few speeches, some of them sensational in effect – those, for instance, of *Jose Diaz* and *Dolores Ibarruri* – the Left did not take a sufficiently energetic stand to check the insolence of a Gil Robles or a Calvo Sotelo. This propaganda for rebellion, carried on in Parliament with the knowledge and patient indulgence of the Republicans, came to a head at the session of the Permanent Parliamentary Commission on July 16, two days before the outbreak of the rebellion. At this session Gil Robles clearly announced that his fighting forces were now sufficiently prepared to proceed to a coup d'état. Instead of drawing the logical conclusion and arresting Gil Robles and all the other leaders of the reactionaries still in Madrid – the Government permitted every one of them to take up his position from where he was to lead the rebellion. A few hours after Gil Robles had made this threatening speech he went to Paris. For the leaders of the rebellion this was the signal to rise in the various provinces.

No terms can be strong enough to condemn the weakness of the Government, the culpability of the Government in refusing to listen to the only too justifiable warnings to undertake a revolutionary and anti-fascist purge. The “energetic” Quiroga, who had been Prime Minister and Minister of War for two months, gave audience a few days before the outbreak of the rebellion to Lieutenant-Colonel Yagüe, an officer whose hands were still stained with the blood shed in the cruel terror organised by him in Asturias in October, 1934. Persons present at this meeting between the minister and this murderer testify as to Quiroga's “energy” as follows: Quiroga received Yagüe with friendliness, which we assume in his favour – was feigned:

“Ah! Colonel Yagüe! How are you? I have sent for you to tell you that there are rumours circulating here that you are preparing an insurrection in Morocco. I do not believe it. However, what have you to say about it?”

“It is all nonsense,” replied the Asturian murderer, naturally enough. He denied the rumours circulating about him, and stated that all he was preparing were great demonstrations of homage to the Republic and the existing Government. On this Quiroga shook hands with him and said:

“Be a good boy, and tell your friends on your return that the Republic is extremely strong and it

would be foolish to rise against it.”

But in actual fact, this “foolish” act of rising against the Government became a reality a few days later. And the leader of this rebellion was the blood-stained Yagüe.

What part did the C.P. of Spain play during this brief but extremely tense period of the Spanish revolution? We shall sum up concisely the part played by the C.P., confining ourselves to its attitude and activities towards the main problems.

The C.P. was represented in the Cortes by 17 deputies. This number did not in the least correspond to the influence possessed by the C.P. among the masses, as was soon to become apparent.

As soon as the first powerful revolutionary mass mobilisation took place after the victory of the People’s Front, the great influence of the C.P. was seen. At these demonstrations the flags and banners of the C.P. took the lead. The workers shouted the Communist slogans in all the streets of the towns and villages of Spain. Everywhere people declared that it was necessary to do what the C.P. demanded.

The rapid pace at which the influence of the C.P. increased among the masses is indicated by the growth in its membership. A leading article in *Mundo Obrero* on June 1 pointed out that:

“Before the February victory our Party numbered 20,000 members. At the present time it has precisely 102,000 members on its books and 15,000 more membership cards have already been sent to applicants for membership.”

This rapid growth of the C.P. is not surprising when one takes into account the correctness of its policy and its definite attitude towards every one of the main problems of the country. Its correct attitude, in the midst of the confusion during the first days following the People’s Front victory, was like a ray of light penetrating the darkness. In this hectic time the people got to know the Party, through its press and propaganda, through the activities of its members, and above all through the magnificent action, marked by a sense of responsibility, of the best known of the leaders, *Jose Diaz, Pasionaria, Hernandez, Uribe*, and others in Parliament. For Parliament, though it accomplished little, provided an excellent platform which was fully utilised by the C.P. Two speeches of outstanding importance may be mentioned. One is that made by Jose Diaz on April 15. In this speech the General Secretary of the C.P. exposed and stigmatised the provocations of reaction and fascism, and proposed measures necessary to destroy reaction and fascism root and branch. He demanded the immediate realisation of the People’s Front programme. His speech was frequently interrupted by the reactionary and fascist deputies. One passage of this speech was noted by the masses:

“Senor Gil Robles says pathetically that if the situation which may develop in Spain should really come about, he would prefer to die in the street. I do not know what he has in mind. I do not know how Senor Robles will die. (A deputy of the Left interjected: ‘On the gallows.’ Violent protests from the reactionaries.) Perhaps he will die like Sergeant Vazquez, like Argüelles, and other comrades who died in defence of the Republic and democracy, shot on the orders of the Government of which Senor Robles was a member. I cannot say with certainty what death Senor Robles will die, but I can say that if the people exercise justice he will die with his boots on.”

Another speech, now become historical, is the one made by Pasionaria on behalf of the Parliamentary Communist Party in the debate in Parliament on June 16. This was a masterly speech. The following are a few passages from it:

“Even though at certain moments reactionary generals may come forward, incited by such elements as Calvo Sotelo, and may be ready to rise against the State power, there are at the same time soldiers of the people, heroic leaders such as those of Alcala, capable of holding all

reactionary generals in leash. (Hear, hear!) And if the Government is resolved to speed up the carrying out of the People's Front programme, and the Republican offensive announced by Senor Albornoz many days ago begins, then this offensive will find all the workers on its side as on February 16, and these workers will again exert their utmost strength and again aid the People's Front to gain the victory.

“I draw the following conclusions from this: If such disturbances and unrest as are going on in Spain at the present time are to be prevented, it is not sufficient to make a Calvo Sotelo responsible for everything which may ensue. On the contrary, the first step necessary is to imprison those employers who refuse to recognise the arbitration awards of the Government.”

“We must begin to arrest the landowners who are starving the peasants, we must arrest those people whose hands are red with the blood of the victims of the October persecutions, and who then come forward here with unparalleled cynicism demanding that people be called to account for something which never happened. And if this work of justice is commenced, then, Senor Casares Quiroga and gentlemen of the Cabinet, then no Government will be able to reckon on a more determined and powerful support than yours, for the great masses of the people of Spain will rise anew, as on February 16. And it might well be that their own self-respect will cause them to advance against all those forces which we cannot tolerate here on these benches.” (The speaker turned towards the benches of the reactionaries and fascists.)

The Communist Party thus offered the people, to the utmost of its powers, guarantee and certainty that there existed at least one resolute and definite party watching over the interests of the people. On February 21 the leading newspaper of the C.P., *Mundo Obrero*, pointed out quite clearly the path which must be taken in order to ensure the victory of the People's Front. This leading article stated:

“We say quite clearly: we have no wish to revive the simple-minded trustfulness of April 14, 1931. This trustfulness brought about the tragedy of November, 1933, and the horrors which followed it. This blind faith has cost the people frightful sufferings and endless tears. And the workers and anti-fascists all over the country have learned this sad lesson well. There must be no repetition of this 'to-day.’”

At this time there was no lack, either in the literature issued by the Party or in the action taken by its representatives in Parliament, or urgent representations to the Government that the people demanded the arrest of the elements who were conspiring against the regime – those elements whom all the workers, indeed the whole people, knew to be guilty of the bloody repression of October, 1934. Hence the headlines on the front page of *Mundo Obrero* on March 2 were as follows:

“To jail with these murderers! This cry for justice rises from the hearts of the people! To jail with them! To jail with Gil Robles, Lerrox, Doval, Velarde, Salazar, Lopez Ochoa, Yagüe, Hidalgo, the murderer of Sirval, and with the whole blood-stained Government of 1934! The will of the people must be fulfilled!”

Every day, at every moment, the necessity was emphasised of putting an end to the encouragement being given the fascists in their bloody provocations. Day after day such headlines appeared in the leading newspaper of the C.P.S.:

“We tell the people to-day, more urgently than ever: Vigilance, calmness, worker and peasant militia!”

Whilst the other Labour and Republican Parties were paying little attention, or rather none at all, to the People's Front, the C.P. insisted again and again on the necessity of strengthening this organism of unity. Again and again such appeals as the following could be heard and read:

“The unity of the People’s Front must be preserved at all costs. The strengthening of the People’s Front is the call of the hour.”

The leading article of *Mundo Obrero* on May 8 showed how clearly the Party foresaw the shameful intervention of fascism in Spain:

“We must not forget to stress the necessity of the People’s Front, the less so as the critical international situation too requires this Front. The fascist forces, having subjugated Abyssinia, are preparing for fresh adventures and imperialist crimes. This calls for a strengthening of the People’s Front, a striving by democratic Spain for unification with the progressive forces of the whole world, above all with the Soviet Union, the bulwark of peace, and in closest contact with the endeavours of the People’s Front of France, that an effective force may be created for the struggle against the fascist barbarism which is menacing the peace, freedom, and progress of the peoples.”

And these words were written for the very reason that the Executive of the U.G.T., led by Largo Caballero, possessing at the same time influence over "the Socialist Party, had adopted decisions which threatened to split the People’s Front. A document clearly showing the stand taken by the C.P. at this time is a brief letter sent by *Uribe*, President of the Communist Party group in Parliament, to the President of the Republic, giving advice on the formation of the Government. This letter enumerated the problems confronting the country, and put forward suggestions for their solution. In this letter the C.P. advised the formation of a Republican Government which would follow faithfully the spirit of the election victory of February 16, and would proceed with the utmost rapidity and energy to carry out the People’s Front programme. The letter stated:

“In view of the provocative attitude of certain press organs and financial circles, and in view of the sabotage practised by the banks against the people and the Republic, the new Government has a great mission to fulfil, for it must frustrate the plans of the enemies of the people and the Republic. The Government cannot be indifferent to the continued attacks upon elements belonging to the People’s Front. It must severely punish the persons who inspire and execute these attacks. In the High Command of the Army, among the authorities, in the State apparatus, concealed but undoubted representatives of reaction and monarchism are hidden, and are sabotaging the Republic. The Communist Parliamentary deputies are of the opinion that this state of affairs must not last any longer, and consider that the first act of the new Government must be to purge the above organs from all elements hostile to the liberty of the people.”

Innumerable documents and quotations might be cited in proof of the correct policy and clear line pursued by the C.P. of Spain during this period, which was one of intense and historical responsibility for all the parties and organisers of the People’s Front. But these few examples, chosen at random, will suffice. They prove beyond doubt that if action had been taken as urged by the C.P., it would have been possible to crush the rebellion. But such action was not taken. On July 18 the rebellion broke out – and first of all in Morocco, where the bloody butcher of Asturias, Colonel Yagüe, was in office. And it was Colonel Yagüe who had been requested only a few days earlier, by the President of the Republic, *Casares Quiroga*, “to be a good fellow and not to conspire.”

These are a brief outline of the events which took place in Spain during the months of February, March, April, May, June and July, 1936. These are the events which occurred between the elections of February 16 and the fascist rebellion which began on July 18.

The Forces of the People's Front in Spain

By Mariano Perla

When the Republic was established in April, 1931, the Republican-Socialist coalition governments put the brake on the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The broad peasant masses, who bore most of the burdens of the feudal regime, wished to free themselves from the brutal rule of the great landowners, from the usurers and the miserable conditions of pay. The proletariat aspired to obtain the demands, both economic and political, which the monarchy had systematically denied them. They wanted vigorous action against the military caste and the great industrial barons of the type of Ruiz Senen, Juan March, etc. – action which would destroy the material basis of the rule of the landowners, of the Church, of the military caste and the big employers. The lower middle class as a whole and a large section of the industrial bourgeoisie also wanted a policy of Republicanism tending to undermine and destroy the privileges of the enemies of the people.

The Republican-Socialist coalition took no serious steps whatever in this direction, but, on the contrary, contented itself with setting up a constitution and enacting certain laws which proved weapons for the reactionaries, such as the Public Order Law. This policy led to a loss of prestige of the Constituent Assembly and made possible its dissolution by *Alcala Zamora*. Disunity among the popular forces, and especially within the working class, rendered the picture darker still. This was the position when the general elections were held in November, 1933. In one province only, that of *Malaga*, did Communists, Socialists and Republicans join forces. The natural result was that they won. But in the other provinces there were only a few instances where the Left-wing Republican parties united. The reactionaries and fascists, on the other hand, presented themselves as a compact electoral bloc, extending from the Monarchists to the Radicals, led by Lerroux. The discontent existing among the workers because of the failure of the Republicans to carry out the pledges given was skilfully used by the reactionaries and fascists in their demagogic campaign, particularly among the peasants, and resulted in a victory of the Right-wing and finally in the formation of a Parliament with a clear reactionary majority. It is necessary to point out, however, that the *Communist Party* made every effort to put forward joint candidates and afterwards to bring about the pursuit of a common parliamentary policy.

THE OCTOBER RISING IN 1934

While the reactionary Cortes was in being, fascism progressively conquered more and more positions. It strengthened those already held in the army, gained important positions in the civil service and granted all kinds of privileges to the big industrialists, and particularly to the landowners, who fixed the wages of the agricultural workers just as they willed. This policy, directed against the people, resulted in the growth of a general movement of revolt. Thus it was that the first act of heroic resistance to fascism took place: the rising of October, 1934.

Despite the courage with which the workers fought, this movement was defeated and drowned in a sea of blood. The main reason for the defeat of the rising was the lack of a revolutionary leadership embracing the broad popular masses and closely linked with them. The slogan: "United Front of Workers and Peasants," put forward by the Communist Party was fiercely opposed by other working-class bodies; it had no roots in the masses, and instead of it, in certain parts of the Peninsula, and especially in Catalonia and the East, bodies calling themselves "Workers' Alliances" (*Alianzas Obreras*) were set up with the very object of fighting this slogan. The "Workers' Alliances" were not living organs of the united front – they were top-heavy committees absolutely divorced from the masses of workers and peasants with whom they were most unpopular. They represented a certain section of the proletariat, but in many places, especially in Catalonia and the East, whence it drew most of its forces, working-class forces of such importance as the C.N.T., the F.A.I. and the Communist Party remained outside this grouping.

At the end of September the Communist Party joined the “Workers’ Alliance” with the object of transforming them into “Workers’ and Peasants’ Alliances,” giving them the revolutionary content which they lacked and turning them into the axis and the nerve-centre of a movement of the whole people against reaction and fascism. But events moved too fast, and only in the *Asturias* was the October rising directed in the spirit of the united front, with the result that the flag of the proletariat waved victoriously for a fortnight over this province. In *Catalonia* it failed because of this lack of a united front (the “Workers’ Alliances” were no united front), because the Anarchists, misunderstanding the character of the struggle, stood aloof and especially because the leadership of the revolutionary movement in Catalonia was in fact in the hands of the governing petty bourgeoisie which was afraid to arm the workers.

The fires of the October struggle were hardly extinguished when the Communist Party – which approved the movement in spite of its defeat and thus took the political responsibility for it – issued a general appeal to the other anti-fascist sections of the population, inviting them to organise, in a positive manner, unity against reaction and for the constitutional regime and liberty desired by the Spanish people. With the slogan: “No more death penalties!”, which saved the lives of many revolutionaries, an intense pro-unity campaign was launched among the popular masses. On June 2, 1935, *Jose Diaz* declared to an audience of 10,000 assembled in one of the theatres of Madrid:

“We must face and are already resisting in an organised struggle. To-day, from this platform, as we did yesterday, with the greatest energy and emphasis, we renew our call to the workers, to the peasants, to all free men, to all anti-fascists, to the Left-wing Republicans, and appeal to them: let all of us who have anything in common in this fateful hour unite in an anti-fascist Popular Front to frustrate the designs of this government of fascists and reactionaries.”

The programme contained four fundamental points: the confiscation without compensation of the land of the great landowners and of the Church in order to hand it over to the poor peasants and the agricultural workers; autonomy for Catalonia, Euzkadi (the Basque country) and Galicia; a general improvement of the living and working conditions of the working class; an amnesty.

THE SITUATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTIES AFTER OCTOBER

The idea of unity, widely propagated by the Communists, was gaining ground everywhere. The working masses pronounced themselves plainly in favour of the united front, and the Republicans, through their press, declared that they accepted in principle the idea of a People’s Front.

Falling wages, the callous dictatorship of the Christian Democrat leaders and their Radical allies, the popular desire to liberate the revolutionary prisoners, the unprecedented pillaging of public funds by the “Republican” lackeys of the landowners and capitalists, and the desire for peace and work all swelled the torrent of revolt. In order to give it an organic form and turn it into an instrument to frustrate the plans of the fascists, the masses of workers and anti-fascists of Spain demanded the constitution of a *People’s Front*.

The strong popular pressure strengthened by the untiring propaganda of the Communist Party, which popularised the slogan of unity, compelled the Government to dissolve the Cortes of the so-called “black biennium.” The Straperlo* affair and other scandalous exhibitions of cupidity on the part of the Radicals accelerated the process of discrediting the parliament of repression. After the dissolution of the Cortes by the Government of *Portela Valladares*, two tendencies became manifest in the counter-revolutionary camp. One of them, represented by *Alcala Zamora*, wanted to play a dirty electoral trick which would give the majority to a centrist party, led by the President of the Republic in person; the other tendency, that of the monarchists and the Christian Democrats wanted to attempt the rewinning of a parliamentary majority by means of electoral gerrymandering, which was being carefully prepared, and in the event of the elections being lost in spite of this – a military coup. The

officer caste, the big employers and landowners of the party of Gil Robles put their trust, above all, in the military measures taken by Gil Robles himself when he was Minister for War, with the help of Franco, Fanjul and Goded.

* Corruption scandal in connection with concessions for running gaming houses.

FORMATION OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT MOVEMENT

But the bourgeois-democratic revolution could not be held up. The movement for the creation of the People's Front launched by the Communist Party turned a historical principle into a living reality. That principle was that this bourgeois-democratic revolution had to be impelled forward and carried out to its last consequences by the working class in close alliance with the other revolutionary forces. The Communist thesis was finally accepted by the Socialists and Republicans, though they declared that the People's Front had a merely electoral purpose.

On January 16, 1936, a programme and covenant of the People's Front was signed, by which all parties to it pledged themselves to promote, by the passing of a law, a broad amnesty for all political and social prisoners, to revise all sentences passed during the period of intense repression, to reinstate all workers dismissed as a result of the October events, to grant an indemnity to all victims of the repression, and to re-establish in all parts the validity of the constitution of the Republic. The Republicans refused to accept the principle of the nationalisation of the land and its handing over to the peasants free of charge which the working-class parties demanded. Nor did they agree to nationalise the Bank. On the other hand, they agreed to restore the wages cancelled by the reactionaries and to abolish the starvation wages of the peasants and grant them better conditions; to undertake extensive public works in which the unemployed would find an occupation; to adopt special measures to protect the small peasants and tradesmen, to expedite the agrarian reform, to abolish the land tax, to develop popular education as a duty of the State, creating a great number of new schools. This document was signed by the Republican Left, the Republican Union, the Socialist Party, the General Union of Workers (U.G.T.), the Communist Party, the National Federation of Socialist Youth and the Syndicalist Party.*

ALVAREZ DEL VAYO, <i>Foreign Minister of the Spanish Republic.</i>

* Against the wishes of the Communist Party, this document was also signed by a representative of the Trotskyists (P.O.U.M.). Not much time elapsed before the Trotskyists showed that they had feigned adherence to the People's Front with the intent of betraying it. Shortly after the elections they began their work of provocation on behalf of the fascists, which culminated, when the country was already in the midst of a war, in all the crimes which are described in an article on another page. (Author's note.)

The *Republican Union*, a party representing certain leaders of the industrial bourgeoisie, logically constituted the most advanced and democratic section of the Spanish bourgeoisie. It was formed as a result of the union of dissident sections of the Radical Socialist Party and of the Radical Democratic Party when Martinez Barrio left the Radical Party led by Lerroux. In the pre-election People's Front this group was the most moderate wing of the popular forces.

The *Republican Left* is the party of the urban petty bourgeoisie. It came into being through the

amalgamation of the Radical Socialist Party, led by *Marcelino Domingo* and the Republican Action group, whose leader was Don Manuel Azana. It is larger than the latter group, but not a mass party, though a certain number of middle peasants joined it, particularly after July 18.

When the People's Front was formed, the *Socialist Party* was the strongest working-class party in Spain. Until the end of 1935 it held undisputed sway in the General Union of Workers (U.G.T.), through which it also controlled a great number of agricultural workers organised in the Federation of Land Workers. At this time, thanks to the persevering campaign of the Communists, the U.G.T. amalgamated with the C.G.T.U. and the Communists began to share with the Socialists the leadership of the resulting trade union centre. The Socialist Party influenced revolutionary workers by the thousand as well as a great part of the Spanish peasantry and certain sections of civil servants and intellectuals.

The *Communist Party*, initiator and organiser of the People's Front, numbered 20,000 members in October, 1934. The correct application of the political line of the Communist International and its heroic participation in the October struggles – for which it publicly claimed political responsibility in the eyes of the people – its untiring campaign in favour of unity, culminating in the formation of the People's Front, had won for it the sympathies of the working class and of the people in general and a great process of growth of the party began. The fidelity of the party to Marxism-Leninism and its unbroken unity permitted it to appear before the masses as a party conscious of its responsibility and its great historical obligations. Before the election the General Secretary of the party, Comrade *Jose Diaz*, proclaimed his confidence in an electoral victory and thus defined the policy of unity: "What is it that unites us in the People's Front? In addition to the minimum programme which must be immediately realised, we are united by a common objective of great importance: we must prevent Spain from suffering the indignity of fascism. Fascism has shown in the countries under its yoke what it does to the people. We all know what fascism is, and the desire to avert it is what unites us in the People's Front both during the elections and after the election."

The signature of the U.G.T. meant the adhesion of several hundred thousand workers organised in their trade unions: Socialist, Communist and non-party workers. Both economically and numerically the U.G.T. was the strongest force in the People's Front as it appeared in February.

The *Socialist Youth* signed the document when the process of its amalgamation with the Communist Youth was far advanced, a political event which took place shortly afterwards and resulted in the formation of the *United Socialist Youth*, which embraces the greater part of the anti-fascist youth of Spain and which has succeeded in uniting in a great common movement, the *Anti-Fascist Youth Alliance*, "the whole of the anti-fascist youth.

Finally, the *Syndicalist Party* – whose chairman, *Angel Pestana*, died recently – is a party small in numbers, organised by a group which split off from the C.N.T. because it disagreed with the unpolitical attitude of that body, also gave its signature. Its programme is confused, and according to its founder, *Angel Pestana*, is "not a class party, but a social party." It is a confused mixture of syndicalism and politics, and explicitly denies the existence of the class struggle.

Such were the forces which constituted the political basis of the People's Front. What were the forces opposing it? Monarchists, fascists and radicals, i.e., the great landowners, the nobility, the big employers, the military caste and the Church.

Ten per cent, of the population of Spain devoted itself to the task of defending its privileges, maintaining the feudal survivals and preventing all social progress.

THE FORCES BEHIND THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

But the People's Front had behind it not only the militants of the organisations which had adhered to

the People's Front. The People's Front had the enthusiastic support of the overwhelming majority of the people. The proletariat saw in it the great force which was about to liberate their imprisoned brothers, restore the basis of labour destroyed by the reactionaries, adopt vigorous measures against unemployment, which had increased tremendously during the "black biennium," and restore to the people the political rights, of which they had been robbed. In the election campaign and after the victory it was the working class which constituted – just as it does now – the fundamental force of the People's Front, its vanguard and shock troop, its brain and its decisive impelling factor.

For the peasants the People's Front signified the abolition of the starvation wages, and granting of holdings to many families of small and tenant farmers, the repeal of the law giving the nobles the right to draw rent from the farms, the adoption of measures of protection for stockbreeding, the carrying out of irrigation projects, the struggle against illiteracy by the establishment of new schools, the struggle against usury, the reduction of the heavy fiscal burdens, the annulment of onerous debts of a semi-feudal nature such as the "foros" in Galicia and the "Rabassa Morta" in Catalonia.

The measures planned against the trusts and great industrial enterprises and the public promise to adopt special protective measures rallied the urban petty bourgeoisie unconditionally around the People's Front. Many civil servants and provincial and municipal employees who had been removed from their posts after the October rising were able to return to their jobs.

In the same way the intellectuals saw in the victory of the People's Front the end of that period which denied them all liberty of expression, and the beginning of an epoch in which the struggle against reaction, against the feudal power of the landowners and of the Church would go hand in hand with their own emancipation and a just appreciation of their work.

As for the leaders of the middle class which was prepared to support the People's Front, the fact that the Republican Union took part in it, and also the Liberal moderate character of the programme induced them to give their support to the Left-wing candidates who were to protect them from the unfair competition of big business and ensure the development of industrial capitalism in the form of small-scale enterprises.

THE VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

This great assemblage of forces secured a victory for the People's Front, a resounding, categorical, indisputable victory despite all tricks and electoral combinations. With a fine sense of discipline the Spanish working class carried out a peaceful mobilisation of its forces in all Spanish cities on February 16, 1936, in order to watch over the course of the elections. Even in the most remote localities, in the villages which the Republic had never reached, and which had hardly heard the voice of the propagandists of the People's Front, the ballot boxes were crammed with votes in favour of the People's Front. The new Cortes was a Cortes of the People's Front.

But the reactionaries did not accept this splendid triumph of the people with resignation. The "independent" Government of Portela Valladares which had left no stone unturned and had resorted to every possible dirty trick to prevent the victory of the People's Front, thought that it would be easy to frustrate this notable victory by the ancient methods of intrigue and intimidation which were the traditional weapons of statesmen of the type of Portela de Valladares. Thus the Home Office, which received within a few minutes all the news of all events occurring in any part of the country, refused to recognise the victory of the People's Front with the pretext that "things were not yet clear." On Monday morning the Portela Government declared the "state of alarm" and imposed a preliminary censorship on the press. Strict orders were given to all the police forces to maintain rigorously what the reactionaries call "law and order."

This threat of violence did the Portela Government little good. The people thrust aside the defenders of

bourgeois law and order. The storming of the prisons was followed by the occupation of landed estates. The invitations which the reactionaries and fascists gave the Portela Government to remain in power did not produce the intended results. On February 18, Portela de Valladares resigned and the President of the Republic, much against his inclinations, entrusted the formation of a government to *Don Manuel Azana*. It was not the electoral victory of the People's Front which caused the Prime Minister and his whole Government to resign – it was the vast revolutionary mobilisation of the masses which caused their overthrow.

The Government now formed under the leadership of Senor Azana consisted entirely of Left-wing Republicans, whom one might call the Right wing of the People's Front. Its first concern was not, as one might have expected, the immediate realisation of the programme of the People's Front; what it began to do was to follow the notorious "path of legality." This path implied in the first place the maintenance of "public order," or in other words, the introduction of repressive measures to hold in check the enthusiasm and revolutionary ardour of the people.

The chief measures adopted by the Parliament of the People's Front were the gradual application of the agrarian reforms, which included the settlement on the lands of the nobles of several thousand Andalusian and Estremaduran peasants, the restoration of the wage rates abolished by Gil Robles and the ratification of the decree granting an amnesty. The Republican Government was supported in this by the votes of the working-class minorities.

The Communist Party stated its attitude more than once in public and in Parliament on this point, demanding immediate* prosecution of those who crushed the October rising, compensation for the victims, suppression of the fascist Press, energetic measures for the destruction of the economic basis of the landowners, big capitalists and the Church. In a word, it pointed to the immense dangers of any kind of weakness.

On July 18, 1936, the people rose to drive out its enemies. From the Madrid broadcasting station *Pasionaria* expressed the wishes of the people with the historical slogan "They shall not pass!" The people did not rely merely on its courage and; intrepidity. It held in its hands the weapon of the electoral victory of February, the inspiring power of the People's Front, which from this time onwards was transformed into the banner and the policy of the struggle for national freedom and against fascism. All the forces which formed the People's Front in January remained faithful to it. The rebellion strengthened the unity of the people by that great organised working-class force which until then had stood aside: the C.N.T. During the course of the war this force had developed under the pressure of the obvious necessities of the struggle, taught by experience and impelled forward by the revolutionary fervour of many thousands of Anarchist workers and fighters. At the very moment when the working class took to arms to defend its own existence and national liberty, a number of revolutionary conquests immediately became realities. The big employers, enemies of the regime, were expropriated and their works nationalised. Workers' Councils of Control were established in all industries. The peasants occupied the land of the great landowners. But many leaders of Spanish Anarchism did not understand that in order to defend these conquests in an armed struggle a basis of unity of discipline had to be created, a regular army formed and all necessary measures taken to defeat the fascists. Little by little this policy was straightened out to a considerable extent and the position has now been reached when they are ardent champions of the regular army and its military discipline.

Since the formation of the People's Front Government, in which all anti-fascist forces were represented, there has been a considerable change in the relation of forces within the People's Front. The Communist Party has become the strongest party in Spain and exercises the greatest political

influence on the working-class and anti-fascist masses of the country. At the first Enlarged Plenum of its Central Committee held during the war, its General Secretary Comrade *Jose Diaz* thus defined the conquests which the people was defending by means of the policy of the People's Front:

“To what extent have the material bases of reaction and fascism been destroyed? In all the provinces dominated by us there are no great landowners any more; the Church as a ruling force no longer exists; militarism has also disappeared, never to return; neither are there any big bankers or industrial barons. This is the truth and is the guarantee that these conquests will never be lost again; the fact that the weapons are in the hands of the people, of the real anti-fascists, of the workers, of the peasants, of the intellectuals, of the petty bourgeois who have always been slaves of the ruling castes.”

The People's Front is not merely the organic form of the union of all these forces, but a whole policy of the defence and development of the national anti-fascist revolution of the people. Comrade Jose Diaz said recently:

“Our People's Front inherits in the history of Spain the aspirations of the Liberals and Progressives, who since the Cadiz Cortes have fought, with fugitive moments of victory, to liberate themselves from despotic and inquisitorial oppression; the aspirations, crushed during half a century, of the founders of the first Republic; the aspirations of the people which fought against the bloody tyranny of Ferdinand VII of Canovas, of the monarchist, clerical and military reactionaries; the desire for national independence which inspired the masses in the struggle against Napoleon; the aspirations of the working masses who fought with weapons in hand during the tragic week of Barcelona in 1917, in the Asturias and in Madrid in the glorious days of 1934, and in a thousand heroic episodes of the working-class struggle; the national aspirations of the peoples of Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque country, oppressed by monarchist despotism.

“Our People's Front is heir to all these aspirations of the people, it was for this that our fathers fought, our grandfathers and we ourselves, Spaniards of to-day, who have also fought for the same things now unite under the same flag to turn these aspirations into reality.

“The first condition that all political forces of the people unite on the basis of a common programme of demands which embraces all tendencies of the working population and which can develop without limits.

“Such is our People's Front: the organisation of the struggle against fascism, against the traditional oppressors and against the invaders. Its task is not ended and cannot end for a long time yet. It is not ended and cannot end until it has realised the demands which the great masses of the people have entrusted to it; for the People's Front is not a simple coalition of parties, nor the union of a few leaders; it is a policy, a programme, a platform, because the People's Front as an organism which fuses into one all anti-fascist forces is a necessity felt by everyone. Never was the thought of anti-fascist unity more all-embracing than in the People's Front.”

In order to carry out this policy, all the forces of the people remain united: the workers who constitute the basic force of the democratic Republic; the peasants to whom the Uribe Decree of October 7, 1936, has given the land, authorising them to till it individually or collectively, according to their desire; the lower middle class whose property has been carefully respected, together with certain groups of the industrial bourgeoisie, who feel bound to defend the independence of Spain and whose interests have not been injured by the Republic. Politically the People's Front embraces the parties which formed it in January, 1936. The C.N.T. has repeatedly declared that the People's Front can rely on its support. The Basque Nationalist Party also fought side by side with the People's Front to defend its invaded country, and with it fight for the right of autonomy recognised by the Republic in the Basque country and Catalonia.*

* Catalonia, where all working-class parties have united and where the main force of loyal Spain is now concentrated, is discussed in another article of this issue.

In the fires of war, in the defence of the cause of progressive humanity, the Spanish people maintains its policy of the People's Front and has created an army of the People's Front.

The Communist Party, vanguard in the struggle and in unity, initiator and organiser of the People's Front, has defined the realisation of the present programme of the People's Front in these words of Jose Diaz:

“The Spanish people need not and cannot turn back towards the accursed past of oppression, poverty and shame which the 17th of July terminated for ever in Spain. Our peasants do not want to return to work in slavery and death by starvation in order to pay rent to the idle nobles. Our workers will never return to work under the regime of slavery and absolutism. Our people knows already the value of liberty and will never give it up. It rejects with indignation any proposal of agreement with the enemy which is trying to subject it.

“We know that we are serving the cause of peace and progress. Compromise with fascism in Spain would be a victory of fascism all over Europe.

“We feel strong enough to fight until the enemy is finally defeated.

“We are also convinced that our unshakable decision to continue the struggle until we win will result in the mobilisation of fresh forces in our aid in the international field. We have not yet lost hope in rousing the forces of peace and democracy. We are certain that the working class will achieve unity in action to help us.”

Important Declaration by Negrin

On April 30, *Negrin*, the Spanish Prime Minister and Minister for National Defence, formulated the aims of the Republic in an interview he gave to foreign journalists as follows: –

The Government of national union, which enjoys the confidence of all parties and trade union organisations in loyal Spain, and which represents all those Spanish citizens who conform to constitutional legality, hereby solemnly declares its war aims to its fellow-countrymen and to the whole world.

To ensure the *absolute independence* and *complete integrity of Spain*; a Spain entirely free from all foreign interference, whatever its character and origin, with her peninsular and insular territory and her possessions untouched and safe from any attempt at dismemberment, seizure or alienation; and with her protectorate zone, assigned by international agreements retained, unless such agreements should be modified on Spain's own intervention and with her assent.

The liberation of the Spanish territory, from the foreign military forces of invasion and from those who have entered Spain since July, 1936.

The legal and social structure of the Republic shall be built up by the national will, freely expressed, as soon as the war is over, in a *plebiscite* to be carried out without restrictions or limitations.

Respect of regional liberties without prejudice to Spanish unity. Protection and development of the personality and individuality of the various regions of Spain, as historic law and fact impose.

The Spanish State shall guarantee all citizens rights in civil and social life, liberty of conscience, and

the free exercise of religious belief and practice.

The State shall guarantee legal property legitimately acquired within the limits imposed by the supreme interests of the nation and the protection of producing elements. Without prejudice to individual initiative it will prevent the exploitation of the citizen and subjugation of collectivity by an accumulation of wealth, which weakens the controlling action of the State in economic and social life. To this end it will encourage the development of small properties, will guarantee family patrimony and will adopt every measure leading to the economic, moral and racial improvement of the producing classes.

The property and legitimate interests of *foreigners* who have not assisted the rebellion will be respected and will be examined with a view to granting indemnities for damage incurred involuntarily during the course of the war.

A radical *agrarian reform* to abolish the former aristocratic and semi-feudal system of ownership. The establishment of a new Spain on a wide and solid basis of a democracy of farmers owning the land which they cultivate.

The State shall guarantee the rights of the *workers* by means of an advanced social legislation, in agreement with the specific necessities of Spanish life and economy.

The Spanish *army*, at the service of the nation itself, shall be free from all hegemony, bias or party, and the people shall recognise in it a sure stronghold for the defence of their liberties *and* their independence.

The Spanish State reaffirms the constitutional doctrine of renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. Spain, loyal to agreements and treaties, will support the policy represented by the *League of Nations*.

Complete amnesty for all those Spaniards who wish to cooperate in the tremendous work of reconstructing Spain.

Letter from Jose Diaz to the “Mundo Obrero”

Note. – We publish this letter from Jose Diaz in which several basic questions of the Spanish revolution are explained. *Ed.*

Dear Comrades, – An article appeared in the March 23 issue of the *Mundo Obrero* to which it is necessary to draw your attention and the attention of the whole Party. The article begins by stating that “everything which tends to disorganise the masses must be analysed with the greatest possible clarity.” No one can doubt the correctness of this statement, and it is for just this reason that I believe it is necessary to write you this letter. For your article also contains the following statement:

“...one cannot say, as one paper does, that the only possible outcome of our war can be that Spain should become neither fascist nor Communist, because Franco wishes it thus.”

I do not know against which paper your criticism is directed. Possibly the article was written by people who do not like our Party and do not correctly understand the problems of our war. But the statement “the only outcome of our war is that Spain becomes neither fascist nor Communist” is absolutely correct and completely expresses the position of our Party.

It is necessary to repeat this so that not the slightest doubt on this point can remain. The Spanish people are fighting in this war for their national independence and for the defence of the democratic Republic.

They are fighting to drive the barbarous German and Italian invaders from Spanish soil, they are fighting because they do not want Spain to become a colony of fascism, they are fighting so that Spain may not become fascist. They are fighting for the freedom to defend the democratic and Republican Government, the duly elected Government of the country, which will make far-reaching social progress possible.

The Communist Party is, together with the Socialists, the Party of the Spanish working class, and has no other interests nor objectives than those which the whole nation may have. Our Party has never believed that the solution of this war would be the establishment of a Communist State. If the workers and peasants and the urban petty-bourgeoisie follow us and are favourable to us, it is because we are the staunchest defenders of national independence and freedom and of the Republican constitution. This defence is the basis and content of our whole Unity and People's Front policy. And it would be very bad, it would be impermissible if there should arise in the ranks of our Party – I do not say doubts – but even the slightest lack of clarity upon this question, and especially at this time when the people need the greatest unity to withstand the fierce attacks of the alien invaders.

In our country to-day there exist certain objective factors which, in the interests of the whole nation, make the continuation and strengthening of the democratic regime imperative. There are no factors which would justify the establishment of a Communist regime. To raise this question to-day would tend to divide the nation, for a Communist regime could not be adopted by all Spaniards and our Party would never undertake anything which would divide the nation, but on the contrary, has been fighting with all its strength since the beginning of the war to unite it, to unite all Spaniards in the struggle for freedom and national independence.

More than that, I might say that at the present time, when it is our task to mobilise the last man to extreme resistance against the offensive of the invaders, to attain a resistance which aims at the continuation of our counter-offensive and our ultimate victory. One could think of a change in the tactics of the Party only in the sense that it should proceed to adopt further measures to strengthen the unity of the people, not to lessen it. This unity must include important groups of the people who are in fascist territory under the yoke and possibly under the influence of fascist propaganda. This unity must include all Spaniards who do not want to become slaves of a barbarous foreign dictatorship.

This is the first point which has to be clarified, for all Party organisations depend on the way in which this question is put, for their whole policy of unity and their relationship to the Republican, Socialist and other anti-fascist forces of the people.

But in addition to this there is another point in your article which must be clarified, that of the attitude of the democratic countries of Europe and America towards our Spanish people and our struggle. You assert "that the Spanish people will win in spite of the opposition of capitalism." This can be interpreted as an expression of faith in the inexhaustible energy of our people, but politically this expresses neither the attitude nor the policy of our Party and the Communist International. In my report to the November Plenum of the Central Committee I stated:

"There is one thing on which all democratic countries of Europe can agree and can co-operate, namely, the defence of their existence against the aggressor, against fascism. That is, their defence against the war which threatens all of us."

When we speak of "all democratic countries," we do not mean only the Soviet Union, where there is a Socialist democracy, but also France, England, Czechoslovakia, the United States, etc., which are democratic, but capitalist countries. We want these States to help us, and believe that in this they will further their own interests. We try to make this plain to them, and enlist their help.

The position which you take in your article is fundamentally opposed to this and is incorrect. Your

mistake is that you forget the international character of our struggle, which is a struggle against fascism; that is, the struggle against the most reactionary part of capitalism, against the instigators of a frightful new wars, against the enemies of peace, against the enemies of the freedom of the people. We are well aware that the fascist aggressors in every country find bourgeois groups to support them, such as the Conservatives in England and the Rights in France. But the fascist aggression is going forward at such a pace that, in their own national interests, the people of all lands, who care for their country's independence and freedom (for instance, such a country as France), must convince themselves of the necessity of resisting this aggression. And to-day there is no more effective means of resistance than giving concrete help to the Spanish people. Every honest Frenchman must realise that to-day in Spain there is also being waged the battle for the independence of France, and the fate of France is perhaps being decided on the fields of Aragon.

The manner in which you put this question would lead us to narrow the scope of our struggle, while it is necessary to widen it. It is, above all else, the task of the international working class and its organisations to organise international help for Spain in this tragic moment of her history. But we can only agree to this if measures are taken to convince these forces of the necessity of giving this help – forces which do not belong to the working class, but to the petty bourgeoisie and to the liberal and democratic bourgeoisie.

How is it that *Mundo Obrero* has taken such an incorrect position on two such important questions? This may be the reason why, in the last weeks, a wrong interpretation has been given of the correct position of our Party, for it has mobilised all forces to reveal every attempt at capitulation and compromise and frustrate them at the outset, and demanding an energetic war policy which the seriousness of the situation demands. This struggle must and will be continued. But this attitude of our Party does not in any way signify, nor can it signify, that we have changed our appraisal of the character of the Spanish revolution, the international situation, and our policy of unity. On the contrary, everything we demand is in the interest of the people and the war. Therefore all anti-fascists and, further, all Spaniards who want this war to end with the defeat of the fascist invaders can and must agree with this. It is the task of our Party, in view of these things, to strengthen the bonds of unity of all groups of antifascists. It is more than ever important that nothing should be done against unity, but everything must be done to bring about the broadest and fullest unity of the people.

Therefore, esteemed comrades of the Editorial Board of *Mundo Obrero*, we must avoid raising false and confusing issues- in matters which should by now be quite clear to us.

A Year of Heroic Struggle of the Spanish People

By Georgi Dimitrov

The following article was written by Georgi Dimitrov on the occasion of the first anniversary of the revolt of the fascist generals and the heroic resistance of the Spanish people. Although written a year ago the article is equally applicable at the present time. – Ed.

A year has already passed since the Spanish people, in the front line of the struggle against world reaction and fascism, have been manfully defending their liberty and independence and thereby safeguarding the interests of democracy, culture and peace against the fascist barbarians and war-mongers. It may be said without any exaggeration that, after the great October Revolution, this heroic struggle is one of the most important events of the post-war political history of Europe.

When, on July 18 of last year, the news came through of the rebellion of the fascist generals against the

Spanish Republic, nobody thought that the civil war called forth by the fascist scoundrels would continue so long. Both the friends and the enemies of the Spanish people, each in their own way, calculated on the war being brought to a very rapid conclusion.

In a few days the fascist rebellion was crushed by the Spanish workers and the People's Militia in the most important centres of the country – Madrid and Valencia, Barcelona and Bilbao, Toledo, Malaga, Alicante and Almeria, almost all of the towns of importance in Spain were in the hands of the Republican Government.

In taking up the struggle against the democratic conquests of the Spanish revolution, and basing themselves at the beginning of the rebellion, mainly on the counter-revolutionary officers' hatred of the people, on the Moorish troops and foreign legionaries, the rebel generals met with the armed resistance of all the forces of the Spanish revolution, of the entire Spanish people, mustered, in the ranks of the People's Front, around the Republican Government.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that had there been no Intervention by the fascist States, had Hitler and Mussolini not placed their arms, aviation and regular troops at the disposal of the rebel generals against Republican Spain, the Spanish people would long ago have cleared their country of the fascists. The now generally known facts go to prove that the rebel generals would never have decided at all on undertaking war against the Spanish Republic had they not been inspired to do so by the fascist States. In actual fact, this bloody plot against the Spanish people was prepared and organised in Berlin and Rome.

The fascist war-mongers made use of the counter-revolutionary generals so as to lay their hands on Spain, on its wealth, on its raw materials for the war industry and to establish themselves in the Mediterranean for the new imperialist war being prepared by them.

Hitler and Mussolini apparently calculated that Generals Franco and Mola, who acted as their tools, would be able in a few days to seize Madrid, to liquidate the Republican regime, and to present them with rich booty in the shape of a so-called "National" Spain. There can be no doubt that they were also strengthened in this conviction by the circumstances that the then Republican Government, in spite of the repeated and insistent warnings of the Spanish Communists, undertook no radical measures against the plot prepared by the counter-revolutionary generals, and could be taken unawares. Mussolini and Hitler hoped that fascism would achieve victory in Spain without meeting with any serious armed resistance on the part of the masses of the people, as was the case in Italy in 1922, and in Germany in 1933.

All these calculations, however, turned out to be radically wrong. Spain proved to be too hard a nut for the teeth of fascism. Spain of 1936 was not Italy of 1922, nor Germany 'Of 1933.

The fascist rebellion in Spain was undertaken after the first victory of the democratic revolution, of the Spanish people, after the Spanish proletariat and the masses of the people had learnt the lessons of the events in Italy, Germany and Austria, after the foundations of the anti-fascist People's Front had already been laid. By overthrowing the medieval monarchy and establishing the parliamentary democratic republic, the Spanish revolution released the inexhaustible forces of the Spanish people in the struggle against counter-revolution which carried with it the return of the old regime of the landlords and financial oligarchy so hateful to the people.

As far as the Spanish people are concerned, the struggle against the fascist rebellion is – in view of this – indissolubly connected with the maintenance and development of the democratic conquests of their revolution against the regime of medievalism and obscurantism, against the landowners, against the thoroughly decayed aristocracy and the counter-revolutionary officers.

Having become convinced of the helplessness of Franco – on meeting with the resolute resistance of

the Spanish people – to secure victory for fascism with the aid of the Moors and the Foreign Legion, the fascist States directly took over the conduct of the war against the Spanish Republic. Round Madrid and Guadalajara, on the Southern and Northern Fronts, pitted against the valiant Republican Army, there are in fact units of the German and Italian armies, their artillery, tanks and aviation, engaged in demolishing towns, destroying villages, deluging the land of the Spanish people with rivers of blood. The fleets of the fascist States blockade Spanish harbours and bombard and demolish ports. Madrid, Guernica and Almeria will forever remain in the minds of progressive mankind as ill-omened monuments to fascist barbarism.

And the greater the energy, enthusiasm and confidence in the righteousness of their cause with which the Spanish people carry on the struggle, the more – after each new act of provocation by the fascist interventionists – they strengthen the Republican Army, close their ranks and eliminate weaknesses and defects in the conduct of the war, the more cynically do Hitler and Mussolini increase their intervention with the open declaration that they will not permit the existence of a Republican Spain.

Translated into ordinary language, the recent articles of Mussolini amount to the unbridled and cynical thesis that *Spain must be a fascist colony or it will be transformed into ruins.*

In the light of these facts, it is difficult to find pages in modern political history more shameful than the behaviour of the decisive Western capitalist States, which proudly call themselves democratic, in relation to the Spanish people and their struggle for liberty and independence. At the very time when the fascist interventionists are openly engaged before the eyes of the whole world in a predatory war in Spain, these countries, and primarily Great Britain, have for almost the whole two years been engaged in the farce of “non-intervention” in Spanish affairs, and even after Hitler and Mussolini have rejected so-called international control, still continue to seek “compromise” formulas of agreement with the brazen fascist interventionists.

The League of Nations, the statutes of which contain a special paragraph regarding sanctions against the aggressor and providing precisely for cases analogous to the present armed intervention of Germany and Italy against the Spanish people, maintains an obstinate silence.

Although it is clear that should the fascist interventionists succeed in enslaving Spain, they will not delay in staging rebellions like that of Franco, in Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Belgium and other countries, the League of Nations – chiefly under the pressure of Great Britain – carefully avoids taking decisions on the Spanish question which guarantee the international rights of the Constitutional Government of Spain.

Thereby it, in fact, spurs on the fascist interventionists and aggressors. The democratic United States of America, headed by Roosevelt, occupies the position of an unperturbed “observer.” The efforts of the Soviet Union, which is resolutely and consistently on the side of the Spanish people, to rouse the non-fascist States to display a firm and insistent policy in relation to the fascist interventionists so as to provide Republican Spain with its lawful rights and the possibility of defending itself against onslaught, and of being sovereign master in its own country, have not as yet led to positive results.

The egoistic interests of the big capitalists and financial cliques in Great Britain, France and the U.S.A., still continue to dominate, not only over the interests of the Spanish people and of the maintenance of peace, but also over the real interests and future of their own peoples.

Thus, a strange picture is presented which should compel every worker and every supporter of democracy and peace to think things over seriously. At the very moment when the fascist States are acting in unison against the Spanish Republic, when Berlin, Rome and Tokyo are deliberately, step by step, preparing a new predatory world war, when the increasing intervention by Mussolini and Hitler in Spain, accompanied by the provocation of the Japanese militarists on the Amur, and by the military

operations in North China, the Governments of the big Western States are engaged in endless discussions and conversations regarding the bankrupt “non-intervention” and “control” plans and are pursuing an ostrich policy in relation to the furious interventionists and war-mongers, who trample on such measures.

The thought must not be permitted that the policy of the ruling circles of Great Britain, France and the U.S.A., as regards the Spanish question and the question of the maintenance of peace, corresponds to the sentiments, feelings and will of the overwhelming majority of the peoples of these countries.

It is precisely for this reason that, in order to justify their policy, they do not cease attempting to scare their peoples with the thought of war which they allege will be begun by the fascist States, if the non-fascist States and the League of Nations stand forth resolutely against fascist aggression. But it is quite clear to everybody who knows the international situation as it really is, who knows the position in the fascist States themselves and the relation of forces between the supporters of peace and the war-mongers, that this is nothing other *than unworthy speculation on the anti-war sentiments of the masses*. For, as far as the fascist States are concerned, the conquest of Spain is precisely one of the most important conditions for the world war which they are preparing.

To give them the opportunity of entrenching themselves in Spain means to help them to increase the preparations for war to transform that country into a base for an attack on France and to make it possible for them to strengthen their military-strategic positions in the Mediterranean.

The real truth of the matter is that a defeat of the Spanish people would increase one hundredfold the threat of war and considerably hasten the outbreak of war on the part of the fascist aggressors. A victory for the Spanish people, on the contrary, would raise a new barrier in the way of the outbreak of war.

All who are seriously desirous of maintaining peace must do everything to ensure that the fascist interventionists are driven out of Spain as rapidly as possible and that the Spanish people are able to secure their liberty and independence.

Even such an admirer of Hitler as *Lloyd George* could not deny this truth. Speaking recently on the Spanish question in the House of Commons he declared: “It is said that if we display firmness in relation to Berlin and Rome, there will be war. I say to you that if we do not display such firmness, war will surely take place.”

One of the most important conditions rendering it possible for the non-fascist Western States to occupy such a position of toleration as regards the fascist interventionists, and, Pilate-wise, to wash their hands, is undoubtedly the circumstance that the international proletariat have not as yet succeeded in acting as one man fully prepared themselves so as to achieve the main demands put forward on behalf of the Spanish people namely:

The immediate withdrawal of the interventionist armed forces of Italy and Germany from Spain;

The lifting of the blockade from the Spanish Republic; The recognition of all the international rights of the lawful Spanish Government;

The application of the statutes of the League of Nations against the fascist aggressors who have attacked the Spanish people.

These demands, which were advanced in the main by the Communist International soon after the fascist rebellion in Spain, were also later proclaimed by the Labour and Socialist International, and undoubtedly are the demands of every class-conscious worker and every honest supporter of peace.

The international proletariat are, without doubt, on the side- of the Spanish people against the fascist

rebels and interventionists. They have displayed and continue to display their solidarity with the Spanish fighters, not only by rendering materials aid but by supplying food and medical equipment.

Some of the best sons of the proletariat are fighting around Madrid, Guadalajara and at the other fronts in the Republican Army. But all of this is far from being adequate. The international Labour Movement and its political and trade union organisations cannot consider their duty in relation to the Spanish people and the defence of peace, as fulfilled, *until they can achieve the restoration of its international rights to the Spanish Republic and the cessation of the fascist intervention in Spain.*

To achieve this, what is required is the all-round intensification of an effective solidarity campaign in all countries on behalf of the Spanish people. What is necessary is the mobilisation of all forces so as to render impossible the policy of toleration in relation to the fascist interventionists.

It should be understood that in this connection the main role in Europe is being played by *Great Britain*, and therefore a special responsibility for the fate of the Spanish people, for the maintenance of peace, lies on the working class of Great Britain, on the people of Great Britain.

It cannot be tolerated that such scandals exist as that of the Labour leader *Lansbury* making his abeissances to Hitler and Mussolini with an "olive branch" in his hand, while *Citrine*, general secretary of the T.U.C. echoes the songs of Chamberlain and Eden, designed to lull public opinion in Great Britain at the very time when the fascist hordes of Italy and Germany are spilling the blood of the Spanish people and demolishing Spanish towns and villages.

If the Spanish people and international peace are to be effectively protected, *what is absolutely essential is joint harmonious action by all the international organisations of the working class.* Let it not be said that such joint action is impossible. True, there are quite a few obstacles on this path.

There are leaders and groups in the Labour and Socialist International and in the International Federation of Trade Unions, who, out of considerations that have nothing in common with the interests of the international proletariat and the Spanish people, oppose joint action by the international working-class organisations, and even threaten to leave the Socialist International if an agreement is adopted regarding joint action with the Communist International. But can it be that *such a situation is to be regarded as something fixed once and for all*, and not subject to alteration?

The obstacles must be overcome we must not capitulate before them. The interests of the international proletariat and the cause of the defence of peace fully correspond with the interests of the Spanish people and must be placed above all personal and group considerations.*

The meetings between the representatives of the Communist International and the Labour and Socialist International in Annemasse and Paris have shown that both sides are at one in the main demands directed towards the defence of the Spanish people and the maintenance of peace. Why, then, not do the only thing; that can rapidly and surely lead to the fulfilment of these demands, namely, the organisation of joint action by the international working-class organisations all along this line, and the joint utilisation of all the reserve forces at the disposal of the world Labour Movement?

On the anniversary of the heroic struggle of the Spanish people, in face of the ominous and growing fascist intervention in Spain and the new Japanese aggression in North China, this question rises *in all its sharpness* before each working-class organisation, before everybody active in the Labour Movement* before all supporters of democracy and peace *and demands impractical solution.*

During a year of uninterrupted and tense battles, the Spanish proletariat have succeeded in defending the gains of the democratic revolution, in strengthening unity in the ranks of the People's Front, and in securing the establishment of an heroically fighting People's Republican Army, half a million strong. They are clearing the way for their united political party and the unification of their trade unions, and

working unswervingly to secure all the domestic conditions necessary for the final victory over fascism.

The Spanish proletariat, headed by the Communist Party and marching in the front ranks of their people, are honourably fulfilling their duty in the front line of the struggle against world reaction and fascism. The international proletariat for their part *must fulfil their duty to the end*, in relation to their glorious Spanish detachment.

The Communists, while in every way intensifying their own action in defence of the Spanish people and of peace, will not on that account cease from pointing still more doggedly to the imperative necessity for the establishment of united action by the International Labour Movement, and fighting with all their energy to bring it about as rapidly as possible.

From Militia to Regular Army

By Dolores Ibarruri (Pasionaria)

Our Spain, the Spain of romance and legend, is a unique country, hard to compare with any other.

The pride of its people, their powers of endurance, their courage in the face of foes more powerful than themselves, their self-reliance, their contempt of death, united with their intense love of independence and freedom, have made it possible in every epoch of history, when wars of invasion and conquest or civil wars have drenched the soil of Spain in blood, for men and women to rise from among the people, and by their heroic deeds, their courage, their rare gifts, and their indomitable spirit, to go down to history famous and beloved of the people.

In such days and years of decisive events, volunteers without military training develop in the course of the fight into efficient generals. With such valiant soldiers as these the best armies of the world can be defeated.

GENERAL MIAJA, <i>Defender of Madrid.</i>
--

The Spanish people are an inexhaustible spring of courage and self-sacrifice. They have fought admirably whenever disaster has overtaken their homeland, and have sacrificed their lives with Spartan simplicity.

It was Spanish voyagers who crossed the Atlantic and discovered a new world.

The writers, scientists, and artists of Spain have brought it fame; its men and women have never failed to set an example of courage and readiness for self-sacrifice.

And this Spain, this admirable country, which has given to the world such wealth in science, civilisation, art, and culture, has been reduced by the feudal landlords, the clergy, and the clique of military aristocrats, to a land of an impoverished, sad and backward people.

The heirs of the men who ruined Spain and deprived it of its place in the community of the leading countries of the world believed that they could continue the policy of enslavement initiated by their forefathers. They believed that the oppression and tyranny to which they had

subjected the masses of the Spanish people for centuries, had robbed them of all energy and had transformed them into a vast herd, easily tamed, easily marked with the branding iron of fascist rule.

They have found themselves mistaken. The glorious traditions of heroic Spain still survived beneath the ruin wrought by feudal rule. The rebellion of a group of traitor generals, allies of foreign fascism, had the effect of a wind sweeping away the ash and exposing the glowing coal of the proud spirit of the people.

Spain rose, and the world looked on in amazement at a wonderful sight. A poverty-stricken, subjugated, backward people rose like a giant, and drove back those who had expected to master them with the utmost ease.

The fascists had prepared the ground well; a reactionary Government in power for two years had enabled them to get into their hands many important positions of power in the State and the majority in the army.

On July 18, 1936, the whole State apparatus was destroyed and State power lay in the street. This was the moment when the greatness of our glorious people once more had its opportunity, for the people were able to create a State apparatus, to produce millions of men and women, heroes and heroines ready to defend with steadfast courage the soil of their fatherland, their liberties, and the rights of the Spanish Republic threatened by fascism.

During the first days of the rebellion, one part of Spain lay bleeding under the heel of triumphant reaction. The suddenness of the onslaught, the deceit of the traitors still concealed behind the banner of the Republic, had carried confusion into the masses of the people who could not comprehend what was at stake. This confusion was exploited by the fascists, and enabled them to seize some provinces. But even here they encountered the resistance of the workers, peasants, intellectuals, and loyal soldiers, who fought and died for the Republic and in defence of democracy.

In the rest of Spain, especially where the political schooling of the masses had made greater progress, where the workers loved democracy and the independence of Spain and hated fascism, they rose together with the middle classes and the petty bourgeoisie in a self-sacrificing struggle.

The workers' parties and trade unions appealed for help in the struggle, and the people responded unanimously. On the side of the Government there further remained a group of professional army officers who were true to the Republic. These placed themselves at the head of the miscellaneous groups of men, women, and even children who had come forward, burning with hatred against the rebels, and eager to drive them out.

The barracks of "*La Montania*," "*El Campamento*," "*Alcala*," and "*Alcala de Henares*" were the first enemy strongholds to be taken by the people. Hundreds of rifles stored in these fortresses served to arm the first forces moving into the *Guadarrama Mountains*, to bar the advance of the enemy who were endeavouring to approach Madrid from *Leon* and *Somosierra*.

Everything was still unorganised; the officers who had remained loyal were too few to organise the thousands of volunteers who were anxious to fight, and who went unarmed to the front to take arms from the enemy, or to wait till they could take the army rifle or hunting rifle of a fallen comrade.

For days the struggle was indecisive, confused. But when Italian and German aeroplanes appeared in our skies, the open aid being given by Italy and Germany to the rebels showed plainly that this was not simply a rebellion hatched by the rebels, not merely a barrack-room coup. This was something much more serious, difficult, dangerous. The sulphur mines of Huelva, the mercury of Almada, the iron of the Basque country, the fruit and oil of Valencia and Andalusia, were the prizes for which the enemy were playing. The Balearic Islands and Morocco, the rule of the Mediterranean, were the stakes in this

venture.

These were the objects which Germany and Italy were out to achieve; and there were men, calling themselves Spaniards, who were so degraded and cowardly that they did not hesitate to offer this wealth to Germany and Italy in return for help in the effort to reduce the Spanish people to the worst slavery, the slavery of fascism. These traitors were not men of the people. They formed a caste. They were the sons of those officers, aristocrats, who betrayed Spain during the war of independence in 1808 and delivered it over to Napoleon, whilst the people of *Bailen*, of *Gerona*, of *Saragossa* and *Madrid* were shedding rivers of blood for the freedom and independence of Spain.

It was the Communist Party which was the first to sound the alarm in July, 1936:

“This is not only a war against the Spanish fascists” – wrote the leading newspaper of the Communist Party, *Mundo' Obrero*, during the first few days of the rebellion – “but a new war of independence. And in view of the military formations which international fascism is sending against our people, we must organise our own army.”

Our Governments did not understand this; nor was this urgent necessity of the fight understood by the other organisations and parties. The C.N.T. for months opposed our slogan of a regular army: “Spain is the typical country of the guerrilla troop,” they maintained, “and there is no need of an army.” The various Republican Ministers, and the Social Democrat *Largo Caballero*, lost much valuable time because they did not grasp what was so necessary. But the Communist Party did not confine itself to proclaiming the slogan of the necessity of a regular army; wherever it was possible it proceeded to its actual organisation, and it called the Fifth Regiment into existence.

At the end of July, 1936, immediately after the *La Montania* barracks had been captured, the Communist Party commenced to organise the People's Militia, which were bodies of a very original type. They were not yet a regular army, but they represented its germ, the beginning of a military organisation, disciplined, under a regular command.

All the parties and organisations formed their own militia: the C.N.T., the U.G.T., the Socialist Party, and the Republican Parties. All competed to send soldiers, men and women, to the front.

Military mustering centres were organised in various parts of Madrid. The example thus set was followed all over Spain. Men and women of every shade of opinion, of all ages, gathered in the barracks. They wanted to fight....

They wanted to learn the use of arms, they wanted above all to receive military training. They demanded insistently to be sent to the front. Professional officers came to these barracks to give the workers military instruction. The first militia battalions were organised. A number of these battalions have gained the love of the people by their heroism, and many songs have been composed in their honour. Their courage in the face of death has given them a place in the hearts of the people. In the works and factories, in the fields, the workers and peasants, the young people and the children, sing the song of the militia: “*The steel battalions march singing to death.*”

Within a few days the people's militia grew rapidly. The Fifth Regiment is formed of the following battalions: Loyal, Worker and Peasant Youth, October, Thaelmann, Iron, Red Lions, Red Bullets, Backer, Feder, Students Federation, Asturias, Condes, Benito, Leningrad, Paris Commune, Madrid Commune, Sailors of Kronstadt, Jaen, Lister, P.U.A., the glorious “steel companies” numbers 1 to 33.

Besides these battalions, the *Mangada* and *Galan* Columns were formed – “*Campesino*,” to-day one of the most popular commanders, belonged to this latter – and the *Perea* Column. Some of these battalions were organised by the young people.

These forces of the regiment and of the youth were supplemented by the columns of the C.N.T., the

F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation) and the militia of the Socialist Party.

The organisers of the people's militia did not confine themselves to the military training of the units, but organised their political schooling at the same time. Newspapers were issued, and some of them, the *People's Militia*, for instance, have attained a circulation of 75,000 copies daily.

Every battalion had its newspaper. Wall newspapers were issued in the barracks and trenches. The People's Militia organised in the Fifth Regiment served as pattern and model for the formation of the militia of other organisations and parties. The militia organised their own medical service and their own supplies, on the lines subsequently adopted by the army. They organised the beginnings of a war industry; bombs were manufactured, as also various kinds of ammunition and armoured cars; stationary and travelling workshops were organised for the upkeep of the arms.

GENERAL ROJO, <i>Chief of the General Staff.</i>

Model hospitals, convalescent homes, sanatoria, children's homes for the orphans of the militiamen, garment workshops, schools giving military-technical instruction, schools to combat illiteracy – all these were organised.

Equal attention has been devoted to every section of the army. Excellent artillery soldiers have been trained, the first cavalry battalions organised, and workers and peasants prepared for enrolment in technical colleges.

The Fifth Regiment has supplied the first aviators, men who had hitherto wielded only the scythe and guided only the plough. To-day they guide their aeroplanes with a skill and experience unsurpassed even by the aviators trained in the capitalists countries.

The first tank drivers, the first groups trained to fight tanks with dynamite – a creation of this war – the first Women's Battalion, the first International Centuries, and the Partisan groups who render such invaluable service in the camp of the enemy, both in fighting and in blowing up mines, electric works, railways, bridges and factories – all these have been taught and trained in the barracks of the Fifth Regiment.

The militia have carried on intense agitation and propagandas work. They have published hundreds of thousands of manifestos and posters, and have organised propaganda work in the enemy camp. They have maintained contact with the country behind the lines by means of innumerable propagandist theatre performances, cinema shows, broadcasts. They have formed workers' shock brigades to help the peasants in sowing and harvesting. They have established contact with the factory workers. They have been the soul of the people and their best defenders.

Four militia battalions: "*Leningrad*," "*Kronstadt*," "*Paris Commune*," and "*Madrid*" prevented the advance of the fascists at the gates of the capital of the Republic.

The creation of Political Commissars (called Delegates in the militia units) was the logical consequence of the special policy pursued in the militia.

The Communist Party, defending the People's Front self-sacrificingly and enthusiastically, has imparted a definitely united character to the militia which it has organised. It became clearer every day, however, that it was necessary to form a regular army, for the centralised command was lacking, and

the varying ideological tendencies determining the work and lives of the militia frequently gave rise to friction and disagreements reducing the fighting powers of the forces.

Our soldiers were fighting, without an organised plan, against powerful armies with regular army commands possessing full knowledge of the organisation and conduct of wars. Therefore we suffered the defeats in the North, at Malaga and Toledo. Our soldiers were full of enthusiasm, courage, and readiness for self-sacrifice, but they lacked technical aids. The enemy possessed military knowledge, iron discipline, organisation, and a superabundance of war material.

Thanks to the hard lessons of the daily struggle, thanks to the sacrifices of the professional officers and the aid of all organisations and parties, and thanks above all to the Communist Party, our militia have developed, under fire on the battlefield, into military units of daily increasing discipline and fighting ability.

Whilst the People's Militia were growing and developing, the remainder of the military formations which had stayed behind after the rebellion filled up their ranks again with the volunteers streaming in from town and country to defend the liberties of the people. The existence of these remainders of the army side by side with the militia made it more difficult for large operations to be carried out on a single plan.

On October 21, 1936, Largo Caballero, in response to the urgent wish of the majority of the militia to be regarded as regular units of the army, published a decree incorporating all militia in the regular army. Their commanders were given equal status with the professional officers of the army.

The incorporation of the people's militia in the regular army 'brings into existence an army differing fundamentally in its main features from the Spanish army as it existed before the rebellion. The militia have brought into the army the vital energy and enthusiasm of the people.

The institution of the Political Commissars, representing the spirit and the backbone of the people's militia, has become a constituent part of the regular army. In the regular army, as formerly in the militia, the effect of the self-sacrificing, heroic and indefatigable work, of the Commissars is to make every soldier and every officer into a devoted fighter for freedom and (democracy).

Every officer belonging to the regular Spanish army has learned how to fight not only for the independence of Spain, not only for the liberation of the homeland from the fascist intruders, but at the same time for the laying of the foundations of a new Spain.

They all know for what they are fighting: that there may be no peasant in Spain without land, that the bosses of the communal bodies may not come into power again, that the workers may lead worthy and cultural lives, that the women may not remain slaves for ever, and that the castes and privileges of a minority may be abolished.

The army is on the march. The army of Republican Spain is no longer the old army in which the soldiers were cannon fodder, an army upon which no one could reckon in the event of war. No army of the capitalist world can offer the wonderful spectacle of our army. A leading part is played by the cultural militia, the fighters against illiteracy; thousands of soldiers have learned to read and write at the fronts.

Our soldiers of to-day are no longer the militiamen of the first few weeks, when they were clothed in rags, badly armed, undisciplined, filled with heroic courage but lacking military knowledge. To-day they are excellent soldiers, possessing military training and technical knowledge of war in addition to courage and heroism. It was due to this military training that German divisions were shattered on the Jarama, Italian units scattered at Guadalajara, and Brunete, Villanueva del Pardillo, Villanueva de la Canada, and so many other villages, were captured.

It was the soldiers of the regular army who took Belchite, Quinto, and Codo, who gained a victory at Teruel, and who are to-day resisting with calm certainty the savage offensive of the fascist forces.

We possess an army, and are proud to be able to say that it is an army which has sprung from the people and serves the people. An army which is prepared to carry on the glorious days of its first great victories, an army with heart and spirit, an army which is fighting to-day with inspiring heroism for Spain, for democracy, for world peace.

We have created this army whilst fighting not only against the Spanish fascists and their Italo-German allies, but against a factor hard for us to bear, the carelessness and indifference of the so-called democratic countries. More than half a million men are under arms. We possess the possibility of increasing this number to a million. We have inexhaustible reserves of men behind us. Simultaneously with the organisation of the defence of our country, we have created a war industry now developing rapidly.

We had no tanks. To-day we have tank regiments and armoured cars. We had no aviatics. To-day we have our aviatics – if numerically weaker than the fascists – and we have pilots able to compete with the best in the world.

We had no means of transport. To-day we have thousands of motor-lorries, in use on all the fronts and on all the roads in Spain. We had no artillery. To-day our artillery plays a leading part in the fighting.

We have reorganised the cavalry, and to-day we possess important units of this military formation. We had not enough officers, but in the course of one and a half years of war we have trained new commanders, inferior in nothing to the pupils of the old academies.

Our traditions are upheld. Spain is bringing forth heroes unceasingly. We are filled with profound pride to possess such men as General *Miaja*, the defender of the capital of the Republic, and General Rojo, the organiser of the victory of Teruel; 'such men as Hernandez Sarabia, Pozas, Cordon, Estrada, Burillo, Marquez, the Galan brothers, Vivancos, all loyal officers of our army. We look with pride on such fighters as Lister, Modesto, El Campesino, Carton, Toral, Durutti, Mera, and many others too numerous to name here. We are filled with pride at the unassuming courage of our Commissars, ever the first in the advance and the last in the retreat.

To-day we have more confidence than ever in the victory of our cause. Our confidence is based not only on the consciousness of the justness of the cause we are defending, but upon the strength of our army and our military abilities. We are fighting in the vanguard of world democracy against fascism. We shrink from no sacrifice. We expect only that the countries which confine themselves to expressing platonic admiration for us, will grasp the historical responsibility which rests with them, and will at last put an end to the policy of concessions and vacillations in face of fascism. Fascism remains strong so long as its opponents show themselves weak.

Spain sets the example. Our people are showing the democracies the road to triumph.

What Has Been Done for the Culture of the Spanish People

By Jesus Hernandez

Former Minister of Public Education and Health

When our people took to arms to defend itself against a nefarious attack designed to plunge it into the darkest depths of slavery, it prepared to fight not only for its liberty, not only for the independence of its soil, not only for a future of progressive possibilities, but also for its culture.

Culture in Spain was still a caste privilege – one more instrument of class domination, degraded and debased by the vile mentality of feudalism which ruled as a historical anachronism deeply implanted in the general contour of Spain.

Only a few timid efforts were made by a few Liberals who at one time or another held a portfolio in one of our Cabinets and who attempted to improve and widen our education and our culture.

Even of the results of these activities – later savagely destroyed by the reactionary Governments following on each other's heels in Spain – practically nothing was left standing.

A war imposes concrete preoccupations, and renders difficult the realisation of anything which does not follow the accelerated rhythm of the struggle. But it was a war-time job to exterminate illiteracy, that century-old fetter binding the natural intellectual forces of the Spanish people. It was a war job to create schools, to open the highest gates of learning to the proletariat and to the people, to protect and enhance the prestige of Spanish science, art and literature, to ensure that our children are properly educated and to send books and teachers to the trenches.

Since September, 1936, *ten thousand new schools* have been opened in Spain. About twenty million pesetas have been spent by the Ministry of Education in the construction of school buildings. The children of our combatants, of our workers, of our whole people are being given instruction in hundreds of *child colonies*, fitted with every modern pedagogical accessory, and enjoying such sanitary conditions that present-day Spain can now point with justified pride to the strong, healthy and happy children entrusted to her care.

Besides the task of satisfying the primary requirements of the child population it was necessary to liberate from the cultural indigence to which they were still subject those wide sections of the population who could not read and write. A national campaign was started by the civic mobilisation of teachers and “volunteers of education,” and an organised struggle undertaken by the Ministry of Public Education against illiteracy. Flying squads were sent out into the villages, to the humblest hamlets, to the remotest corners where no spark of education had ever been kindled.

The vehement urge towards learning which constitutes to-day one of the best features of the struggle of the Spanish people was met by organising *instruction centres and classes for the adult population*, and the amount assigned for this purpose in our budget was not less than 10,359,000 pesetas.

This work found the greatest scope and fulfilled the highest mission where it was required with the greatest justification and with the greatest effect: in the trenches, in the line of fire.

By a decree issued on January 30, 1937, the corps of the “*militia of culture*” was created. This “*militia of culture*” groups school teachers and instructors who carry to the dug-outs and the battlefields the

JESUS HERNANDEZ, <i>former Minister for Education, now General Commissar for War in Central Spain, member of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of the Communist Party of Spain.</i>

elementary education required by the illiterate combatants. This corps, already covered with glory, is also covered with the blood of young and heroic teachers who, wielding no other weapon but the primer which they taught the combatants to read, fell by the hands of fascism.

The activities of the “militia of culture” include besides classes in the trenches the organisation of *Soldiers’ Clubs*, theatrical and film shows and training classes for men and officers of our army. Although the difficulties standing in the way of obtaining a complete statistical survey are enormous, the latest data at our disposal present the following picture:

In the month of October, 1937, the “militia of culture” has to its credit a total of 75,894 individual classes and 31,200 collective classes; in the 30 days of that month 11,062 combatants were taught to read, 35 libraries were set up, 752 lectures given, 23 soldiers’ clubs organised, and 78 wall, newspapers, and a number of “culture corners” established.

Some time ago the office of a Commissar for the “militia of culture” was created as the corps is now a military unit so far as discipline is concerned.

The enthusiasm which makes our combatants always victorious in this battle of culture is the best proof of the fact that the urge towards learning is one of the driving forces behind the heroism of our forces. About 60,000 soldiers have learned to read and write and have been trained to play their part to-morrow, in the building up of a new Spain.

The basic difference between the army of criminals and foreigners who fight against liberty and civilisation on the other side of the trenches, and our own soldiers, lies in this mighty crusade, in this indefatigable movement towards education which carries to every point at which our combatants are fighting, the light, the confidence, the stimulus and the grandeur of culture.

To adapt and recreate our culture for the whole of our people is the main mission we have undertaken to fulfil in the Government of the People’s Front.

It must be a new culture built on new foundations from the bottom rung of elementary schools to the summit of the Universities and Institutes.

The problem has been tackled and is being solved as a corollary of the political and economic problems. Thus it has been possible to abolish effectively all social privilege in the field of education and open up the widest possibilities of culture for all the intellectual abilities of the Spanish people.

It is the whole of our people that is fighting for a better Spain and defending itself against fascist regression. And it is for the whole of our people that the Ministry of Public Instruction has opened the lecture halls of higher education.

It is our working class, our proletariat, our vital vanguard force which is fighting now for the independence, the liberty and the future of the whole people. It was the proletariat which was in the past the most oppressed class, the class to the greatest degree deprived of all cultural opportunities.

For our workers, for the sons of our proletarians, whose intellectual gifts will enable them to occupy responsible posts in the Spain which is about to emerge from the fires of our victory, a decree issued on November 21, 1936, created the *Workers’ Institutes*.

The Workers’ Institutes are teaching centres in which only workers between the age of 15 and 35 can acquire a degree in a training course lasting two years. Candidates for this training can be nominated by trade unions and juvenile organisations fighting against fascism. A preliminary qualifying examination ensures the selection of the best and most capable of candidates.

The Institutes already functioning in *Valencia, Barcelona* and *Sabadell* group hundreds of the best sons of the working class, sons of the workshops, the mine and the soil. Our plans provide for the immediate

creation of two further institutes in Alcoy and in Linares.

Matriculation and education in the Workers' Institutes is completely free of charge. The State provides all pupils with the requisite books and pedagogic materials. Up-to-date premises situated in beauty spots of our territory provide housing for our proletarian students. The State also provides for the maintenance of the pupils and in addition pays a wage to those workers who, in order to pursue their studies, had to leave an employment which provided a living for their families.

The Spanish working class understood perfectly the importance and the object of this initiative. Workers of all trends of opinion have shown the same enthusiasm in supporting the work of the Ministry for the advancement of popular culture. Living examples show how completely the Spanish workers identify themselves with the measures of the Ministry. These examples are instructive and illustrate that to-day the Government can accomplish its work only thanks to the confidence, the assistance and the support of the workers.

To quote one such example of many: the textile Trade Unions of Alcoy (affiliated to the C.N.T.) have put at the disposal of the Ministry of Public Education for cultural purposes the sum of two million pesetas.

This gesture shows how well the working class of Spain has understood the significance of the cultural transformation of our people and its participation in all intellectual pursuits. It also serves as a stimulus to the Ministry, as a mighty impulse to intensify its efforts towards transforming Spain into a cultured country able to choose its leaders from the very best sons of its people.

As the struggle in which we are now engaged is a struggle of the popular masses, is a national struggle of the whole people for its freedom and independence, the benefits of the new system of education must also be at the disposal of the whole of our people. We want to end for the whole of our people the present condition of backwardness and we want to give the whole of our people the opportunity of becoming intelligent and capable.

For this it was not enough to create popular Universities and Workers' Institutes alone. We needed a more universal method to help on the natural selection of the ablest among all the sons of the Spanish people. For this purpose the Ministry established *popular scholarships* ensuring an allowance for all anti-fascists who fulfil certain minimum requirements of ability needed for higher studies.

As a complement to the decree creating the Worker's Institutes, a decree dated September 6, 1937, established *scholarships* for all those sons of the people whose natural abilities qualify them for a University education.

The scholarships of the Ministry of public education are not charity grants, but an institution destined to ensure that superior education should be available for the whole of our people without any privilege of class, and giving the students not only a free course of instruction but also a decent allowance which makes the work of learning a remunerated social function. There is no limit to the number of scholarships that can be granted and their scope embraces the enormous majority of young anti-fascists to whom the gates of higher instruction are now opening for the first time in the history of Spain. The estimates set aside by the Ministry for the scholarships of the current year amount to 25 million pesetas.

The extent of the scholarships will be:

The scholarship students under 18 years who under normal circumstances have no self-earned income will receive 200 pesetas a month; students who are older will receive 300 pesetas a month. Those who leave work in order to study will receive a monthly allowance equal to the total income they have given

up. Only one kind of privilege is recognised; it is gained by having shed blood in the defence of the Republic or by being the child of one of our heroes or of one of our glorious dead.

Besides this work of education and culture we were faced with the task of satisfying the requirements and desires of our youth in the field of *physical education and sport*. Our aim was to create a strong and healthy youth capable of defending our country and strengthening and extending the achievements of the Spanish people during our struggle and after our victory.

With this end in view a *National Council of Physical Education and Sports* was created and given the task of developing sports activities to strengthen and entertain our splendid young people. In compliance with the lively desire of our young anti-fascists and wishing to give them the best preparation for the struggle, we created within the National Council of Physical Education and Sports a special section destined to advance by every possible means *air sports* such as gliding and parachute jumping – sports activities which originated, developed and reached their culminating point in the Soviet Union, the country which under Socialism has raised to a level unprecedented in contemporary history the culture, strength and happiness of its people.

Air-sport bases were immediately established in *Barcelona, Valencia and Madrid*. An intense propaganda campaign pointing out the significance of this sport will foment the enthusiasm of our youth and of the masses of our people. Work will be done in the schools in order to rouse interest in air sports, and the children be supplied with material for the construction of modern gliders and aeroplanes. Thus one of the liveliest wishes of our youth will be fulfilled, the muscles of new Spain steeled and our youths prepared to become future heroes of the air, to defend our land from the nefarious aggression it is now suffering, to ensure a victory and enrich civilisation and science by their demonstrations of courage.

This is what we have done in the midst of the fires of war for the culture of the Spanish people. Our work never postulated disregard of the traditional values worthy of preservation, nor ever failed to devote the greatest attention to the arts, the sciences and literature which it encouraged as never before.

For the first time in the history of Spain *literary and artistic competitions* have been organised on the scale of those now announced by the Ministry of Public Education. Prizes range up to ten thousand pesetas and the rules guarantee the writers and artists that their work will not be in vain as all works of merit will be bought by the Ministry itself.

For the first time in the history of Spain the most representative artistic treasures and cultural values of our past are given the care and attention they deserve.

Never before have the purest manifestations of the artistic sense of the people, such as music, the fine arts, etc., found such intense encouragement as is given them to-day by new institutions such as the *National Concert Orchestra* or the *Institute of Sculpture* established by the *General Management of Fine Art*.

Never have education and culture been more appreciated and better defended in our country than to-day. Never before has our people been, as it is now, in a position to rise by its own efforts and by its own abilities to the highest regions, to the noblest peaks of cultural progress.

Therefore our people, among the many reasons it has for fighting until the traitors are exterminated and the invasion defeated, has this great reason, which is the admiration of the world and a joy for the progressive conscience of humanity: that it wants to be a people advanced and cultured, strong and happy, living and working at peace with all the nations of the earth.

The Gigantic Efforts of the Spanish Government to Transform the Countryside

By José Silva

To understand better the noble effort efforts which the Government of the People's Front in Spain is making to improve the living conditions of the peasant masses and to transform in a progressive sense our poor and backward agriculture, it is necessary to give a retrospective survey of the position in the countryside prior to the rebellion of the military caste and the black reaction in Spain.

From time immemorial the Spanish peasants lived subject to the most revolting conditions of slavery. Hunger and misery were carefully fostered by the landowners and the village administrators (Caciques) who saw in them the means of maintaining their odious privileges. Starved, ragged, degraded to the level of brutes, the peasants led a life of incredible privations and were victims of such violence as is hard to believe possible.

The wages were miserable (the average wage in 1920 was 2.25 pesetas per day, and in 1930, 3.25 pesetas; but in certain districts wages were even lower: in Jaen 1.50 pesetas and in Badajoz as low as fifty centimos). Work was available only part of the year; 160 days of normal wages and 90 days of harvest wages – but a harvest worker rarely worked them all. Thus the average yearly income of an agricultural labourer was about 720 pesetas in 1920 and 1,015 in 1930, supposed he was lucky enough to work every working day of the year – a thing which never occurred.

VICENTE URIBE, <i>Member of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of the Communist Party of Spain and Minister for Agriculture.</i>

As a corollary to this situation of terrible misery, the all-powerful Civil Guard brutalised the peasant masses in the most barbarous manner. This “deserving” corps distinguished itself by its methods of sadistic torture, by the horrible murders which it committed. Woe betide the unfortunate who dared to gather a pint of acorns in the woods and thus rob the pigs of their feed, or to raise his voice in protest against the hell of exploitation existing on the Spanish countryside! The Civil Guard, that gloomy figure of the black Spain, began to function and quickly dealt with every protest. Beatings which made a man an invalid for life, Dantesque tortures, murders, mass slaughter – the guards of the landowners were the worthy heirs of the executioners of the Holy Inquisition, with the privilege of killing without a trial, of murdering with impunity.

In order to disguise this picture of horror and slavery the landowners, masters of the land and of the lives of the peasants, left the fields uncultivated and desolate, preventing the slightest agricultural progress. Thousands and thousands of hectares of fertile land were reserved for hunting-grounds, for preserves or simply left fallow.

The backwardness and neglect in our agriculture was described in these terms by Fermin Caballero:

“The first glance at our fields offers unequivocal proof of this inferiority. In some places villages, full of labourers, crowded into tiny houses, and compelled to walk one, two or three miles a day in order to till their plots – and in other places extensive deserts, uncultivated or almost virgin, without a house or any indication of being the property of civilised human beings; here, forests of trees cut down by careless hands offering the spectacle of wanton destruction; there, common lands, or no man’s land without boundary- lines or bourns serving alternately as objects of speculation for the all-powerful or as a scene of violent struggles between rival neighbours, as a school for usurpation, intrusion and licentiousness.

“On the one hand, fallow land which seems as if sowed; but tillage has been reduced to a deceptive scratching of the surface the only result of which is to facilitate the growth of weeds; on the other hand protruding among the ears of wheat thistles, poppies, fennel flowers and other weeds which choke and consume them. Here, herds and flocks starving on wide fields devoid of vegetation; there, beasts of burden and horses, ill-groomed, filthy, deformed, with harness and farm implements rudely fashioned or broken. And everywhere most of the cultivated land is left entirely untilled for one or two years in sequence; water is lost or insufficiently utilised, as if some one expected the vital force of nature to accomplish results which ought to be effected by a more intelligent and more strenuous labour.”

Such is the picture offered by the Spanish countryside in 1931, the birth-year of the Republic. A few figures concerning the concentration of landownership in the hands of the degenerate and parasitic nobility will illustrate the assertions of the writer quoted and enable the reader to understand better the tragedy of the Spanish countryside and the effort needed and undertaken to transform it.

Estates exceeding 200 hectares constitute 33.29 per cent, of the total area of the country, and cover 7,468,029 hectares.

Estates of 100-150 hectares constitute 10.43 per cent, and cover 2,339,957 hectares; estates of 10-100 hectares represent 20.56 per cent, and cover 4,611,709 hectares.

Smallholdings, i.e., under 10 hectares occupy an area of 8,014,715 hectares representing 35.72 per cent, of the total cultivated area of the country.

These figures show that large estates occupy an area almost equal to the area occupied by smallholdings on which millions of peasant families must seek a living. *Galicia* alone numbers more than two million dwarf properties. In some provinces the big estates occupy most of the area. Thus in the province of *Seville* 50 per cent. (13 estates total 90,000 hectares); in *Cadiz*, 58 per cent, (three estates add up to 30,646 hectares); in *Huelva*, a province in which only 72 per cent, of the area has been surveyed, large estates occupy 47 per cent, of the land.

The picture of the distribution of landed property would not be complete if we omitted to mention the names of the large landowners. These figures, however, refer only to the land subject to expropriation under the Agrarian Reforms Bill; considerable domains were exempt from the provisions of the Bill and are not included in the figures. It may be useful to point out that the landowners listed below possess very much more land (in some cases twice as much) than contained in the figures given below:

- The Duke of Medinaceli
- “ Duke of Penaranda
- “ Duke of Villahermosa
- “ Duke of Alba
- “ Marquis de la Romana
- “ Marquis de Comillas

- “ Duke of Fernan Nunez
- “ Duke of Arion
- “ Duke of Infantado
- “ Count of Romanones
- “ Count of Torre Arias
- “ Count of Sastago
- “ Marquis of Mirabel
- “ Duke of Lerma
- “ Marquis of Riscal
- “ Duke of Albuquerque
- “ Count of Elda
- “ Duke of Tamames
- “ Marquis of Viana
- “ Count of Toreno
- “ Marquis of Narros
- “ Count of Mora
- “ Duke of Sotomayor
- “ Duke of Plasencia
- “ Count del Real
- “ Duke of Alcurdia and Suera
- “ Marquis of Asienzo
- “ Count of Campo Alegre
- “ Marquis of Camarasa
- “ Marquis of Santa Cruz
- “ Count of the Andes
- “ .Duke of San Fernando
- “ Count of Floridablanca
- “ Duchess of Monteleon &
Castilblanco
- “ Marquis of Argueso
- “ Marquis of Hoyos
- “ Count of Bornos
- “ Duchess of San Carlos

We might continue to enumerate more aristocrats owning thousands of hectares of land, but the list above will suffice to convey to the reader the tremendous injustice, the great crime which permitted 38 lords to own more than half a million hectares of land dedicated to the breeding of bullfight cattle or to the chase which might procure them amusement a few days each year, while millions of agricultural labourers own no land whatever, or too little to keep them.

This small list is enough to give a notion of the importance of the agrarian problem in Spain and of the motives of the “patriotism” which induced the Marquis of Riscal to protect and pay the fascist pistoleros of the Falange Espanola to murder the workers, the “patriotism” which induced all aristocrats and landowners to subsidise the military rebellion and open the gates of our country to the foreign fascist invaders. One will understand why the effeminate Duke of Alba spreads slander about us throughout Europe, invoking the “defence of civilisation” which, in his language of degenerate aristocracy, means the slavery of millions of peasants.

When the Bourbon monarchy collapsed, the Republican- Socialist Governments did not tackle the agrarian problem with the necessary energy and decision. They did impose a rise in wages (in 1932 the normal agricultural wage rose to 5 pesetas per day and the harvest wage to 11 pesetas), issued a decree

protecting the farmers from eviction and a decree compelling the landowners to carry out the necessary work on their land (thus preventing the peculiar political persecution consisting in leaving the land untilled in order to starve out the agricultural workers and force them into submission), and in September, 1932, promulgated the Agrarian Reforms Bill.

However, action against the big landowners was so feeble that up to December 31, 1934, only 12,260 peasants were settled on 529 farms with a total area of 116,837 hectares. The 383,052 hectares confiscated from the aristocrats involved in the plot of August 10, 1932, served later as a pretext for the Right-wing to their former owners, in addition to the restitution of their land, several hundred million pesetas as compensation.

This situation on the countryside, which had undergone no fundamental change after the Republic had issued its very moderate Agrarian Reforms Bill and applied it with even greater moderation, took a turn for the worse in the so-called "black biennium" (black, tragic and full of bloodshed), when the reactionaries, returned to power, again lowered agricultural wages to 1.50 pesetas per day, increased unemployment to an unprecedented extent, proceeded to evict the farmers in masses, imprisoned hundreds and thousands of agricultural labourers and tortured and killed, until they were defeated and driven from office in February, 1936.

From then onwards the feudal caste, the whole host of fascist reaction, fearing the loss of its enormous privileges, and desirous of preventing even the most modest progress of the countryside, devoted itself wholeheartedly to the preparation of the military rebellion of July 18, 1936, never hesitating for a moment to sell the country to German and Italian fascist imperialism.

It was only after the outbreak of the civil war that the real *agrarian reform* began. The great enslaved masses of the countryside rallied to the Government of the People's Front, and while they took up arms to repel the fascist aggression, they at the same time attacked the slave-drivers in their economic base by occupying the land of the exploiters in order to cultivate it. The old slogan of the Communist Party: "The land for those who till it!" became reality. The usurpers of the land, the starvers of the working people were expropriated without indemnity. The Agrarian Reforms Bill of 1932, which granted the robbers compensation, was superseded and relegated to the archives of history.

Another Bill, in greater harmony with the political and social realities and imbued with a spirit of greater social justice, has been substituted for the one passed by the Constituent Assembly of the Republic. The decree of October 7, 1936, issued by the Communist Minister for Agriculture, Comrade *Uribe*, and later converted into a law, fully satisfies the wishes of the Spanish peasants. Its first paragraph says:

"All landed property, without distinction of extent or use, belonging on July 18, 1936, to natural persons or their wives or husbands or to juridical persons who have participated directly or indirectly in the insurrection against the Republic, is being confiscated without indemnity in favour of the State."

Article 4 makes provision as to who is to be given the use of the expropriated land.

"The use and exploitation of the estates expropriated by force of Article 1 is to be given to the labourers and peasants of the locality in which said estate is situated or to those of the neighbouring localities as the case may be."

This decree, converted into law, solved the fundamental problem of the land in Spain, and thus laid down the foundations for a profound transformation of the countryside.

Not counting Catalonia, which is an autonomous region, and has its own special arrangements and where, therefore, the provisions of the decree of October 7 do not apply, the number of estates

expropriated amounts to 46,896, with an area of 4,086,386 hectares. These estates were put in the hands of agricultural labourers, respecting the rights of the formers' tenants to their holdings.

These figures do not include the lands expropriated in the three provinces of *Aragon* because the special circumstances existing there prevented the collecting of statistical data. But it is certain that the land taken from the rebels represents hundreds of thousands of hectares.

Several hundred thousand agricultural workers and peasants benefit by the use of these lands, which they till either collectively or, individually, according to their own wishes.

The former farmers, share-croppers and tenants also feel the advantages of the profound change brought about by the People's Front Government on the countryside. Left to enjoy the same holdings for which formerly they had to pay enormous rents, they now find themselves free from all obligations towards their former landlords and from the vexations inflicted on them by the village authorities. The Minister for Agriculture, by handing over the land to them for their use, freed them from the burden of the rent which weighed them down.

But the Government of the People's Front is not content with this alone. It extends the benefits of the new order to *all* tenant farmers. Not only the tenants of land belonging to rebels are exempt from paying rent, but also the tenants renting land from others who have not been declared rebels. The decree issued on August 10, 1937, a moratorium has been given up to September 30, 1938, for the payment of rents due and unpaid after July 18, 1936.

Thus, even though in a transitory form, the principle that "the land belongs to him who tills it" has been established, and no one has the right to live by the labour of others.

In Republican Spain, the Spain of the People's Front, there are no longer any aristocrats, big landowners and caciques, who in the past enslaved and exploited the tillers of the land. There are no more fields left untilled or devoted to the amusement of the few, there are no more starving labourers exhibiting their misery in the market-places of the villages in the hope that the steward of the landlord will hire them. To-day thousands of workers toil eagerly on collective farms and on their individual holdings to extract from the land the products needed to feed the People's Army and the hinterland.

Despite this fundamental change in the conditions of land ownership, the agrarian problem needs much further attention. The decree of October 7 is the corner-stone for the transformation which is now being realised. But the peasants need more help. Hence the Government of the People's Front adopted additional measures to assist the peasants, improve their conditions of life and raise their cultural level which necessarily had to improve with the improvement and growth of agricultural production.

Credits, seeds, fertilisers and agricultural machines were, thus put at the disposal of the peasants, additional food was supplied during the harvest operations of the past summer, and the Ministry made arrangements to buy part of the products, thus protecting the peasants from the speculators and preventing speculation which otherwise might have developed in the present abnormal circumstances. Measures were taken to adapt agriculture to the conditions of war and an education scheme elaborated which would banish for ever the ignorance now existing on the countryside.

All this is being put into practice with great success, as we shall see presently. But we shall be better able to appreciate the work that is being done if we keep in mind the tangle of difficulties of every kind which result from the war the people of Spain is waging against fascism and the complications which accompany the course of the revolution.

Despite the tremendous unproductive expenses entailed by the war, the Government has spent more than 200 million pesetas to assist the peasants. We give below a table of the amounts and the objects of this expenditure.

Credits for the support of peasants
Mechanical supplies and implements of
labour
Credits for seeds and fertilisers
Credits for the purchase of products and
cattle
Credits for agricultural machines and
sisal fibre
Wage advances and harvest expenses
Education expenditure
Total amount granted by the Institute of
Agrarian Reform

Amount Granted by the Crédito Agrícola

To the cultivators of rice
To the winegrowers' co-operatives
To the agricultural syndicates
To the agricultural co-operatives
To individual cultivators
Total amount granted by the Crédito
Agrícola

Various departments of the Ministry of Agriculture have distributed 255,730 tons of fertiliser of all sorts costing several million pesetas and representing a tremendous effort if one keeps in mind the great difficulties which had to be overcome in order to provide them, as the raw materials for their manufacture must be imported from abroad. The peasants could purchase these fertilisers at pre-war prices.

The Central Section for Seeds set up within the Ministry of Agriculture supplied 14,623,090.75 kilograms of seeds for potatoes, wheat, beans, soya, peas, etc., to the value of 18,465,842 pesetas, without counting the seeds supplied in the first period of the war by other departments of the Ministry. A great part of these seeds was also imported from abroad.

In addition to these goods supplied for the various needs of the agricultural workers and of agricultural production, the Sub-Secretariat for Agriculture spent great sums amounting to several tens of millions in purchasing wheat, rice, wine and other products. In the provinces of Valencia, Castellon, Alicante and Murcia alone 8,794,155 pesetas were spent in buying from the peasants products other than wine or rice. And although the purchase of certain products was dictated *by* the necessities of the war – such as the Government control of wheat and rice – the purchase of wine in Ciudad Real, of almonds in Alicante and Almeria, etc., was due merely to the desire of the Government to assist the peasants in the sale of these products. There can be no doubt that the peasants greatly benefited by the guaranteed sale of their products and by the fact that they were thus delivered from the pressure of the speculators.

All this help, effective, real, not mere words like the promises of the fascist demagogues, has completely changed the living conditions of the workers on the countryside. But it is not only by credits, seeds, fertilisers, purchase of products, etc., that the Government of the People's Front assists the peasants. There are other most interesting aspects which give a foretaste of what Spanish agriculture will be within a short time.

One of these aspects, a magnificent performance in consideration of the enormous difficulties which it had to overcome and the splendid success with which it did so, shows clearly the care and enthusiasm

with which the Government attends to the needs of the peasants and the great practical help it brings them. We refer to the assistance given in the harvesting of cereals last year.

41,657 hectares of cereals had been sown in excess of the sown area of the previous year, and the crops were very good. But hands were lacking to gather in the harvest, and as for machines, there were none to manage even those which could be made available. The Ministry of Agriculture did not lose heart, however. It issued an order protecting the collectives and instructed the Institute for Agrarian Reform to organise the machinery required for the harvest operations and to obtain from the Ministry the foodstuffs needed to supply the agricultural workers with a supplementary diet in consideration of the most intensive labour they would have to perform in order to cope with all the work entailed by the harvesting operations.

The peasants had refused to declare the agricultural machines in their possession, for fear that the machines would be taken away. It was thus impossible to provide them with everything needed to operate the machines, nor did the Government know how many and of what kind they were. There was no sisal rope for the binders, there were no mechanics, no spare parts, no petrol, no lubricants. The peasants demanded all this at the last moment, as if it could be produced at a moment's notice. But it had to be produced in order to save the crops. Engineers were sent to the villages to organise machine stations, mechanics were found, petrol and oil was procured, fibre was imported and four factories were set to work to make sisal rope; spare parts were found, transports organised and food provided and these efforts were rewarded by complete success.

Here is what was put at the disposal of the peasants:

Sisal rope	bales
Petrol and oil	kilograms
Harvester-binders	
Winnowers	
Extinguishers	
Sickles	
Engines	
Hackles	
Tractors	
Threshers	
Harrows	
Ploughs	
Sowers	

This may seem very modest, but if one considers that there was nothing available at all and that the peasants made their declaration only when they found that the machines would not function without mechanics, spare parts, petrol, sisal rope, etc., one will understand the effort needed to run even this small number of machines.

As for the food for additional nourishment, it was not much easier to provide, but the Ministry succeeded in supplying 11,357,207 kilograms of chocolate, sugar, coffee, codfish, chickpeas, beans, potatoes, rice, etc., together with 1,773 boxes of bully beef, 251 boxes of condensed milk, 24 boxes of soup cubes, 29 boxes of hardtack and 14,127 tins of sardines.

For the first time in the history of Spain a Ministry attended to the needs of the workers on the countryside, and that in circumstances which made it almost impossible to find the necessary

foodstuffs.

The peasants responded to this effort to help them by gathering in the whole harvest. And for the first time in the history of our country absolute and effective co-operation between the Ministry of Agriculture and the peasant masses was established.

In view of the ignorance in which the Spanish peasants had always been kept, it was obvious that nothing could be done unless all the successes described above were accompanied by measures to overcome ignorance. Here again we met with the greatest difficulties owing to the lack of teachers. In spite of this, effective steps are being taken to establish *farming schools* and every possibility is made use of to train skilled cadres for every branch of agriculture.

Since May 12, 1937, there is in operation a Farming School of the East, which began its activities with 30 pupils entered for a short course of five months to learn the rudiments of Arithmetic, Geometry and Surveying, the technology of rural construction, irrigation and sanitation, the cultivation of herbaceous, plants, shrubs and trees, the handling of agricultural machines, agricultural industry, forestry and the means of combating pests and parasites in agriculture, stock-breeding and the care of cattle, farm administration, book-keeping and agricultural co-operation.

The second course of training began in September, 1937, with 27 pupils and will end in October of the current year.

In addition, a special training course for engineers was arranged in which 15 pupils participated and which lasted from November 14 to December 23. On January 17 a second such course was inaugurated with 14 pupils, ending February 28.

On February 15 a farm school was inaugurated in Albacete with pupils from the same province and from Ciudad Real and Cuenca. The work of establishing a similar school in Orihuela is far advanced and peasants from Alicante and Murcia will be given instruction there.

Four short training classes for village schoolmasters have been held, consisting of 18 lectures and various excursions to Valencia, Castellon, Alicante, Murcia and Albacete, with 25 pupils from each province.

In June and July, 1937, two short courses were arranged in Castellon dealing with the cultivation of apples and potatoes. In various villages of the province of Alicante, during last August, lectures were held on the disinfection of granaries and the conservation of grain. In the winegrowing localities of Albacete, lectures were held on the grafting of American vines and the handling of wine.

In November a training course for rabbit-breeding was held, comprising 30 lectures and various excursions to the locals of the Chamber of Agriculture of Valencia. The attendance was 39 regular trainees and numerous guests. In December, training courses for rabbit-breeding were organised in Jativa, Liria and Candia.

A campaign was inaugurated for the spreading of knowledge on the manufacture of oils in Chiva, Requena, Alabaida, Onteniente, Jativa and Enguera by means of short training courses.

A course of lectures on general agriculture was held in Murcia and another course on wine-growing and the treatment of wines was held in Requena at the oenological station of that city. Many popular leaflets on agricultural subjects have been published and more are in preparation.

Taking into account the lack of teachers and the difficulties of every kind, the results achieved in the sphere of technical and practical instruction are considerable, and the fact that they have been achieved in the unfavourable circumstances of a war render them even more meritorious.

When the timid agrarian reforms of the first Republican Governments were introduced, the military

caste and the whole black and brutal host of Spanish reaction rose in arms to prevent the most modest social progress and in order to maintain their infamous privileges, they sold Spain to foreign fascism. The transformation which is now being effected on the countryside augurs a splendid future. The Government of the Republic can even now present for the judgment of the civilised world an active balance of progress.

Terrorism and Starvation in the Hinterland of the Fascists

By Juan José Manso

“The semi-feudal castes, the church and the army and the big capitalists have not only recovered their secular privileges, but have added to them. That part of Spain has returned to the blackest days of the Inquisition and of despotism. The state which Franco intends to establish, is modelled on the pattern of German and Italian fascism, *i.e.*, on the most frightful terror.” (*Jose Diaz*, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain.)

From its very beginning on July 18, 1936, the fascist rising has been characterised by an unbridled terror which stopped at nothing and spared no one, trampling down men and women, old people and children of all social classes in our beloved country.

In case some people believed in good faith that this situation was a result of a state of disorganisation and of a lack of control on the part of the supreme chiefs of the mutiny, the vile lackeys of Italo-German fascism, we quote here statements made by the assassin Franco in the first days of the rebellion:

“It is necessary that there should be no further talk of any Socialism, Communism, or Democracy in Spain during many generations.”

To a special correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, he said, “on the 10th day of the rising that he had decided to provoke an international conflict in the event of his plans being in danger of failure, and that he would not hesitate to shoot one half of the Spanish people in order to achieve his end.”

In order to exclude all doubt about this attitude of the fascist leaders we wish to quote a sentence broadcast from Seville by *Queipo de Llano*, the blood-stained buffoon, the butcher of the Andalusian anti-fascist:

“Eighty per cent, of the families of Andalusia are in mourning. In our march towards the decisive victory, we shall stop at nothing, and shall continue our work while a single Marxist remains alive.”

The tragic confirmation of these statements is given by the following very incomplete data:

Up to September 1937, in *Seville* alone, the number of killings amounted to the horrible figure of 35,000 which, added to the 60,000 committed throughout the province of Seville, give the terrible figure of nearly 90,000. In May 1937, the number of murders committed in *Galicia* exceeded 30,000. In *Huelva*, town and province, 30,000 (May 1937). In *Saragossa*, 25,000 (September 1937). In *Granada*, town and province, 23,000 (May 1937). In *Badajoz* more than 20,000 (September 1937). In *Navarra*, town and province, over 20,000 (August 1937). In *Malaga* 18,000 (September 1937). In *Asturias*, according to latest reports, 14,000. In *Zamora* more than 6,000, this is a province where reaction was always predominant. In that part of the province of *Toledo* which is under fascist domination, more than 6,000. In *Teruel* more than 6,000. In *San Sebastian* 6,000. In *Majorca* over 6,000.

Queipo de Llano himself said in his broadcast from Seville on January 18, 1937, apparently in one of his fits of “sincerity” that there were 8,000 orphans in Seville and 6,000 in Cadiz of Reds shot in those cities. 14,000 orphan children in only two provinces of fascist Spain!

Such is the picture of barbarism and brutality in one section only of the fascist hinterland. The infamous and miserable lackeys of Hitler and Mussolini can pride themselves on the fulfilment of their mandates.

This Inferno of terror affects not only workers and other anti-fascists active in the parties and organisations which compose the People’s Front or are in sympathy with it, but even moderate Liberals and Democrats including such men as Air- Commander *Jose Bahamonde*, chief of the Tetuan aerodrome and cousin of the gang-leader Franco who took up a resolute attitude of loyalty to the Republic. This officer who merely remained faithful to the oath of loyalty which he had sworn to the Republic was shot on the ramparts of one of the forts of Ceuta. When the officer commanding the firing-squad asked the victim whether he had any wish to express he answered:

“There is only one thing I wish to say. Some mothers suffer the tragic fate of seeing a monster instead of a human being issue from their womb. One of these unfortunate mothers is the mother of Franco.”

The cruelty of the so-called “saviour” of Spain is well characterised by these words.

The methods of terrorism employed by the merciless gangs of fascists are so barbarous and so extensive that we must limit ourselves to describing only a few of the many thousand cases which have occurred in that short and black period of the history of Spain which pines under the yoke of Franco and the foreign invaders.

Mr. *Lawrence A. Ferneworth*, U.S.A. journalist and correspondent of the *Times* gave this account of the savage slaughter in *Badajoz*:

“When they could not kill any more people in the street they drove the victims into the bull-ring and mowed them down with machine-guns. The figure of 800 killed was the lowest estimate I heard of the victims of this horrible slaughter.”

At the end of August 1937, the body of a Falangist, head of a group of Pistoleros, was found in one of the streets of *Seville*. Without any further investigation 300 Falangists and 70 civil guards blocked up all exits from this street, and ordered all men living in the houses with odd numbers to come out into the street. There they were placed against the walls of these humble dwellings and shot. More than 400 unfortunates were thus massacred amidst the cries of terror and distress of their wives and children.

In a little village of the province of *Huesca*, *Cerro de Andecabo*, the whole population was killed with the exception of two Right-wing families, and at the entrance to the village a cross was erected with the following inscription: “This was a Red Village which thanks to the Falanga no longer exists.”

As a last example of the mass killings we describe here what happened in *Talavera del Tajo* when the Moorish troops entered the place. The hospital was full of wounded and sick who had not been evacuated owing to the suddenness of events. Suddenly a troop of men, their ferocious faces covered with dust and sweat rushed into the wards of the hospital brandishing rifles and knives, and fell on the sick and wounded in a vociferous onslaught. The patients shrieked in agony at the sight of the sinister sparkle of steel over their heads. Some of them fell out of their beds and crawled along in a supreme effort of self-preservation. Others tottered towards the doors vainly hoping to reach safety. Like wild beasts the intruders pursued the unfortunate invalids and plunged their murderous weapons into their bodies. The wards of the hospital in *Talavera del Tajo* remained behind in absolute silence after Fascist “civilisation” had passed through it.

The martyrdom of the noble, heroic Spanish people is full of such boundless barbarism and cruelty that one would have to hark back many centuries in the history of European civilisation to find its equal.

A small village in the province of *Garciaz, Caceres*, with Left-wing traditions was inhabited by 600 families. After having killed 211 persons within a few days the criminal bands arrested on August 15, 1936, the four most prominent representatives of the Left-wing groups, *Florencio Sanchez, Pedro Mozas, Juan Carrasco* and *Francisco Morales*, bound them hand and foot with iron chains, threw them on the ground, poured a few cans of petrol over them and set them on fire in the middle of the market-place of the village.

In order to drown the screams of agony of these martyrs who writhed in desperate convulsions, a bugle band blared loud music.

Young *Francisco Sanchez* of the little village of *San Roque* in *Cadiz* province, was sentenced by a Falangist tribunal to die *twice*. He was tied with arms extended to two pieces of wood tied in the form of a cross and six Moors were then chosen for their good marksmanship to serve as a firing squad. The first discharge smashed the hands and feet of this unfortunate youth. The feat was rewarded by the loud applause of the sadist spectators who had come to enjoy this terrible spectacle. Overcome by pain and terror the victim fainted away – he had died the first time. He was brought to life again and dispatched by a second volley to the head and to the heart. The sentence was thus carried out to the letter!

Carlos Romayal, a fisherman of *La Tunara*, a suburb of *La Linea* was arrested by Moorish invading forces. They tied him up and slashed his arms with knives, shot him several times in the legs and then made him witness the rape of his wife by eight Moors. *Isabel Luguna*, another victim, was hacked to death with bayonets after having been raped. The husband was tied to a tree and his belly cut open with daggers. For three days the body remained there still tied to the tree, which threw its shadow on the man's miserable hut.

Nor should one believe that the hell of sadist terror which invaded Spain has now ceased to exist. We repeat that these horrors were not a product of the first moments but are still going on with tragic consistence. In *Bilbao* in five days, from December 12 to 15, 1937, 140 persons were put to death by means of strangling, and their names published in the *Bilbao* daily *Hierro*.

Terror still reigns in the thousand times heroic *Asturias* where at the present moment thousands and thousands of Antifascists are being foully murdered without any "legal" proceedings of any kind merely because they have committed the terrible crime of defending their country against the foreign invasion. Comrade *Jose Diaz*, that splendid Bolshevik and beloved leader of the working and anti-fascist masses of our country, reporting to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain last November summed up the situation in fascist Spain in these words:

"No one can express his thoughts by word of mouth or in writing except to render unconditional homage to the terrorists and despots. Justice has become the province of the civil guard and of the Falangist bandits."

The state of terrorism has for its corollary the most inhuman exploitation, bringing in its train hunger and the most dreadful poverty.

"The power wielded by the so-called Burgos Government upheld by the church and the army, is always at the service of the big capitalists and land-owners. One of the first measures taken by it was the abolition of the laws passed in favour of the peasants and agricultural workers. The Agricultural Labourers' Bill, the Bills guaranteeing the rights of farmers and tenants, the laws limiting the working hours on the countryside and those protecting the agricultural workers and their organisations have all been rescinded, and the working day from sunrise to darkness and starvation wages re-introduced."

The achievements of the workers and the slight social progress effected in the first years of the Republic have all been completely abolished.

In proof of this assertion we quote the following random example. In the province of *Granada* the working day is 12 hours: 8 for the manufacturers or landowners and the other 4 “for the benefit of the glorious national army.” It must be added that the highest wage or salary does not exceed 250 pesetas per month. From this amount deductions are made of 2 days’ wages per month a weekly deduction for the “one dish-day” and all kinds of “voluntary” subscriptions and contributions the refusal of which means imprisonment, beating up and even the traditional “disappearance.”

In the province of *Cadiz* the workers are in a desperate position. Eighty per cent, of them are out of work. The average salary is 4 pesetas for a working day of twelve hours. One day’s wages being deducted for “war expenses.”

Civil servants and employees whose salaries are not more than 5,000 pesetas per annum must give up two days salary each month, and must in addition contribute another day’s salary every ten days for the institution of one dish-day. Further there are “voluntary” donations for the Falanga Requete, etc.

In the mines of *Bilbao* an iniquitous system of exploitation has been put into operation. The extraction of the ore is effected by workers concentrated in Labour camps, and housed in miserable wooden huts. The “remuneration” for their labour consists in a horrible mess which they are given for their food.

Enormous queues of hungry women and children, of workers, employees, ruined small farmers, etc., all without work besiege the gates of the “charity” administrations and kitchens waiting for a crust of bread.

Thousands of men and women, old people and children have for their bed the benches in the public parks in the towns of the fascist hinterland.

Despite the terror, the desolation, the espionage and the most cunning persecution operated by the German Gestapo and the Italian O.V.R.A., the people protests. It boycotts production in general and armament production in particular, witness the explosion of one of the departments of the powder factory in *El Fargue*, Granada; the air bombs and the shells which do not explode, the emptiness of the movie theatres when a fascist film is shown, and the increasingly loud expression of disapproval on the part of those present, the anti-fascist inscriptions on the pavements and the walls of the houses, the boycotting of patriotic “collections,” the assistance given wherever possible to the widows and orphans of the murdered anti-fascists, and in some places the fact that the people are organising even though at the risk of their lives.

The invasion of foreigners increased the traditional Spanish hatred of foreign bandits, not only among the workers, but even among those who at first believed in the “pure” intentions of the traitor-general, but who now begin to regard with sympathy the victories of the Republican People’s Army.

It is a covert, but continuous struggle against which fascism feels itself powerless and which is spreading day by day although the fascist Press and radio is full of threats and the fascist military and civil authorities continually thunder against “the grumblers,” “the grouzers” against those who boycott the national collections. The daily growing indignation of the people can no longer be restrained.

The dissatisfaction of the people sometimes finds vent in an open and violent form, such as the military risings and conspiracies in *Tetuan*, *Valladolid*, *Seville*, *Malaga*, *Saragossa* and hundreds of other localities, movements in which civilian elements also took their part. The increasing number of manifestoes and leaflets signed by the Falangist “old shirts” and the *Requetes* of *Navarra* and directed against the foreign invasion and the traitor generals are all symptoms of the same process of disintegration in an insecure hinterland.

The earth which the Francoists and the Italo-German invaders tread is sinking in a little more each day under their feet.

Trotskyists in Spain – Open Agents of International Fascism

By Francisco Anton

Twenty months of war have sufficed to show the world that the anti-fascist people of Spain are fighting with the greatest enthusiasm and fire, and that periodic reverses have not been able to damp their fighting ardour. Such reverses have rather inspired the people with greater courage and imbued them with the firm resolve not to lay down their arms until fascism is completely destroyed and the invaders cleared from every inch of Spanish soil.

Twenty months of war have also proved that the people of Spain will continue to remain unshakeably united under the banner of the People's Front, and that they will be guided in their struggle by the Government which has sprung from their ranks. This unity of leadership continually increases the enthusiasm of the Republican fighters and the effectiveness of their weapons; for this reason the war will cost the fascists dear. It will be of long duration and we can be sure that the invaders will not attain their objective.

We may be convinced that the Government troops will offer stubborn resistance to the new offensive and will smash the desperate attacks of the fascist armies. This resistance will, just as on the battlefields of Guadalajara, finally scatter and destroy the invading forces. This is a risk which fascism and world reaction does not wish to run.

Undoubtedly they want to win the war – and this as quickly as possible. But since they know very well that the Republican troops will continue to offer unshakeable resistance to their attacks, they are on the one hand making more and more use of the weaknesses of the European democracies and on the other hand they are resorting to espionage and treachery, which is carried out for them by their Trotskyist agents, and by provocateurs of all kinds, which they send into Government territory. *Stalin* was absolutely right when he said:

“Trotskyism at the present day is not a political tendency within the working class. The Trotskyists are an unprincipled band of wreckers, diversionists, spies and murderers without an idea between them; they are the sworn enemies of the working class, in the pay of the secret services of foreign States.”

There are people who believe that Stalin's words apply only to the Soviet Union, because the Moscow trials have revealed that Trotsky and his accomplices are in the service of German fascism and Japanese imperialism, and were preparing the ground for armed intervention against the great country of victorious Socialism and for the partition of its territory.

Whoever believes this is deceiving himself dangerously. It is characteristic of Trotskyism that it is prepared to sell its fatherland to the war incendiaries and criminal fascists; this is the *raison d'être* of these scoundrels, the disgraceful purpose which determines the whole of their activities.

In Spain also, at a time when the whole people – Socialists, Anarchists, Communists, Republicans and all non-party people who strive for a future of justice and freedom – were fighting bitterly, confronted by immense difficulties – at a time when the whole people was pouring out its blood to save the inviolability, liberty and independence of the country, at this time the Trotskyists are working in the service of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini, in Republican territory, for the defeat of the Republic, to

deliver up the Spanish people, bound hand and foot, to the mercy of the fascists, the enslavers and destroyers of the people.

In Spain, it is possible to point to a whole series of recent facts which show how the Trotskyists have for a long time been working towards this disgraceful and criminal end, and how, as difficulties increase and the decisive struggle draws nearer they are more and more openly putting forward the enemy's slogans and sowing defeatism, mistrust and disunity among the masses; how they are resorting more and more openly to a protracted activity of espionage, provocation, sabotage and crime, on a large scale.

From this endless series of facts, we can give to the workers and anti-fascists of all countries the most eloquent and irrefutable examples. The most characteristic of these, and the most convincing proof of these Trotskyist crimes, is their *putsch*, in May, 1937, in *Barcelona*. At that time the fascists needed a split in the bloc of the anti-fascists forces, and a weakening of the Republic hinterland, in order to carry their offensive in northern Spain to a successful conclusion.

Agitation in the Press and at meetings, and "ultra-revolutionary" propaganda no longer sufficed. Deeds were necessary. Thus they resolved to organise a revolt in the hinterland, to urge the troops to desert from the front, and to produce chaos in Government Spain. Fascism needed this situation in order to laud troops on a large scale in Catalonia and on the east coast of Spain, and thus deliver a heavy blow to the Spanish people.

This revolt broke out in *Barcelona* on May 3, 1937. The Spanish people and the Spanish Government possess enough proof that the organisers; leaders and instigators of the revolt were the P.O.U.M. Trotskyists, who were carrying out the orders of Franco and the interventionists.

Many days prior to the revolt the atmosphere had been prepared and the necessary conditions created.

At the same time the P.O.U.M. was actively preparing to attack the people and the army from the rear. The *Batalla*, the organ of the P.O.U.M., transformed itself into the organ of the revolt. More violently than ever it attacked the People's Front, the Government, the Communist Party, the United Socialist Party of Catalonia, and the Soviet Union. The provocateurs of the P.O.U.M. were active both in the barracks and at the front.

The P.O.U.M. openly raised against the People's Front Government the banner of armed revolt. In a manifesto published in the *Batalla* on May 1, it said:

"On May 1 this year the Spanish proletariat must strive towards a higher goal, the attainment of power." Events followed one another in rapid succession. Undoubtedly fascism was urging the fascists on to immediate action.

There are still further proofs of the active part played by the P.O.U.M. in the crime of May, 1937, in Catalonia. We read in *the Batalla* of May 1, under the heading "Stop Press" the following urgent announcement:

"All active members of the P.O.U.M. who belong to the People's Military Academy and who have been assigned to various posts in Catalonia or at the fronts are urgently requested to report to the military executive committee (Rambla de los Estudios No. 10, Executive Committee room) as soon as possible, on a most important matter."

Thus the military executive committee of the P.O.U.M. mobilised its men. But how was the provocation extended to the front?

How does one damp the real revolutionary ardour? How does one demoralise the army? How -does one break up -the war front?

In the same paper on May 1 we read:

“There are enough tanks, aeroplanes, rifles and money. But they don’t want to send them to Catalonia, to the revolutionary proletariat, because it is revolutionary, because we want to combine the war at the front with the revolutionary reorganisation of the hinterland; because we do not regard ourselves as ordinary soldiers in a milk and water army, but as fighters for the revolution!”

But how does one lead the troops to desert from the front and involve themselves in the worst kind of excesses?

“We cannot tolerate it any longer that the militia on the Aragon front are oppressed and shabbily treated, while a life of uncurbed and bestial licence is carried on in the hinterland. If Valencia will not give us the money to live, if it cannot supply the troops at the front with food and clothes, we are prepared to plunder and tear the clothes off the bourgeoisie in the open street.”

In this atmosphere of provocation, and after such preparations, the revolt began. From the beginning of the rebellion the Trotskyists added fuel to the flames.

There are proofs, provided by the fascists both in Spain and abroad.

The whole reactionary and fascist press throughout the world spoke during these days of “chaos” in Catalonia, of the rebellion of the people against the “Soviet dictatorship,” of the “collapse of the Valencia Government” and of the “independence of Catalonia.”

At the same time the rebel transmitting stations in Salamanca and Saragossa repeated unceasingly, day and night, instructions such as the following, which sound exactly like those of the P.O.U.M.:

“Hold out steadfastly, weapons in hand.” “Do not cease to fight.” “Unite with your brothers at the front.” “Set up your own Government.”

Further, we know that the enemy at that time interrupted their activity on the Aragon front and kept planes ready to aid the rebels in Barcelona.

During these days the London Non-Intervention Committee, with the agreement of the fascist Powers, wanted to land troops in Catalonia and at other points on the Mediterranean coast, on the pretext of “restoring order.”

This was well known. The Government knew it, indeed it was common knowledge. But we will here reproduce a piece of secret information:

“According to reports from official and semi-official sources, we were able to establish that Gestapo and O.V.R.A. agents took part in the recent events in Catalonia. The Gestapo and O.V.R.A. agents at the various embassies gave regular reports to official German and Italian circles concerning the course of events in Catalonia. It was possible to prove the direct connection between the agents of the Gestapo, the O.V.R.A. and General Franco, whose agents were living in Freiburg (Switzerland), and the Catalonian Trotskyists and fascists. It is known that bayonets and machine-guns have continuously been smuggled into Spain across the Catalonian frontier, and that this is still going on. It is also known that valuables have disappeared from Catalonia and have later been handed over to fascists abroad, in person, to pay for the weapons thus sent. It is known that it was the intention of the fascist agents to do all in their power so that the revolt in Catalonia should last some days, and thus give the international control commission the opportunity of intervening. We know that the German and Italian delegates on the control commission had already discussed with *Lord Plymouth* the necessity of landing troops in Catalonia and at other points on the Mediterranean coast, and, in case the

rebellion lasted any length of time, of restoring order. The speedy liquidation of the Catalonian revolt was regarded by fascist circles as a great blow. We know that one of the Gestapo agents declared that the fact that General *Poza* had been entrusted with the organisation of the fighting forces on the Aragon front was a heavy blow to the work of sabotage in the hinterland, since different methods would now have to be used to supply the groups of 'uncontrollables' with weapons. He also stated that he was disappointed because in spite of all the work done in this sphere it had proved impossible to disintegrate the Aragon front; for this the agents sent from abroad into the ranks of the extremists were blamed, because they had been unable to gain the confidence of all the military leaders on the Aragon front."

But although the nature of the despicable rebellion in Barcelona itself forms conclusive enough proof, there exists further evidence which completely reveals the true face of this band of counter-revolutionaries.

During the months of April and May the Madrid police succeeded in discovering a widespread espionage organisation. More than 200 arrests were made.

Among those in the service of this espionage organisation were elements which were active on the general staff and in units on the central front. They had succeeded in extending their network of communications over the Republican National Guard, the army ambulance service, the information service of the war ministry, the deputy for the organisation of anti-aircraft, the naval and air ministry, the Red Cross, etc.

Their activities were of a most varied nature. They supplied the enemy with secret information of a military character, such as the plans of operations, positions of batteries, etc.

These were the most important of the organisation's activities – typical espionage work. Yet this was not all. The investigations of the police were able to establish the following:

"...this organisation not only carried on espionage work on behalf of the enemy, but it was also preparing an armed rebellion, to take place at some suitable time. In this it relied on a group of activists, and on its excellent relations to extremist groups, such as the P.O.U.M."

Here we clearly see the origin of the May revolt in Catalonia and the whole disintegrating campaign of the P.O.U.M. Do we now understand who were the leaders of this band of criminals?

Documents found on fascists arrested in Madrid contain still more concrete information on the subject:

"The danger of an espionage organisation of this kind and of the possibilities which were open to it on account of its widespread nature can be judged from the following sentences which were contained in a report to the "Generalissimo" Franco. The report was written on the reverse side of a map of Madrid, which was divided into millimetre squares so that certain strategical points could be indicated. On the back of this map the following sentences, written in code and with invisible ink, were brought to light (they were decoded by the technical staff of the General Staff). "To the Generalissimo. Personal. At the moment we are enjoying such favourable conditions that we can inform you of everything which we know of the position and movement of the Red troops. The last reports transmitted by us by wireless, showed a great improvement in our information service."

Thanks to these revelations by the police the people of Madrid now understand why the German and Italian guns were producing such startling effects! By means of this map, divided into millimetres, and through the reports of a secret transmitting station, the fascists were able to concentrate their artillery fire with great exactitude on those points which were indicated to them by the Trotskyist spies.

The police investigations showed still more clearly what a serious danger was presented by the

organisation of an armed revolt in *Madrid*:

“The assembly of fighting forces for a movement in the hinterland, however, is progressing rather slowly. Nevertheless we can reckon with 400 men ready for action. They are well armed and are stationed in favourable positions on the Madrid front. The penetration of our people into the ranks of the extremists – the Anarchists and the P.O.U.M. – is being carried on successfully. We lack a good propaganda leader who – in order to be able to act with greater security – would have to carry on this work independently of us. (A code section follows). In accordance with your orders to me, I myself went to Barcelona and met N., the leader of the P.O.U.M. I inform you of everything which he told me. Communication could not be established between you and him, because the transmitter broke down; but while I was still there the apparatus began to function again. You will already have received the answer to the main problem. N. most emphatically demands of you and our friends abroad that I and I alone shall be the only person to maintain connection with him. He promised me to send people to Madrid to spur on the activity of the P.O.U.M. Through these reinforcements the P.O.U.M., as in Barcelona, will prove a strong and effective aid to our movement.”

This is the most irrefutable proof that the P.O.U.M. had connections with Franco. Who is this “N” who is mentioned here?

It is *Andres Nin* himself, the leader of the traitors. This is why he was arrested and brought up for trial. And Nin’s disappearance, or rather his “abduction” by fascist agents, is further proof of his guilt. The fascists wanted in this way to prevent the Spanish officials from discovering fresh and still more irrefutable proofs of these crimes.

But it was not only Nin, within the P.O.U.M., who was acting on Franco’s orders. The whole of the P.O.U.M. – if we make a distinction between the deluded workers and these spies and traitors – is in the service of fascism.

The members of the P.O.U.M. themselves admit it. Their betrayal is so obvious, their crimes have been so completely revealed, the proofs are so irrefutable, that the wretched creatures in the P.O.U.M. admit their guilt.

In the illegal number of the *Batavia* of July 19, it said in an article entitled “The Counter-revolutionary Nature of the Suppression of the P.O.U.M.”:

“Assuming that the accusations of espionage and cooperation with Franco which have been made against our leaders were well founded, the most natural thing to do would be to punish the criminals speedily, and publicly, as an example – not, however, to punish the whole organisation.”

No honest man, no genuine revolutionary, no anti-fascist fighter – no matter what his ideology is, nor what honest mistakes he has made – could possibly accept this hypothesis. Why do the P.O.U.M. members accept it? Because in view of the overwhelming proof of their guilt they do not want the blame to fall on the whole organisation, and thus they sacrifice one or the other of the bandits, so that their gang can continue its criminal work.

But these kinds of tricks are only too notorious. In the Soviet Union also, every group of Trotskyists which was unmasked declared that it was the only one responsible, and had no connections with anyone else. In this way they attempted to prevent the whole organisation from being destroyed root and branch, and to enable those who remained at large to carry on their work of espionage.

The whole of the P.O.U.M. is in the service of fascism. In the document of the Madrid police, quoted above, it is indicated that

“it is not a matter of a local group, but of an organisation which possesses branches in almost all centres and provinces of Republican Spain.”

The People’s Police in *Barcelona* has recently succeeded in putting out of action a most dangerous and important espionage organisation of a military character, whose most prominent agents were members of the P.O.U.M. and maintained direct connections with Franco’s general staff. They had penetrated into the various sections of the People’s Army and had prepared to assassinate a minister of the Republic and a prominent military leader, as well as carrying on continuous wrecking and sabotage work.

The report of the Barcelona chief of police, which was given to the journalists on October 23, 1937, contains the following statements:

“The search of R’s house, one of the most important members of the organisation, enabled us to find, hidden between mattresses, most significant documents, which, in agreement with the statement of the above-mentioned member of the organisation, proved that one of the best cells of this espionage organisation consists of a numerous and well-organised group of spies who are members of the P.O.U.M.

This group was known as Group C, and every agent of this network of espionage was known by the letter C and a number.

In the bookshop owned by R’s father, when it was searched on September 18, a letter was found sending the following information to Franco’s general staff:

Firstly: The group led by the agent C 16 succeeded on August 26 in destroying three rifles belonging to N division and four of M division, and this at a moment which was decisive for the operations then being carried on.

Secondly: Preparations were being made to blow up the Ebro bridges.

Thirdly: A military train had been held up, carrying arms, an exact list and description of which was given.

Fourthly: Information concerning the artillery on the Aragon front.

Fifthly: The new form of food supplying was being used to incite the people to demonstrations of protest.

Sixthly: Preparations for assassinating prominent leaders of the People’s Army were being continued.

Seventhly: In the same way the organisation of the planned attack on the Minister of the Republic was continued. It was hoped to make use of the opportunity presented when he passed a certain place in his car.

For this purpose two cars carrying men armed with hand-grenades were detailed to follow the minister’s car. The organisation of this murder was entrusted to two terrorists, both members of the P.O.U.M., known by the signs C 18 and C 23.

In the letter was enclosed a sketch of a P.O.U.M. workshop in which bombs were being made.

Investigations made at the front confirmed the accuracy of the information in this letter.

The leadership of the P.O.U.M. espionage organisation complains, in the same letter, that it cannot make use of all its agents because the complete list of trusted agents among the P.O.U.M. membership was known only to the highest leaders who were now in prison in Valencia awaiting their trial....

These are further proofs revealing the part played by the P.O.U.M. in the espionage and provocation service instigated by Franco. They are conclusive proofs that these bands of terrorists not only threaten the lives of Communists but also aim at destroying the most prominent leaders of the whole working-class movement and the Spanish people. *Prieto*, a member of the Socialist Party, was singled out by these murderers because he was Minister for Defence.

The provocateurs of the P.O.U.M. do not only act in the service and under the leadership of Franco. Another important proof is available: a letter which was found in the P.O.U.M. premises, from the German Gestapo agents, and addressed to *Andres Nin* personally:

“Bayonne, July 12, 1937. To the executive committee of the P.O.U.M. I confirm herewith my previous statements. In the groups of the Basses-Pyrenees, of which we have already spoken, differences have arisen which accrue to our advantage, because if we examine them carefully they may prove the nucleus for the formation of another group of our party. The best elements in this group – among them Walter, Babinot, etc., who exert considerable influence, have come into conflict with the group at St. Jean de Luz. The latter refuse to send people for a journey which may be necessary, if they do not receive any concrete instructions from the C.N.T. We must get a power of attorney from the C.N.T., even though the people in Bayonne want to undertake something from which they hope for good results.” This document contains a most interesting statement: ‘Barcelona should send us money and material to make known the attitude of the party, then we will work firmly and unceasingly to steel a group which shall be prepared for anything.’ These, then, are some of the views of the ‘dissenters.’ But more and better is to come: ‘The wife of “Generalissimo” Franco is in France. Do you remember what was said in a previous report regarding the possibility of a stay in Barcelona? And what possibilities will there be for us, in respect to that which Bonnet said concerning “Quim”: ‘I insist above all on the necessity of supporting this group materially and ideologically, since this group may bring us much profit; but for this reason you must see to it that Walter goes to Barcelona. Comrade C has found a connection in Perpignan. There, where I am finally going to-day, it is difficult to get concrete news. I require an answer by telegram, in which you must confirm all this and let me know whether you will apply it into actual practice. Salud and P.O.U.M. (Signed) IMA.’”

The P.O.U.M. has direct connections with the bureau in *Saint Jean de Luz*. What is this *bureau*? As everyone knows, an agency of the Gestapo, one of Franco’s espionage centres in France. And the people who are mentioned in the letter are German espionage agents.

These are documents well known to the authorities. All these proofs are of a recent date. Can we conclude from this that the relations of the Spanish Trotskyists with the enemies of the Republic date from to-day?

Not at all. Like their pope, the criminal Trotsky, the Spanish Trotskyists have been carrying on their communications with the fascists for some years.

In a letter which recently came to light, from the lawyer *Enrique de Angulo* to *Gil Robles*, when the latter was war Minister, it says:

“My dear friend! A friend from Barcelona, the lawyer *Jose Maria Palles*, who, in consequence of his profession and his interests often goes abroad, where he maintains important connections with the international world, informs me that he intends to conclude an agreement with the Paris White Guard and Trotskyist organisations, which will keep him informed about the machinations of the Communists in regard to Spain....”

Enclosed in the letter is an enumeration of the questions on which the White Guardists and Trotskyists offer the Spanish fascists information.

“Information regarding the activity of the Spanish section of the Third International, the leaders of this section, their instructors, and their journeys abroad with details of these journeys.

“Information regarding the system of correspondence functioning between the Third International and Spain.

“Information regarding the illegal activity of the C.P. in Spain itself.

“Information regarding the attempts to create a People’s Front of the Left parties under the leadership of the Third International and the Communists. Further, information regarding the People’s Front movement in France, which may have political consequences in Spain.”

Trotskyism is an international espionage organisation. Who were its agents in Spain? *Nin, Andrade* and *Gorkin* who, as everyone knew, kept up their communications with their French accomplices quite openly.

Its agents were the cronies of *Nin, Andrade* and company, the Trotskyists of all countries who, at a time when the workers and anti-fascists of the whole world demand more and more emphatically aid for Republican Spain, and hasten to support this movement with a spirit of self sacrifice, to overcome the resistance of their governments, when the working classes, Socialists and intellectuals in France, Great Britain, the United States and other countries are moving into action – who at a time such as this say that the Government of Spain is not a People’s Front Government, but a counter-revolutionary one, which persecutes “revolutionaries” such as *Nin*, and that hence the world proletariat and the anti-fascists must not support this- Government or the Spanish Republic.

This is also the main object of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco: to isolate the Spanish Republic, to prevent the world from aiding it in its struggle. This is the aim of the whole of reaction and world fascism, as is proved by the activity of the Non-Intervention Committee. And it is all the more the goal of the Trotskyists, the most devoted and efficient servants of fascism in all countries.

The trade unions and political parties of the working class are the marked prey of these scoundrels. Certain experiences, made in other countries, show us how they carry on provocation when they join in working-class organisations, how they weaken, split and disarm the working class. The Young Guard of Belgium and the Socialist Party of the United States sing a song about the deep wounds which the Trotskyists inflict on the working-class organisations, if they once get these into their clutches.

In order to carry out their ill-omened work more effectively, and because this corresponds to the interests of fascism, the Trotskyists exploit their leaders from the anarcho-syndicalist camp and try to win over the C.N.T.

On May 2, on the eve of the putsch in Catalonia, the organ of the P.O.U.M. the *Batalla*, wrote:

“We are in complete agreement with one of the Anarchist groups which to-day is at loggerheads with those C.N.T. leaders who are loyal to the Government, and published the following slogans: ‘All power to the working class. All economic power to the trade unions’.”

The group to which the *Batalla* is here referring is the group of “*Friends of Durutti*,” which took an active part in the May revolt in Catalonia and contained many provocateurs and fascist agents in its ranks. The C.N.T. later energetically repudiated this group.

The meaning of *Nin*’s words is clear. The alliance which the Trotskyists were attempting to conclude with the C.N.T. was nothing more than a pretext to split it and compromise its name and tradition. This was done in the case of a few groups in May, 1937, e.g., the “*Friends of Durutti*” who were drawn into the rising.

As long as the Trotskyists carried on their destructive work among the youth also, unity could not be

achieved and the minds of the heroic and unselfish youth became most dangerously confused. It was sufficient to expel the Trotskyist elements and energetically combat the Trotskyist ideas, and unity was immediately achieved on a large scale. At the same time a really correct ideology was taught and speedily gained ground. To-day the new youth organisation is preparing most effectively for the present struggles and for the great tasks of the future.

And as long as – in the same way – the *Anarchist youth* was unable to rid itself of Trotskyist influence, the National Alliance of youth could not be achieved – an alliance which is one of the best weapons which the Spanish people possesses for the defeat of fascism. After all this, it is clear that the struggle for unity must go hand in hand with a bitter struggle against Trotskyism. For without this struggle unity will always be in danger.

The soundest, most heroic and vital forces of the Spanish people are to be found among the ranks of the *youth*. The fascist phalanx is smashed by the ten thousand bayonets carried by the youth. Hence fascism must try to split the ranks of the youth movement. And it did try to do so. Luckily these fascist machinations were discovered and the unity of the youth of Spain is an important fact representing a great victory. One of the youth leaders, *Santiago Carillo*, Secretary of the United Socialist Youth recently revealed to the people a new crime committed by the Trotskyists.

“Spanish youth,” he said, “designates the Trotskyists as the chief provocateurs of the defeat and the break through on the Aragon front.”

Spain is engaged in the most difficult and decisive stage of its struggle. This stage will be decisive for the future of the country. The fascist vultures intend to divide this beautiful and rich country among themselves.

In order to prevent this, Spain needs the assurance that there are no spies in the country, that no one is planning betrayal at a difficult moment; that there are no murderers preparing to stab the country in the back.

Yet this certainty cannot be obtained if the people do not know how to smash the Trotskyists relentlessly – the most important driving force of the fascists in organising revolts, assassinations and betrayals. The same Trotskyism must be smashed which in the Soviet Union betrayed the country to help Japan and the Third Reich, to enslave and divide up the magnificent fatherland of Socialism; which murdered many of the best of the Soviet people, such as Comrades *Kirov*, *Kuibyshev* and the great writer *Maxim Gorky*, which with its criminal sabotage activities continually destroyed the lives and wealth of workers and peasants in the happiest and most genuinely free country in the world. It is the same Trotskyism which we saw in Spain carrying on espionage work in the service of Franco and of German and Italian fascism, and provoking criminal revolts, such as that against the Spanish people in *Catalonia*, which was unleashed at a most serious and critical moment. It is the same Trotskyism which, as we have seen, handed over exact information enabling Franco’s guns to murder hundreds of heroic anti-fascists in Madrid with unerring aim. It is the same Trotskyism which organised the assassination of leaders of the proletariat and the Spanish anti-fascists which works for the defeat of the Spanish people so that the fascist criminals – Germans and Italians – can divide up Spain among themselves, and the people of Spain be subjected to the most terrible regime of enslavement, and the blackest decline of culture.

All the vigilance of the Spanish masses is concentrated on this clique of unscrupulous bandits and criminals, who are just as bad as the open fascists. The people of Spain will see to it that they cannot find support even in the remotest corners of the country, so that wherever they are found they may be delivered up to the implacable law of the People’s Justice.

Guerrilla Warfare in Rebel Territory

By Lorenzo

The rear of Franco, where the terrorism and brutality of the German and Italian fascist invaders prevail, is the domain of the guerrillero, the Spaniard who does not want to be a slave, who prefers the free life of a wild animal on the mountainside to that of a bondman in the ranks of Franco. These unknown fighters, poorly clothed and scantily armed, facing hunger and the continual persecution of the fascist punitive expeditions, abandoned their families and took to the peaks and ravines of the Sierra, among eternal snows and the burning sun; ten thousands of men whom neither the threats of Radio Seville nor the decrees of the general staff in Salamanca have been able to intimidate.

Most of them are peasants, miners and labourers, writing with their blood, with their sacrifice the most glorious and moving chapter of the struggle for the independence of Spain.

With old rifles and primitive pistols, the guerrilleros – among whom are boys of 15 and old men of 60 – have succeeded in arming themselves by taking rifles, bombs and machine-guns from parties of Civil Guards, phalangists and requetes sent out against them.

The legendary guerrilleros of the war of independence against the invasion of Napoleon, have come to life once more in the struggle against the traitors and the Italian and German invaders.

As early as in July, 1936, immediately after the military-fascist rising, the first guerrilleros appeared in *Extremadura*, *Andalusia* and *Galicia*. More than three thousand miners of the mining regions of *Aznalcollar*, *Rio Tinto*, *Nerva* and other localities of the province of *Huelva*, after a desperate struggle against the overwhelming numerical and technical superiority of the enemy, withdrew to the mountains. This force was led by a committee elected by the guerrilleros who were divided into groups of 20 to 300 men. In August they were already faced with the necessity of confronting strong enemy columns sent out against them by the fascist command. For the purpose of better defence and in the interest of a better organisation of their attacks, the guerrilleros occupied the peaks of *Aroche*, north of the village of *Aroche*, and all enemy attacks failed to dislodge them.

In the Sierras of *Monsalud* and of *San Pedro*, to the left and to the right of *Badajoz* there are over 3,000 peasants and workers organised as guerrilleros. This zone was called the “*Sierra Front*” by *Queipo de Llano*.

In *Galicia*, especially after the armed defence of *El Calvario*, over 3,000 fishermen and labourers of the whole Galician region gathered in the *Montes de Viena del Bollo* in *Orense* under the skilful leadership of *Manuel Fresco*, the Republican millionaire of *Puenteaareas*.

Manuel Fresco possessed many millions. He never bothered about politics. He lived in his magnificent palace in *El Calvario* until, horrified by the massacres of *Vigo*, *Villagarcia*, *El Ferrol* and *La Coruna*, he called together all the men of *El Calvario* and said to them:

“We would all be sons of a bad mother if we submitted to these wild beasts. Those who are men will defend themselves and die rather than let them outrage our womenfolk. Those who are cowards – let them go away before we are compelled to kill them....”

El Calvario resisted ten days. The resistance of 400 men was at last overcome by an enemy ten times superior in numbers. *Manuel Fresco* withdrew into the mountains of *Puenteaareas* with his men. He armed them all with weapons taken in raids and attacks on the fascists in the adjoining villages. The columns sent out to destroy his army returned decimated.

In every Sierra from *Malaga* to *Granada* there are groups of guerrilleros. Hundreds of *carabineros*, assault guards, elements adhering to the *People's Front*, who could not escape from the region of

Malaga because they were cut off by the invaders in January, 1937, took refuge in the mountains, from where they harass the enemy and where they constitute a continuous menace.

In the *Asturian* mountains whole battalions remained behind, preferring to die fighting rather than surrender.

The organisation, which in the first days was sporadic, without any discipline, has now been perfected and the guerrilleros constitute genuine fighting units, well disciplined and subordinated to a command.

The story of this movement, which constitutes a veritable second front for the fascists, will not be written until we have won the war and have the time and the possibility of collecting all the data. In Estremadura and Andalusia, Malaga, Granada and Cordoba, in Galicia and in the Asturias there are thousands and thousands of men, who although they know nothing of the fate of the Republic and although they are fighting under terrible conditions, are organising, living, fighting and dying to defend their country.

They interfere with railway traffic by blowing up trains, bridges and tunnels; they interfere with road traffic by blowing up cars, lorries and bridges; they destroy military objectives and annihilate fascist guards; they interfere with communications in the enemy rear by cutting telephone and telegraph lines; they collect information needed for our war and disseminate antifascist propaganda among the population in the fascist rear.

The risings in Badajoz and Caceres in December last year and in March this year were due mainly to the propaganda of our guerrilleros.

They are men who combine the audacity of the airman with the hardness of the tank-driver. They are most formidable enemies against whom the fascists mobilise thousands of their best men in order that they may be sought out and killed. Such attempts are nearly always unsuccessful. The guerrilleros have contributed a very great part to all our victories on the war fronts.

The facts we have told here – which we are able to tell because the fascist press itself has admitted them – are only a small part of the exploits of these devoted anti-fascists. Hundreds of facts such as the ones related here can be recorded, and we shall tell of them when the opportunity offers and their publication is possible.

The *Communist Party of Spain* contributed very greatly to the development and organisation of this movement. It organised schools for guerrilleros (the first was that of the Fifth Regiment), provided good cadres and fought against the open hostility of the ex-Minister for War, Largo Caballero, who did not understand this movement and resolutely opposed it. The present Government not only recognises its utility, but looks upon the guerrilleros as its best soldiers and sees to it that their rights are safeguarded.

Incomplete data, gathered from our own press, from the foreign press and from the rebel press, shows that from December, 1936, to September, 1937, 156 trains, 91 lorries, 43 cars, 7 bridges, 69 posts, 10 railways, 2 munition dumps, 5 waterworks and 4 electric power stations have been blown up. The casualties caused among the fascists are estimated at 10,000 to 15,000 men.

In February last year, on the Merida-Caceres railway, a train with 22 units transporting Italian and Moorish troops was blown up and traffic interrupted during a fortnight.

In reply to the decree of outlawry issued in August by Queipo de Llano against the guerrilleros of the *Sierra de Huelva*, the guerrilleros increased their activities: they blew up two trains, three bridges, and a power station; they occupied for several days the mines of San Telmo and provided themselves with dynamite; they took the village of El Patral, inflicting on the enemy 200 mortal casualties. The enemy losses amounted to 200 killed, including a lieutenant-colonel, two captains and six lieutenants.

In the same month the guerrilleros for the tenth time decimated the fascist garrison of *Ardales* (Andalusia), occupied the locality and captured 20 cases of dynamite, 90 rifles and other war material. The enemy suffered casualties in the struggle amounting to 50 dead and over a hundred wounded.

In January, 1937, groups of guerrilleros entered *Malaga* and besieged the military headquarters for 24 hours! In *Motril* they helped the workers in the sugar factory to entrench themselves inside and resist for two hours the foreign troops who wanted to arrest some workers and shoot them. As a result of their resistance the workers were all able to retire in good order and take to the mountains.

Between July and September, 18 trains and 50 automobiles were blown up on the Madrid and Eastern fronts. The enemy suffered 800 to 1,000 casualties. Traffic and transport were held up one to three days. The enemy was forced to employ entire brigades in guarding the railway lines and roads.

Worthy of mention is an episode in which one of the most valiant guerrilleros, killed in action, took part. He commanded fifty men who, after blowing up two trains, fought a battle lasting four days against 3,000 fascists. The group lost 21 men and the fascists several hundred.

In October 200 fascists attacked our guerrilleros in the Sierra de Aroche in the province of *Huelva*. 16 fascists, among them the captain in command, were killed in the struggle and many were wounded. In the same month a convoy consisting in the main of 130 Civil Guards, was suddenly attacked by guerrilleros. The column retreated and, receiving reinforcements the next day, it grew to about 2,000 men, among them a company of Portuguese infantry. The result, according to the Portuguese newspaper *El Seculo* was: the fascists had 200 casualties, the battle lasted 48 hours – and our forces numbered 300 in all....

In October, on the *Aragon* front, a group of dynamiters mined a bridge over the River Gallego. Withdrawing after the operation, they observed a squad of fascists approaching the bridge. The dynamiters waited and ignited the charge at the right moment, destroying both bridge and fascist squad.

In September, 200 guerrilleros occupied *Frias de Albarracin*. In this locality they resisted for ten days a force consisting of three battalions of infantry, cavalry and artillery.

In November a group of guerrilleros blew up a train between, *Alcantara* and *Caceres*, destroying wagons and inflicting a number of casualties which must have been considerable, to judge by the consternation of the fascists and lively comments which circulated in connection with this event not only in the surrounding enemy zone but throughout rebel Estremadura.

On one of the Southern fronts a group of guerrilleros invaded rebel territory and blew up a powder-magazine, the exploding; of which, as previously arranged with our command, was the signal for a victorious attack by our infantry. The enemy, believing themselves attacked from the rear, abandoned their trenches in a panic. The group of guerrilleros returned to its: base with 80 prisoners. The group consisted of 40 comrades.

Another group of nine guerrilleros succeeded in approaching Seville and blowing up two trains and a lorry. This group remained in rebel territory two months and returned to its base after countless adventures with – an increase of four men.

In the province of *Badajoz* twelve guerrilleros occupied the village of *Cordovilla de Lacra* and organised a meeting attended by the whole population, at which they explained the situation of the Republic and the necessity of fighting the fascists.

There are guerrilleros who remained in rebel territory two to three months, entering at one spot and leaving at another spot 450 miles distant after numerous exploits. In some fascist towns, the alarm was raised in the night with much hooting of sirens. Everyone thought it was a Republican air raid. But no, somebody had blown up the power station. This action caused a stoppage of mines and factories for

eight to ten days in important industrial regions. At other times the officers had to drive the Moors into the trains with blows because they refused to entrain, fearing that they would be blown up and killed before they reached the front.

The guerrilleros suffer few losses. They attack the enemy when they are least expected.

Incomplete statistical data of more than a year of guerrilla struggle in *Estremadura* gives the figure of – twenty casualties, and even of these four through an accident. Audacity, daring, decision and initiative are qualities which are combined with prudence and astuteness.

The peasants are the allies of the guerrilleros. They help them and ask for no reward. They see in the guerrilleros the defenders of their interests, the enemies of the landlords and of the Civil Guard, who fight against an unlawful government, against the increasing taxation, against the confiscation of the crops, against the requisition of the cattle. There are cases where peasants, under torture, preferred death rather than betrayal of the guerrilleros to the police.

Time and again wounded guerrilleros have found cordial and careful hospitality in the humble dwelling of a peasant!

The guerrillero finds in the villages the outstretched hand, men ready to help him and to follow him. Here is the answer an old peasant gave to a guerrillero who asked him why he was so friendly to the “Reds”. The peasant said:

“When the ‘Reds’ were here, we, the peasants, tasted a life we had never known before – we had as much money as we wanted. For instance, very often Red soldiers came to our houses asking for food or fruit from the trees, and then we gave them a cheese or a basket of figs. They asked the price of what we gave them and, although we asked for nothing or left the price to them, we always got twice as much as the things were worth. And then, when the ‘Reds’ were here, they cut down some pine woods and we could burn charcoal and make good money, so that in my house we always had some money left, and although we have children we discarded our much-patched shirts and trousers and wore good clothes.

“Such was the state of affairs when *Malaga* fell and this whole area came under fascist rule. Well, when they came in here we all had money and the first thing they said was that the five and ten peseta notes were invalid; later they made us bring in the notes to be stamped. I took in 800 pesetas and they gave me back 400 stamped ones and in the end they told us that the real Holes were no good and that we must give them up.

“In this way they left us without a farthing. But that was not all. They took away my son, who was my helper in everything, and sent him to their front, and I, an old and infirm man, was left alone to keep the little ones and also the one who is at the front, because if he needs a smoke I must send him tobacco, and if he needs clothes I must send him things because they give .nothing at all.

“With the charcoal we could make some money, but these •scoundrels put in prison anybody who burns charcoal, so I have no other income than what the wife and the children earn by making ropes of esparto grass, and those they pay for just as they please.

“You can judge all the others by me, and you can see now why our sympathies are with the Reds, and then fascists themselves who ran away to Granada in the beginning and who are in the village now are in despair: there is no cloth for clothes, there are no alpargatas (sandals), there is nothing! Look what sort of paper we use for cigarettes.”

Franco wants to exterminate this movement. The *internal front* forces him to immobilise whole fighting units which must be used in the mountains, and to guard the roads and railways, bridges and tunnels. They torture and kill like dogs any guerrillero who falls into their hands. Their families, if they live in

fascist territory, are imprisoned and shot. Peasants suspected of complicity or who are found in the mountains at night or who were friends of any guerrillero before the rebellion “disappear.”

In May last year a column consisting of several units of the fascist army was sent into the Sierras of the *Rio Tinto*. It was quite unsuccessful. After this (in June) that charlatan, *Queipo de Llano*, sent delegates several times to the guerrilleros, offering them an amnesty. All his proposals were rejected. On August 6 the same drunkard general published a ban, the text of which was printed in the fascist press and was broadcast by Radio Seville. The ban includes the following paragraphs:

“Article 1. The whole province of Huelva and the corresponding parts of Seville and Badajoz up to the Badajoz-Seville road are to be regarded as belonging to the war zone and service here will be regarded as field and front duty. The above limit can be extended, and will in fact be extended in accordance with the necessity of defeating and reducing the refractory Marxist elements.”

“Article 3. It is expressly declared that the ban published by my authority will be specially applicable in this zone by drumhead courts-martial. The ban, first issued on February 8 of the current year, will be applied with the following provisions;

- a. Persons who supply food or give any other assistance to fugitives in the zone referred to in the ban will be guilty of rebellion;
- b. It will further be considered as an act of rebellion to give information on the position of our forces or merely on their movement to fugitives from the localities;
- c. to leave the localities situated within the area under ban without a permit given for the purpose by the military commander of the zone;
- d. for civilians or soldiers to disobey the orders of the military commander;
- e. to show negligence or lack of zeal in complying with orders or carrying out military duties imposed by the military commander of the zone;
- f. to harbour fugitives or persons considered to be rebels;
- g. to fail to denounce the presence of rebels if known can be regarded as rebellion or complicity in rebellion;
- h. to pass through or sojourn in the mountains without an obvious motive and object may be considered as rebellion or complicity in rebellion.”

Don Fermin Hidalgo Ambrosy was appointed commander of the banned zone. The guerrilleros reacted to the ban by increasing their raids and attacks. In every fight it was the punitive columns who were beaten. The fascists took revenge for their defeat by persecuting the poor peasants in the villages, killing many, looting their houses and raping their women. From April to September, 1937, the fascists devoted greater attention to the mountains in order to destroy the internal front. The press frequently printed notices such as the following:

“Seville. – A few days ago a group of inhabitants and Civil Guards of Real de la Jara undertook a patrol in the neighbourhood of the locality. They surprised a group of about forty fugitives in the Sierra who were coming in twos along the road. Shooting ensued in which two fugitives were killed. The fugitives, who used rifles, machine-guns and bombs, rapidly fled into the mountains, leaving some of their weapons behind.” (*A.B.C.* of Seville, June 26, 1937.)

“*Huelva*. – The Military Governor’s office has received a telegram from the Civil Guards of the Rio Tinto informing him that in a drive undertaken on the 9th and 10th of the month in the Sierra de Aznolcollar the forces of that command destroyed 450 huts built by fugitives, some of them capable of holding as many as fifty persons. At the same time 24 horses and 350 goats were recovered and explosives and arms found. The groups of rebels filtered through near Castillo del Alamo towards the Sierra de Padre Caro and Pena Blanca.” (*F.E.* of Seville, April 15, 1937.)

Since then there has been silence. The fascist press makes no further mention of guerrilleros. The notices about the Internal Front were under the direct supervision of the General Staff in Salamanca. They were all censored. Fascist Spain had to demonstrate that its rear was secure. Very rarely the fascist press is permitted to print notices such as this: "One day General Queipo de Llano had a motor accident on the road but was miraculously saved."

The fascist high command has decided to put a price on the heads of the guerrilleros.

On the *Aragon front* the fascist command pays a price of 60,000 pesetas for a guerrillero chief and 10,000 pesetas for a guerrillero, dead or alive. In *Estremadura* the price is 20,000 for a chief and 5,000 for a guerrillero.

On certain fronts the troops are instructed to erect fortified positions not only in front but at their rear as well (!!!) for fear of ambushes. Over thousands and thousands of miles of railway line the fascists must immobilise whole brigades to guard the lines, the bridges, the tunnels.

Despite the silence of the fascists we know that the guerrillero movement is not extinct, that thousands of peasants and workers, tired of humiliations, starvation and terror, are joining the ranks of the existing guerrilla groups and forming new ones. It is a formidable ally of the Republic in the enemy rear. Far from disappearing, the second front is growing, consolidating and improving its organisation. The guerrilleros are helping us considerably to win the war.

The victorious Spanish people will owe eternal gratitude to those valiant men who in fascist territory, surrounded by enemies and hunted like wild beasts, hold aloft the flag of the Republic and of Spanish independence.

Madrid – Spain's Pride and Example

By Martinez Carton

Madrid has completely justified its title as the capital city of Spain, by its heroism, its political consciousness and its anti-fascist determination. To-day the eyes of all Spanish antifascists are directed with admiration and pride to Madrid, a town almost completely surrounded by trenches, and subjected constantly to artillery and air bombardments by the foreign invaders. Madrid was the spear-head which broke the advance of the Franco hordes in November, 1936, and proved to the world thereby that the strength and heroism of an armed people can stand the hardest tests.

The dignity displayed by the people of Madrid in their struggle for liberty is traditional. In May, 1808, Madrid rose against the invader *Napoleon*, and the citizens of Madrid fought against the invading soldiery on the barricades with knives and sticks, and with all sorts of possible and impossible weapons. They succeeded in delivering a heavy blow to Napoleon's ambitions of world conquest.

Madrid can look back on a long tradition of democratic independence. Throughout the whole of the nineteenth century,

BUENAVENTURA DURRUTTI, <i>Chief of the C.N.T. Militia, killed on the Madrid front on November, 12, 1936.</i>

its streets witnessed a series of mutinies, riots and insurrections. But Madrid is also a cheerful and lively town. The dictatorship of *Primo de Rivera*, which lasted from 1923 to 1930, collapsed under the fatal blow struck at it by the proletariat of Madrid in a huge demonstration in which almost the whole population of Madrid took part to protest against the killing of a worker. The people's mockery of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship also contributed considerably to its downfall. The same enthusiasm was shown by the people of Madrid on April 14, 1931, in connection with the elections which induced *Alphonso XIII* to abdicate, and which were followed by the proclamation of the *Spanish Republic*. The joy of the people expressed itself in mass jubilation on the streets and mass fraternisation. However, there was a note of seriousness in this rejoicing and there were many reminders of the necessity of a struggle for the introduction of social laws by the new Republic, and reminders, too, of the necessity of keeping a watchful eye on the doings of the reaction. As answer to a provocation of the monarchist reaction, the masses again came out on to the streets of Madrid in May of the same year and set light to buildings notorious as centres of anti-Republican conspiracy. Monarchist centres, churches and monasteries alike went up in flames. In the ensuing months, too, tremendous *strikes* took place in Madrid.

From April, 1931, to November, 1933, the *Communist Party* pointed again and again to the necessity of abolishing the feudal remnants in the Spanish countryside once and for all, of raising: the standard of living of the masses, of expelling the reactionary monarchist generals and officers from the army, and of breaking: once and for all the power of the Church as an enemy of the- people. And once again it was in Madrid, the political centre of Spain, in which the proletariat and the masses of the toiling people demonstrated in meetings, processions and strikes that they supported this correct policy. When the reaction came to power again in November, 1933, through the Radical Party of *Lerroux* and the party of *Gil Robles*, the people of Madrid led the whole toiling population of Spain in tremendous protest strikes against the new Government, strikes which already bore the character of a *united front*. And then on April 22, 1934, a *general strike* was declared against a concentration of the fascist forces in El Escorial.

In the same month 80,000 workers were strike. It was the metal workers, the building workers, the printers and the workers of many other trades who encouraged by their strikes the antifascist people of Madrid and gave them confidence in their victory. The strike of the metal workers dragged on for three months, and foodstuffs were collected everywhere on the streets to support the strikers and their families. In the "lower quarters" (working-class quarters) of the town the small tradesmen and assistants contributed either goods or money in support of the strike. The foodstuffs and other commodities were collected in vans which drove through the town. In this strike the people of Madrid documented their democratic traditions once again.

Unity between the Socialists and Communists began in Madrid and spread all over the country. When the *youth* of Madrid held their first unity demonstration in the stadium in September, 1934, 90,000 people attended it. For the first time the workers' militia marched in formation with their red and blue shirts. Later on they were to distinguish themselves and cover themselves with glory in the famous militia regiments and in the people's army of the Republic.

The collisions between fascists and anti-fascists on the streets became ever more bitter, and during one such collision) the young Communist *de Gardo* was killed. Tens of thousands of workers marched in his funeral procession with their clenched) fists held aloft. The opposition of the masses of the people to' the *Lerroux Government*, which proposed to take Gil Robles, the representative of clerical fascism, into its Cabinet, increased tremendously. In October of the same year the masses rose once again throughout the country, and in *Asturia* they seized power and held it for two weeks against Moors and Foreign Legionaries.

Normal economic life came to an end in Madrid, and the aristocratic fascists had to empty their own

dustbins and wait on themselves. Machine-guns rattled in the streets of the capital. The streets of the biggest working-class quarter, *Cuatro Caminos*, were once again stained with the blood of the workers. The movement in Madrid lasted eight days. The trade unions and the working-class parties were prohibited. Mass arrests took place. But in the following month Madrid was again flooded with revolutionary pamphlets and leaflets and illegal working-class newspapers. The illegal trade unions continued to function in the factories and workshops. The sensitive and noble people of Madrid were deeply moved at the sufferings of the masses in Asturia, and the idea spread like wildfire of wearing a black armlet as a sign of mourning for the slaughtered heroes of Asturia. Thousands of anti-fascists in Madrid appeared on the streets wearing this silent symbol of protest, and the Government tottered in the face of this tremendous vitality of the rebellious people.

THE CREATION AND TRIUMPH OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

The activity of the anti-fascist masses compelled the Lerrox-Robles clique to grant certain limited freedom to the people. The Communist Party utilised these hard-won liberties to the full, and in a tremendous *mass demonstration* on June 2 in one of Madrid's biggest halls it put forward for the first time the demand for a *People's Front* as the only way out of the situation. It was the Secretary of the Communist Party, *Comrade Diaz*, an energetic and cool-headed revolutionary, who first put forward this slogan. The idea rapidly spread over the whole country, and under the banner of the People's Front over a million people gathered on a huge field near Madrid to listen to an address by *Azana*, the present President of the Spanish Republic.

Courageously and in a disciplined fashion the people of Madrid then began to mobilise their forces for victory in the *February elections*. Like the masses all over Spain, the people of Madrid realised that these elections would be something more than a mere counting of noses, and that they represented the only means of overcoming the reactionary oppression. The members of all organisations and parties united in the People's Front, and the masses of the Spanish people as a whole, took part in a strikingly disciplined fashion in the electoral struggle and they signally defeated the ruling classes who were responsible for the bloody oppression of October: the bankers, the clerics and their lay supporters, the big industrialists and the rich landowners, and all those who had contributed to filling the cemeteries of Spain with fresh graves and the prisons of Spain with political prisoners.

In Madrid the masses celebrated their *election victory* in a great outburst of popular rejoicing, because they realised that this victory opened up the path to freedom and progress and to the creation of a real democratic Republic.

On the same day, February 17, tens of thousands of men and women streamed to the prisons and demonstrated before the gates for the immediate release of the political prisoners. But immediately the treacherous and criminal intentions of the reaction were made manifest, and they sent their repressive apparatus into action against the demonstrators. In the following months Madrid became the central pulse of all political agitation throughout the country. The masses energetically demanded that the arrogance of the defeated reaction should be tamed immediately, and that the fascist bands who made sudden and murderous attacks with pistols on workers and members of the People's Front parties in the working-class quarters should be disarmed and arrested. However, the men in power revealed fatal weakness; they facilitated the criminal violence of the fascists by their inaction, and the shameless and murderous attacks continued. The weakness of the Government even permitted fascist machinations in Parliament itself, and the reactionary deputies organised deliberate provocations of all sorts.

The Spanish people quickly grew tired of tolerating such crimes and the masses were determined to lend power to their rights and to show the reaction their strength. So that when the armed gunmen of the fascist reaction murdered two Republican officers, *Faraudo* and *Castillo*, who were known to be staunch Republicans, the monarchist leader, *Calvo Sotelo*, one of the chief organisers of the planned

military insurrection, was seized and put to death. His corpse was then discovered at one of the Madrid cemeteries. This incident accelerated the outbreak of the rebellion which the treacherous generals had planned together with Berlin and Rome. Five days after the death of Calvo Sotelo the fascist insurrection broke out.

THE FASCIST INSURRECTION AND THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

The victory of the Spanish people showed that, despite the innumerable provocations of its reactionary opponents, it had made very considerable progress. The progress made by the Spanish people showed itself in the fact that when the military rebellion of Franco broke out the Spanish people not only rallied to the cause of the democratic revolution, but also immediately gave it the modern content of *social progress*.

The occupation of Madrid would have meant a rapid victory for the insurgents in the other parts of Spain, and therefore the fascists had very carefully worked out their plans of aggression against Madrid. They thought they would perhaps meet with resistance from the few regular detachments which remained loyal to the Government, but these they expected to defeat very quickly. They had not reckoned with the masses of the people.

The centre of the military revolt in Madrid was the *Montana barracks*, and what happened there might be considered as decisive for the other barracks. The Montana barracks were situated in a very favourable strategic position on a hill overlooking the town, and the barrack buildings themselves were of modern construction. The civilian fascists joined hands with the military fascists in the barracks and, imprisoning the unwilling soldiers in the cellars, they began the rebellion. The fighting began: on the one hand the masses of the people, who had taken up arms, on the other hand the clique of officers and the caste of fascist aristocrats.

The barracks were attacked by the masses of the people with tremendous élan. A few shells were dropped on to the barracks, but no attempt was made to reduce the barracks by concentrated artillery fire, and the first charge of the workers' militia was sufficient to expose the pitiful cowardice of the parasitic classes when they were called upon to fight alone, without the backing of a mercenary army. In face of the advancing masses the gentlemen in the barracks felt their courage oozing out of them. The members of the militia, with arms in their hands for the first time, charged with tremendous enthusiasm.

General Fanyul, who abandoned his uniform and tried to make his escape in civilian clothing, was taken prisoner together with all the other officers and conspirators who had taken part in the revolt. However, the activity of the enemy was not quite crushed in Madrid, and skirmishes took place in various parts of the town when armed fascists fired on the people from the houses of the rich and from monasteries. But in a few days the streets of Madrid were cleared of armed fascists.

A period of intense organisational work set in. Militia units were sent out into the *Guadarrama Mountains*, which lie 50 kilometres away from Madrid, to hold up the fascist threat to the town. The working-class political parties and the trade unions organised their own battalions, and the *Communist Party* distinguished itself in this connection by the raising of the famous Fifth Regiment, which quickly won general admiration by its heroism, its organisation and its propaganda and enthusiasm, and by such men in its ranks as *Comrades Castro*, who is to-day Inspecting Political War Commissar in the new army of the Republic. The battalions of the Fifth Regiment trained and disciplined thousands and thousands of Madrid citizens and despatched them to the adjacent fronts which were forming everywhere.

A column of rebel troops from *Seville*, made up chiefly of Moorish mercenaries and equipped with modern instruments of warfare, marched through Estremadura opposed only by the shotguns of the

peasants and a few rifles of heroic guerrilla fighters. This column took the town of *Badajoz* and carried out in the bull-ring of the town, one of the most horrible slaughters of unarmed men in history. Machine-guns were used to mow down over a thousand unarmed anti-fascist workers and peasants who had been driven together there like cattle.

Such easy military successes, won against an unarmed people, betrayed by practically the whole of the military caste and compelled to organise a new army out of nothing, went to the heads of the fascist generals. General *Mola*, who was killed a few months later in an aeroplane disaster, announced boastfully that he would take Madrid with four columns. One column advanced from the South over Toledo and Getafe under the command of *Yagüe*, the butcher of *Badajoz*; the second advanced from the West over Maquedo and Navalcarnero under the command of *Varelo*; the third column advanced down on to the capital from the North on the Guadarrama front under the personal command of Mola; and the fourth advanced from the North-East along the Jarama River. Mola generously announced that he would leave open the retreat of the Republicans in the direction of Valencia where they had best throw themselves into the sea. The swollen braggart also announced that he had a “fifth *column*” organised behind the Republican lines from fascists, traitors and other enemies of the Republic.

The boastful crowings of General Mola subsided quickly at the gates of Madrid, and it went badly with the “fifth column.” Within a few days the ever-watchful people of Madrid had broken its back. The town was rapidly cleared of all those treacherous elements who had abused the good-natured tolerance of the people to organise conspiracies. With his vainglorious boastings Mola served neither his own plans nor the well-being of his friends behind the Republican lines, but unconsciously he coined a phrase which was soon to become popular far beyond the confines of Madrid, and which to-day is in use all over the country. The “fifth *column*” is synonymous to-day throughout Spain with the enemies of the Republic and the saboteurs of Republican victory, with all the fascists, Trotskyists, doubtful elements amongst the professional officer caste, the profiteers, speculators, provocateurs, adventurers, and the whole brood of irresponsible and undisciplined elements who endanger the cause of the Republic. All these people fill the ranks of the “fifth column,” an expression which has gone into everyday currency far beyond the frontiers of Spain.

THE ATTACK ON MADRID AND ITS DEFENCE

The column under the command of Butcher *Yagüe* pressed forward over Caceres and took Talavera de la Reina and Toledo, and advanced as far as Getafe. - At the same time Varela advanced over Navalcarnero and actually reached the Casa del Campo. The militiamen had been hard pressed in those terrible days, and great gaps had been torn in their ranks. They were exhausted and their formations were often broken. As a result of the sinister policy of *Largo Caballero* they had no proper reserves. They had no proper war material and they had to face an enemy liberally equipped with German war material and German aeroplanes. In addition, it was not long before the Germans also sent troops.

November 5 and 6 were anxious days for Madrid. The enemy was advancing along the open roads towards the capital, and he had already reached *Carabanchel* and the *Casa del Campo*. On November 6 the Government decided, in view of the serious situation, to move to Valencia. On November 7 the news flashed through the streets of Madrid: “The Moors are at the Toledo and Segovia Bridges!” “They are crossing the Manzanares!” The little river the people of Madrid love so well. The situation was serious. Hatred and anger surged up in the people. Contempt of death was uppermost in the actions of the men, women and children of Madrid. Able-bodied men flocked to the offices of the Communist Party and the trade unions at the appeal of their organisations, and went off in detachments of a hundred to defend the town, riding on motor-lorries and even ram-cars, because the front was not far away. Defiant revolutionary songs sounded, and hundreds of fiery agitators, the forerunners of the political commissars, whipped up the spirit of resistance and self-sacrifice in passionate addresses; and they were in the van at the front as well. On the streets every man, and many women, flew to arms, and

from the masses of the people rose the determined slogan: “*No pasaran!*” “They shall not pass!”

Madrid was in urgent danger. Already the rattle of machine-gun fire, the roar of the artillery and the explosions of mortars could be heard in the town. The fierce bombardment with German 250-kilo bombs set in. Women and children came along the Toledo Road armed with knives and sticks, and with every possible improvised weapon. Others went forward to take up the rifles of the fallen. As at the time of the Napoleonic invasion, the women prepared boiling oil to throw out of the windows on to the heads of the invaders. And others barricaded the windows with mattresses to make a fortress of every house, and to defend Madrid to the last. The four last battalions of the Fifth Regiment still held off Franco and his hordes, and the terrible gaps in their ranks were filled up again and again by reams of volunteers. Of the many war songs of the defenders of Madrid, one at least will go into the lore of the people, the *Song of the Fifth Regiment*:

“Four battalions, the flower of Spanish manhood, defend Madrid.
Four battalions shed the noblest blood in Spain.”

Volunteers collected before the Ministry of Marine. Together with the Marines they succeeded in parrying the hard blows the enemy delivered at Carabanchel. Out of their ranks came a hero of the anti-tank struggle, *Antonio Coll*, who, as the Madrid proletarians had seen in “The Sailors of Kronstadt,” crept forward against the tanks of the enemy with joined bombs to blast them into silence. The morale of the defence increased and they lost their fear of tanks. Many other such heroes came forward, but Antonio Coll was the first and the most popular. He was killed finally, but not until he had destroyed several of the enemy tanks in this fashion. His memory will live on in the hearts of the Spanish people for ever.

It was in this critical situation that the *International Brigade* arrived in Madrid. It was composed for the most part of tried and trusted revolutionaries, hardened in the revolutionary struggle in many countries, men of steel. The noblest blood of Europe, and America, and of the whole world. Fighting for an ideal, the volunteers of the International Brigade went to the front, eager to meet the enemy and with their eyes flashing with devotion. Their march through the town moved the people of Madrid to tears of joy at this magnificent demonstration of *international solidarity*. The men of the International Brigade fought in University City, into which the enemy had already penetrated, in order to foil his plans to advance into Madrid over the Toledo and Segovia bridges. The men of the Brigade stood their baptism of fire magnificently. A great revolutionary fell amongst the dead, *Hans Beimler*, one of the leaders of the German revolutionaries. He had made his escape from the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau and he went to Spain to fight for liberty. He fell in defence of Madrid in the University City.

In December a new offensive was launched against Madrid from Las Rozas and Pozuelo, but once again it was beaten off. The defence maintained its activity, and the people’s army took *Cerro Rojo*, an important position. It was recaptured by the enemy, but the unbroken vitality of the defence made the enemy irresolute.

In February, 1937, the enemy carefully prepared a big offensive from the South-East along the *Jarama River*. This offensive was beaten off with great energy and without the signs of nervousness which had marked previous defensive actions. Despite all these failures, the enemy was still unwilling to give up the struggle for Madrid, and in the following March Franco was compelled by his foreign masters to undertake another offensive. This last offensive against Madrid was launched from the *Guadalajara*, and Italian troops were used. The battlefield was the scene of the *first great victory* of the new People’s Army, which drove back the Italians in great confusion and captured many prisoners and a considerable quantity of war material. Just as the attacking waves, supported by German military technique and war material, broke impotently against the walls of Madrid, so the offensive of the Italian military commander, Bergonzoli collapsed too. The fascist enemy was unsuccessful because he was faced with

a people who preferred death to slavery. They had forgotten that this people had proved its mettle in the fight for the Montana barracks, and that they had already destroyed Mola's famous four columns, and his "fifth column" too.

The fascists then vented their impotent anger at their defeat in the systematic and criminal *air bombardment* of Madrid. The Republican Air Force went into action and on the streets of Madrid men and women fearlessly watched the fierce fighting in the air above them. A tremendous shout of delight went up when the planes of the Spanish Air Force appeared in the sky, the famous "*Chatos*" with their flat propellers. But thousands of women, children and old people were slaughtered. The evacuation of the civilian population to Valencia and Catalonia then began. But the greater part of the population, still insists on remaining in Madrid in defiance of the enemy. The people of Madrid still live in their homes, still take the air on their streets, still congregate in the offices and halls of their organisations, and they patiently suffer bombardments and privations.

THE DEFENDERS OF MADRID

When the Republican Government left for Valencia on November 6, 1936, a *Defence Committee* was formed, consisting of representatives of all the parties of the People's Front and of the trade unions. As the enemy approached nearer and nearer to the town this committee intervened at the critical moment. At its head was *General Miaja*, an old anti-fascist professional soldier, ably assisted by *Lieutenant-Colonel Rojo*, of the General Staff, who has since been promoted to General for his gallant services, and supported politically by the *War Commissar, Anton*. This committee repulsed the enemy and organised the Army of the Centre, which became one of the most efficient sections of the People's Army. It was Miaja who, with the assistance of Rojo and Anton, enforced strict discipline in the army. In carrying out his manifold duties General Miaja was loyally assisted by the secretary of the Defence Committee, the Socialist comrade *Maximo de Dios*. Thanks to his great prestige as a result of his achievements, General Miaja became the best loved General in Spain. His chief war councillors are the Communist comrades *Miye* and *Dieguez*. His closest collaborators for the maintenance of public order behind the lines are comrades of the United Socialist Youth, *Santiago Carillo* and *Cazorta*. His assistants on the commissariat are the U.G.T. comrades and members of the Communist Party *Yagüe* and *Nieto*. The anarcho-syndicalist C.N.T., the Left-Wing Republicans, the Republican Union, the Syndicalist Party and the Anarchist Youth are also represented on the Defence Committee by two delegates each.

Professional soldiers such as *Riston*, who was killed at the front, and *Burillo* and *Ortego*, gave their experience to the task of defending Madrid. Military leaders who have come forward from the ranks of the people, like the popular comrades *Modesto* and *Lister*, lead whole army corps with accuracy and efficiency, and show themselves thoroughly capable of performing all the military tasks with which they are faced. And co-operating with all these men is a whole corps of splendid assistants, military leaders, officers, soldiers and workers working on the staff or in the commissariat. They vie with each other in enthusiasm and self-sacrifice, and stand shoulder to shoulder inspired by one idea; the fascists shall not take Madrid!

THE EXAMPLE OF MADRID

During the weary months of a long defensive struggle the people of Madrid have never lost their morale and their heroism which have enabled them to rise above all the difficulties of the siege. In the first few months of the fighting for Madrid, despite continual bombardment, more meetings and demonstrations of the People's Front parties were held in the town than ever before. The aim of these meetings, etc., was to enlighten the population about the machinations of the "fifth column," to intensify the joint efforts of the people to win the war, and to enlighten them about all the problems which arose in connection with it.

The efficient political work amongst the masses gradually made progress. It awakened the vigilance of the masses and explained every alteration in the position to them. And above all it made valuable contributions towards keeping alive the general spirit of mass resistance which was born in November, 1936.

This good political work, this mass enlightenment concerning all questions, the continual mass discussions, and the constant appeal to the co-operation of the masses in the solution of all problems resulted in the steady strengthening of the spirit of self-sacrifice in Madrid, and, above all, in the foiling of all the machinations of the “fifth column.” Thanks to this excellent political work, the fighting spirit of resistance which prevails in Madrid becomes stranger than ever after each successive bombardment and after each new test of warfare.

In June, 1937, when the defence of the town had been greatly consolidated, a big offensive was organised to free Madrid from the constant artillery bombardments. An attack was launched near *Brunete* in an attempt to break off the enemy wedge. The final aim of the offensive was not attained, but a valuable victory and much territory was won. The second line of the fascists was taken by surprise, and the attack proved the value of such actions for the destruction of the powerful military apparatus of the enemy. The fiercest engagements of the whole war were fought out, and the new People’s Army proved its magnificent qualities to the hilt.

In their hatred the fascists then redoubled their brutal bombardment of Madrid, but the people of Madrid had become used to bombardments; they cleared away the rubble, found new houses to live in and continued their lives as before: a life of daily struggle and daily labour, a life which defiantly faced the enemy one day after the other.

During the middle of 1937 a big campaign was opened up to strengthen the newly-founded *war industries*. The whole of Madrid arose. The strongest voice was the voice of the people’s advance-guard, the voice of the *Communist Party*. It was heard in all factories and workshops, in all streets and in all homes: “Women *workers to the fore!*”

MODESTO,
*Carpenter, Commander of the
Fifth Army Corps
of the Republican Army.*

Thousands of women were taken into the process of production, mostly women who had not worked before in factories, but despite this they gave a splendid example of self-sacrifice and showed their great value at the bench in place of the male workers called up in the various mobilisations.

In many factories the new women workers not only compete with the men who have already distinguished themselves in war-work, but in many cases they have even exceeded the record figures for production, and in addition they keep a wary eye open for saboteurs, whom they expose publicly, and they are constantly improving their technical qualifications.

Another effect of this important political work is that the soldiers defending the town at the front are never completely out of touch with the people, whilst those people who have been left behind work steadily to improve their own military knowledge and to strengthen the defences of the town.

Madrid is ahead of all other towns throughout Spain in the enthusiasm with which it has adopted the *Stakhanov movement*, and that is quite understandable when one knows the circumstances and the influence of the Communist Party in Madrid. Heroic *shock brigades* are at work in the factories of Madrid, and many workers have been killed at the bench by fascist bombs and shells. At the same time work is proceeding to extend the system of *collective restaurants* and *factory clubs*, etc.

Despite certain political difficulties, due chiefly to a lack of understanding, the People's Front in Madrid has maintained the closest contact with the masses of the people, thanks, above all, to the unselfish unity work of the Communist Party.

The leaders of the People's Front regularly visit the trenches and the factories, and the factory workers demand that these demonstrations of the bond between the workers in the factories and the soldiers in the trenches should be held more often, thus strengthening the alliance between the front and the hinterland.

The splendid anti-fascist spirit which prevails in Madrid and the passionate support accorded to the People's Front by the masses expresses itself also in problems such as the *fuel supply* and other supplies. The food stores of Madrid, with its population of over a million inhabitants, is not very great. However, it has been found possible to organise a regular system of rationing. The complete disappearance of parasitic mouths, and the systematic nature of the rationing has led to the avoidance of disagreeable inequalities and to the building up of an *effective system of foodstuffs distribution*.

During the past few months the Communist Party has been mobilising the masses of the people by means of the local borough councils to discuss the problems raised by the organisation of food supplies, fuel supplies and housing. The Communist members of the councils discuss these problems openly with the people and as a result they have obtained many very valuable ideas and suggestions for a juster and more effective distribution. This excellent policy has been taken up by the other fractions of the People's Front and recommended to the municipalities as an example worth following in order to obtain a permanent co-operation of the masses of the people with the authorities in all questions concerning the life of Madrid.

The General Secretary of the Communist Party, Comrade *Jose Diaz*, has often put forward Madrid as an example to be followed by all other towns throughout Republican Spain. And he is quite right, Madrid is indeed a brilliant model of fighting courage, efficient organisation and anti-fascist spirit. And it can be said with complete justification that it was to a great extent the persistent and steadfast political work which maintained and augmented the virtues of the Madrid population. The Communist Party, in accordance with its duty, was in the van in the performance of this political work, and it co-operated loyally with all other parties and organisations of the People's Front in this work.

For all these reasons the whole of Spain to-day is firmly convinced that should the situation of November 7, 1936, arise again, Madrid will again live through glorious days and repulse the fascist enemy at her gates with the same heroism and self-sacrifice.

At the same time the people of Madrid are finding time not only to perfect their war organisation, but to protect the valuable monuments of their city with permanent guards of brickwork from the shells and bombs of the enemies of art and culture, of the men who shamelessly burned scientific books on the streets of Berlin. Amongst the monuments thus protected are various representations of the old Greek gods, and the good humour of the Madrid people even in their darkest days exemplifies itself in the popular witticism: "the twilight of the gods."

Revolutionary writers, poets and musicians have dedicated their best works to the city of Madrid, but the final and concluding page of the city's own great work has not yet been written. Madrid, the heart of Spain, the epic city of the Spanish Peninsula, and the pride and joy of her inhabitants, is still

defending the cause of world democracy in the trenches at her gates.

The Anti-Fascist Heroes of the Spanish People

By Eusebio Ciorra

The wireless broadcast the news to the four corners of Madrid:

“A seditious movement has broken out in several localities of Africa, but the Government considers its forces sufficient to cope with the rising.”

The military-fascist rebellion had broken out.

The working class understood that only its own force, only its own heroism, offered the possibility of salvation. The people did not hesitate an instant in demanding for its defence the only weapon it could oppose with any effect to the armed rising of fascism: rifles.

The Communist Party of Spain most emphatically maintained this slogan in the hurried meeting of the People's Front and the councils of the Government which showed itself every minute more frightened, more riddled with treason and more hesitant and irresolute.

Arm the workers! Arm the popular masses! Organise the defence of the Republic through the workers and the anti-fascist masses, the only forces which could save it and which constituted its true support.

Yet on the morning of July 18 the popular masses had not received arms. But they had instructions to seize them. This was done.

In *Madrid* political tension reached its culminating point. The workers gathered in the premises of their organisations. They demand weapons. They insist on getting weapons. A commission of the People's Front explains to the State Department the necessity of acting with speed.

That night the first lorries with groups of workers arrive in Ventas, Cuatro Caminos, Pacifico and Parque de Artilleria, where the first weapons are distributed.

In Parque de Artilleria, where the first dozens of rifles and carbines were distributed, inexperienced hands eagerly examined the weapons and obstinately struggled to discover how they worked. Those better informed explained to others:

“Look! Like this... with the right hand pull back the breech, slip in the cartridge here, and it is all ready to fire.”

The latest news of the position in the barracks of Madrid arrived. The Montana barracks, main centre of the movement, was in open mutiny. General *Fanjul* and a few hundred surreptitiously-introduced falangists had incited the troops to rebellion. It was imperative to act immediately, and the people made ready to do so.

On July 19 the day began with the roar of a Republican aeroplane, which dropped leaflets inviting the insurgents of the Montana barracks to surrender and with the thunder of a gun battering the stones of the old barracks.

The people, the masses, their tremendous heroism, their unsurpassed courage, their titanic strength rolled like a landslide against the fortress of the military, who opened fire against the oncoming human avalanche.

The first ranks of the crowd fell, mowed down by the machine-guns worked by officers livid with rage

and fear.

The Assault Guards – the only really loyal force – which was in the midst of the crowd, attempted to bring order into the attack. It was not easy. The people of Madrid wanted to get a grip on the throat of the infamous traitors. It was easy for the besieged to butcher the advance-guard of the masses. But the crowd passed on, over the bodies of the killed and wounded. They advanced in the midst of the frantic rain of bullets. With miserable rifles, with overheated pistols, with their bare hands, they were determined to penetrate into the barracks.

They stormed over the central gateway; the flood, the masses reached the stone staircase which led to the inner courtyard of the barracks. A volley from concealed guns attempted to hold back the crowd.

But the first soldiers emerged now, raising their rifles and shouting: “Viva la Republica!” They embraced with a firm embrace the workers of Madrid who came to storm their barracks. In the dormitories of the troops, in the messrooms, in the big hall of the barracks where the flags were kept, miniature tout terrible battles were fought between the people and the rebel falangists and officers. These warriors without honour fell beneath the angry hand of the masses. *Fanjul*, surrounded by a mass of cigarettes, morphine and brandy, stood livid with fear. His officers guarded the door with pistols at the ready. It was no use. The masses were there already. The people passed over the tremulous barrage of shots and tore off the epaulettes of General Fanjul.

The mutiny had been prepared in the military barracks of Madrid: Alcala, El Pardo and Carabanchel. The popular forces, the masses, with a rudimentary organisation of military formations, rushed to the citadels of the traitors to overcome their resistance.

The uniform of the nascent anti-fascist militia was the blue overall, stained with the oil of the factories and the grease of the workshops, the overall of the working class. It was the overall, proletarian garment of the masses. The overall, glorious uniform of the people, in arms for its freedom. The Assault Guards also donned a kind of blue overall and looked more than ever like the brothers of the workers. And also more, than ever like a force belonging to the people.

In the barracks of *Alcala de Henares* the mutineer cyclist battalion was subdued in a few hours. In *El Pardo* a fascist column was overcome. It advanced with a treacherous cry of “Long live the Republic!” which had already served in various places to camouflage the rebellion.

The battalions of the people, having won their victory in Alcala, turned towards *Guadalajara*. The lorries of the people’s militia set out amidst encouraging shouts, the waving of red and Republican flags the brandishing of rifles. A few loyal officers, among them Commander *Ristori*, one of the most energetic and best loved heroes of the Spanish people, directed the operations.

Guadalajara was besieged. A considerable force was surrounded here without courage to enable it to resist. Its superiority in weapons, in organisation and in natural defences was of no avail against the ardour and courage of the people, and the gallantry of the chiefs true to the Republic and to the people. Guadalajara fell. A few hours of bombardment. Bloodshed among the Republican ranks. Machine-gun fire against some houses – and a handful of despicable Scoundrels feel the barrels of our rifles against

ENRIQUE LISTER, <i>Colonel in the People’s Army, formerly a Building Worker.</i>

their chests. Ristori telephoned to the Prime Minister. An amusing anecdote is told of this conversation:

“But where are you telephoning from? Didn’t you receive my orders?”

Ristori apologises penitently at the other end of the line:

“I am sorry, sir. I was busy taking the town of Guadalajara with the forces of the people.”

.“???!!!”

“Yes, sir. I am speaking from the Civil Governor’s office in Guadalajara.”

But a more serious danger was advancing along the roads leading to Madrid from the Sierras. The columns of General *Mola* had reached the environs of Guadarrama, thirty miles from the capital city, and the heights of Somosierra.

The people in arms fought with unprecedented determination against a whole, powerful, professional army. They pushed it back in Guadarrama to the mountain crest of Alto de Leon, and the dominant positions of the enemy were tenaciously attacked with an epic heroism which no river of blood could quell.

Here stood the best sons of the working class, the leaders of its parties and organisations. Here was *Francisco Anton*, Secretary of the Communist Party of Madrid, with his carbine and in his worker’s overall; here was *Francisco Galan*, brother of the hero of Jaca, militant Communist, returning to his profession of soldiering in order to defend the Republic.

The best workers, the best anti-fascists came to fight – and to fall – in the *Sierra*. It was heroism indescribable, extraordinary, unprecedented; the terrible heroism of the masses who drain from their unsubmitting hearts their last resources in order to win the struggle.

The enemy was already checked by a force it could not despise: the people in arms.

More hundreds of militiamen succeeded in taking the city of *Toledo*. In Toledo the Military Academy and the whole Civil Guard of the province, concentrated in the provincial capital, had taken part in the rebellion. Its geographical situation makes Toledo appear impregnable. But the advance of the people was not held up by the curtain of fire which was to have barred its passage. The rebels felt themselves overwhelmed by an inconceivable force. The people fought its way through to the Plaza Zacodover. The enemy retreated into the underground fortress of the Alcazar with an arsenal of arms, with enormous stocks of food and with several hundred women and children.

Toledo was completely in the hands of the Republic. The fortress of the Alcazar remained guarded by Republican rifles.

For the Government the situation of *Catalonia* was a tormenting uncertainty. Catalonia is the most important industrial and manufacturing province of our country. Keeping it or losing it made all the difference in the winning or the losing of the war.

The people of *Barcelona*, knowing of the mutiny in Africa and in a few Spanish provinces, but without precise information on the events of Madrid, were standing by, ready to spring at the throats of the traitors. They had hardly any weapons at all. The working class and the masses in general had nothing but their heroism.

On July 19, in the afternoon, forces of the Army left their barracks and marched into the city. A general strike was proclaimed as a revolutionary measure, as it had been in Madrid and other places. Workers’ patrols were organised. The Government of the Generalidad had at its side a loyal force: the Assault

Guards.

The first shots were fired. The workers rapidly flung up barricades in the central parts of the city. They fell upon the soldiers with their bare hands in order to disarm them, they went for the weapons with bare chests in a ferocious struggle, a battle to the death in which two or three proletarian lives were exchanged for a rifle.

The popular forces turned to the barracks where the situation was the most dangerous and the rebels strongest. It was known that *Atarazanas* was the headquarters of the traitors and their chief *Goded*. The workers understood that to defeat and take prisoner General Goded meant to master the movement throughout Catalonia.

So *Atarazanas* was the objective the people singled out for its first victory. The irresistible force of the masses overwhelmed *Atarazanas*. The workers who took their weapons from the soldiers were also able to take guns with their epic heroism. The lorries full of workers rushed the guns like an iron battering-ram, either to destroy them or to take them from their traitor gunners.

The forces of the people surrounded *Atarazanas*, and shouting "Long live Catalonia!" "Long live the Republic!" orders were given for an attack. A hero, a fighter of the working class, a revolutionary militant of the C.N.T., *Francisco Ascoso*, Anarchist, who led a strong contingent of the people's forces, fell riddled by bullets.

The Assault Guards and the workers went forward against the courtyards of the barracks. Like *Fanjul*, *Goded* felt the hand of the people on his shoulder. He was taken away between Assault Guards.

That same day Catalonia, which had lived in a few hours one of the greatest episodes of our struggle, set about organising the columns of militiamen who were to go out to defend Aragon.

The heroism of the masses had triumphed in Catalonia as in Madrid,

As in Madrid, a Catalan militia was formed of the best sons of the working class and of the people. The veteran fighters of the revolution assumed military posts of command.

The Catalan militia began their march towards *Alto Aragon*, where the troops of *Cabanellas*, the rebel gang-leader of Saragossa, were advancing, possibly with the intention of occupying Catalonia.

The popular advance in its first days was carried forward by the irresistible élan given by the ardent heroism of the masses, things which in theory, in the cold light of reason, seem improbable, were achieved by the people when from its creative faculties and its resolute will it developed the necessary energy and confidence.

Columns of Catalan militia reconquered *Alcaniz*, *Bujaraloz*, and the Aragonese town of *Caspe*.

The struggle was a guerrilla war, but so heroic in its vigour that it succeeded in checking the fascist battalions and reconquering a considerable part of Alto Aragon for the Republic.

Catalonia was free, liberated by her people, with the enemy far distant from her geographical frontiers.

Of the working-class and Republican forces who defeated the fascist mutiny in Barcelona and preserved Catalonia from her enemies, one name began to acquire the dignity of a national hero: *Buenaventura Durrutti*, leader of the C.N.T.

In other parts of Spain as well, the people scotched the snake of military-fascist rebellion in its infancy.

Andalusia was one of the centres where the insurrectionary movement broke out with the greatest brutality. *Seville* fell after short and heroic struggle on the barricades, in which many proletarians of Seville lost their lives.

In Seville – as in Cadiz, as in Cordova, as in Galicia, as in Navarre, as in all regions where the fascist movement overpowered the cities – the workers, the popular masses were unarmed. The cowardice and the treachery of the Republican authorities were the best allies of the mutineer officers.

In *Malaga*, the struggle produced episodes worthy of an epic.

The rebellion broke out on the 18th. The rebel troops came out into the streets, the quiet streets of Malaga. The Civil Guard patrolled the streets. Their actual attitude was unknown.

In the municipal council the leaders of the working-class and Republican parties were preparing to defend the city. The Assault Guards were the armed force which had remained loyal and was sharing with the people the task of defending Malaga. It was a magnificent defence. Barricades, rustic shotguns. Useless old pistols. Carbines in the hands of the workers.

The first shots cracked and the rebel regiment attempted to advance against the Town Hall. From the windows of the building the rebels were held at bay. Hoping to end the struggle, the dark ranks of the Civil Guard approached. But the struggle was soon ended. The people leapt from behind the barricades and fell on the leaders of the rebel forces, a few soldiers were freed. The mutiny was defeated.

The heroic struggle which the Spanish people has now been carrying on for more than eighteen months – no longer against the native military clique and the reactionary castes of Spain but against invading armies of two foreign Powers – has given us not only examples of the heroism of the masses, not only a living proof of the striking power of a people when it unites to take arms in its own defence – it has also shown us of what individual heroism those exceptional men and women who are the glory of the Spanish people and nation are capable.

They are nearly all men and women with a revolutionary tradition, steeled by the long struggle for liberty. They are militants of the anti-fascist parties and organisations who constitute the Spanish People's Front.

It is not easy to select for this narrative, from a long list of heroes, the antecedents and the exploits of each. We shall mention a few and in their story will be tacitly included all those who have fought and fallen to make the soil of Spain the spot where the barbaric forces of international fascism suffer their mortal defeat.

Lina Odena was a Communist girl in the flower of youth. A seamstress by profession, she worked in Catalonia in the organisation of Young Communists. She was courageous, capable, brilliant. She found her way into the factories of Barcelona with correct slogans of propaganda, she taught the workers, she participated in the struggle with the vanguard of the proletariat and suffered persecution and imprisonment with dignity. In October, 1934, Lina Odena had already gained the reputation of a heroine. Later she worked in Madrid. The young workers of Madrid held in great affection this intelligent, resolute, indefatigable girl gifted with a magnificent organising ability. The July rising found her in Almeria engaged in work of the organisation of which she was a militant member. Lina Odena immediately hurried to occupy a post in the vanguard of the struggle. With the dynamic energy which was her nature, with the resoluteness which was the best part of her courage, she organised one of the militia columns which went out to fight on Andalusian soil. Lina was commander of this column which occupied the Granada front, a handful of Andalusian workers and peasants who fought with the heroism inspired by the example of such a commander.

Lina Odena used to inspect the outposts of her unit and to go on patrol duty herself even into enemy territory. Her boundless daring proved her ruin. She went out alone with her driver in a tiny car, armed with her pistol which she always carried. She had already passed the Republican outposts and moved in that fringe of no-man's-land which separates the combatants when a discharge of rifle-fire called a halt to her car.

“Out of the way!” shouted Lina, prepared to defend herself.

The car stopped, surrounded by dozens of Moors from the African legion. The car served as a barricade for Lina and the frantic pistol-fire which she let loose. The driver raised his hands and surrendered to the Moors. Lina had no intention of surrendering. The men of the Rif coveted her courageous youth and her renown – they wished to take her alive. The High Command in Granada would give a good reward for the body of the young Communist girl. Lina’s little pistol could not hold up the Moors for long. Only one cartridge remained in the magazine. That cartridge spent, she would have to surrender. Lina did not want to be either booty of war or a subject of savage torture. The last bullet of her pistol shattered the young, glorious and firm brow of Lina Odena.

The dead body with its five-pointed stars on the sleeves and clots of blood on the face and shoulders was carried away shoulder-high by the Rifs. They cut off her breasts and smashed her skull. *Varela*, the butcher of Granada, it is said, remonstrated with them:

“You should have done this while she was still alive.”

That day thousands of working women, thousands of antifascists, the terrorised population of Granada saluted in their ardent hearts the' desecrated corpse of Lina like a flag of battle and vengeance.

Many other women fell in the struggle. Girls who in the first days occupied a post of combat. Among them was *Antonia Portero*, militant of the United Socialist Youth, well-known to all workers of Madrid, intelligent in action, of a resolute temperament, a conscious revolutionary. She was killed in the Sierra, in the July days. She was defending a machine-gun. The bullets of the enemy stretched her lifeless over the levers of her gun. The youth of Madrid engraved the name of this heroine of our cause in their hearts with indelible letters.

In the days of the retreat from *Talavera* fell *Andres Martin*, leader of the United Socialist Youth, member of the Spanish Communist Party and one of the best-loved young chiefs of the revolutionary generation of our time. The history of Andres Martin contains brilliant pages of struggle and persecution. A worker, he joined the revolutionary movement when almost a child yet. In July he fought in the first struggles and organised the “Pasionaria” battalion in the famous Fifth Regiment. He was one of the commanders of that regiment. He covered himself with glory in the battles of Sigüenza and on the Estremadura front. Andres Martin fell wounded near Oropesa, fell wounded like a hero, with a bullet in his breast.

When the Republicans retreated from Oropesa, Andres Martin remained behind in hospital, weak from loss of blood. It was impossible to rescue him, because the loyal forces who remained behind to defend the place were crushed by Italian tanks. The barbarians entered the hospital with drawn knives. A horrible, criminal slaughter of helpless men, bleeding from fresh wounds ensued. Andres Martin was asked who he was. He replied without fear, with revolutionary pride, stronger than the savages who were about to murder him: “I am the commander of the ‘Pasionaria’ battalion. I am a wounded soldier of the Spanish people.”

They dragged him from his bed with kicks and blows, made him dress and hustled him away to the fascist commander who wished to obtain information from Andres Martin. Neither torture, nor the laceration of his wounded flesh, of his fresh injuries, could break the impassive pride of the young Spanish anti-fascist. With a mere spark of life remaining in him they put him up against a wall to face a firing squad.

He found time to shout:

“Long live the Republic! Long live the Communist Party!”

The Spanish intellectuals have also given us their martyrs and their heroes. The most illustrious men of

science, arts and letters in Spain remained loyal to the people and understood that the fate of civilisation was being decided by the rifles of the people.

Among these martyrs *Federico Garcia Lorca*, the greatest contemporary poet of Spain, figures as a symbol of the victims sacrificed to fascist bestiality. Garcia Lorca was not a political militant. He was a great poet. His terrible crime was that he had written a poem describing the activity of the Civil Guards, those traditional butchers of the Spanish workers and peasants.

Garcia Lorca was working in retirement in *Granada* when the fascist rebellion broke out. Debased “señoritos” drunk with hate and savagery sought him out to murder, in the person of the poet, a magnificent representative of the intelligentsia.

VALENTIN GONZALES, "El Campesino," Major in the People's Army.
--

The Spanish intellectuals have also fought with weapons in hands in the ranks of the people. One of their heroes was the sculptor *Emiliano Barral*, who fought on the fronts of Madrid with a rifle in the hands that had hewn the marble statue of *Pablo Iglesias*.

Emiliano Barral was one of the foremost sculptors of Spain. He was also a revolutionary fighter. He knew that it was his art too which was being defended in the trenches of Madrid. He went out to fight and to die like a hero. Our people will never forget the statue he erected to himself with his life and his death.

Of the Spanish intelligentsia, the teachers also gave splendid fighters. Battalions were formed of school teachers only, most of them members of the Union of Educational Workers. The teachers have their own heroes. One of them is *Felix Barzana*, commanding the battalion which now bears his name. He was a militant Communist and a defender of Madrid in the historic days of November. In those days he met his death. His battalion fought gloriously at the gates of Madrid, forming one of those walls of steel against which the fascists dashed themselves to pieces until the invading troops were dislodged from the Madrid suburb Barrio de Usera. Felix Barzana was killed by a hail of enemy bullets in his Republican trench.

The Popular Army of to-day, the army of the Spanish Republic, has for its foundations that militia which the masses, their parties and organisations and above all the Fifth Regiment improvised out of the first fighting units which defended with their bodies the liberty of the Spanish people – above all the Fifth Regiment.

This army is led by those professional soldiers who maintained and proved in battle their loyalty to the lawful Government of Spain and by leaders from among the people, by commanders from the working-class and the anti-fascist ranks.

Enrique Lister was a quarry worker before July 18, 1936. He is a worker and the son of a worker. Often he tasted the bitter bread of emigration and – while very young he emigrated to Cuba – exploitation. A militant Communist since his early youth, he did not escape the persecutions of the bourgeoisie, and in 1914 had to emigrate once more, this time to the U.S.S.R. Returned to Spain, he devoted himself with

all his forces to the work of the Party. In the July days he fought with the popular militia in the Sierra de Guadarrama. He was one of the workers who organised the Fifth Regiment which became the quarry and the workshop where the most important nucleus of recruits for the People's Army was found and shaped.

The battalions of Lister enjoy an almost legendary reputation of heroism and strength.

Later Lister commanded a brigade. A brigade of four glorious battalions. Of two of them, the battalions "Victory" and "Dawn" nothing remains but an imperishable memory of the anti-fascists who fell with their faces to the enemy. The Lister brigade was the shock troop which in all difficult situations set an example of striking power and tenacity. It fought heroically in *Toledo*. In the desperate days of the retreat from *Talavera* Lister was in the first line with his men, covering the retreat. We find him on the *Guadalajara front* first checking and then routing the Italian legions, we find him in the taking of *Brunete* where he wrote new glorious pages in the history of his brigade. When the enemy launched a human avalanche of his best shock troops against the Republican positions of Brunete, Lister was the first to withstand the hurricane of machine-gun fire; then he opened a way for himself with a handful of riflemen and his own sub-machine-gun, like a common soldier through thousands of fascist mercenaries. No one would have thought that this man, who passed through a hail of bullets, without ceasing to fire the weapon with which he defended himself, is the commanding officer of a division. But such are the leaders of the People's Army. Lieutenant-Colonel Lister is one of the bravest of the People's Army.

Lister. Always Lister. There is no episode of our war in which this name does not appear. The culminating point is the battle of *Teruel*. In the battle of Teruel it was no longer solely the gallantry of Commander Lister, but his military ability and the enthusiasm, bravery and discipline he was able to instil into his soldiers, which foiled one of the decisive counter-attacks of Franco, whose every effort to reconquer Teruel failed before the strategic skill and courage of the 11th division. That day, the most important of the war, resulted in the promotion of Commander Lister to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, the High Command of the Republic thus overruling a decree of the Largo Caballero Government which limited the positions to which a leader issued from the people could rise to the rank of Major.

Commander Modesto was a carpenter. He belonged to the Communist Party. In July he also participated in the organisation of the Fifth Regiment. He was in the fighting line from the first day. Later he fought in battalions with such glorious records as the *Thaelmann battalion*. The Thaelmann battalion was one of the battering rams of the People's Militia. Commander Modesto steeled it in the Bolshevik tradition. Of the wealth of its glorious exploits we may record this one:

Aranjuez. Thirty miles from Madrid. The enemy is attempting to take the road in order to deprive the capital of the Republic of this means of communication. It was October, in the days of disorganisation. The forces which were to have garrisoned Aranjuez were retreating, betrayed by their chiefs or sabotaged by lack of decision, cowardice and indifference of a few professional officers. Provocateurs also played their part in affecting the demoralisation of our forces. But the Thaelmann battalion stayed where it was. Its Commander Modesto, cold, impassable, had said: "They shall not pass *here*." The battalion was protected by a slight rise in the ground. Aranjuez was behind it, to one side. The enemy artillery was battering the ground near enough. The men could hear the panting of the Rifi troops and the resounding gallop of the cavalry. Modesto only said: "They are here. Fix bayonets." For the Thaelmann battalion had run out of its ammunition. They were there, the first ranks of the attacking enemy. The men of the "Thaelmann" went over the top and no one even knew how – for there is no precise explanation at any time of the effect of heroism – the Rifi troops recoiled and though the "Thaelmann" company was decimated, Aranjuez was saved.

Modesto also fought in the defence of *Madrid*. He was by now chief of the 5th army corps, formed of

the best elements of the Army of the Centre. Full trust was placed in Commander Modesto on account of his shrewdness, his military knowledge, his reliability. On the big maps in the quarters of the General Staff he planned the operation of Brunete and directed that battle which was to compel the enemy to cease its attacks in the north.

Modesto, chief of the "Thaelmann" battalion, now chief of the 5th army corps, tempered, like most of the popular commanders, in the fire of battle, in the military school of lead and blood, is to-day one of the most prominent leaders of the Republican Army.

El Campesino (peasant) has gained the reputation of being an excellent soldier. His nickname shows his fundamental oneness with the rural population. El Campesino is a member of the Communist Party. He began the struggle with Galan in Somosierra. He fought battles like the battle of *Gascones*, of great importance for the defence of the capital. The forces of El Campesino are justly famed for their courage. Joining in with Lister in the defence of Madrid, El Campesino held the first-line trenches of *Carabanchel*, and covered himself with glory. Later he fought at *Guadalajara* and took *Brihuega*. He participated in the fighting at *Brunete* and occupied the village of *Quijorna*. The people speak of El Campesino and of his men as of miraculously invulnerable warriors. El Campesino is another of the outstanding heroes who command the People's Army.

Cipriano Mera also occupies an important place in this group of commanders risen from the ranks of the people. To-day he commands an army corps. Up to July 18, 1936, he was a bricklayer. He showed his courage and ability in many battles. He was one of the heroes of *Guadalajara*. He was able to fortify his positions there in a magnificent way and to introduce military discipline to units of Anarchist origin which resisted all efforts to incorporate them in the cadres of the regular army. Cipriano Mera is a revolutionary member of the C.N.T. and is now fighting as an army commander for the victory of the Spanish Republic.

The Political Commissariat was created in order to maintain the fighting spirit of the People's Army, to teach incessantly, to co-operate with their commands and inspire them with the decisive striking power. Before the institution assumed an official character, the militia already had a kind of political delegate in each unit whose job it was to activate the soldiers in the political sense and to assist the commanders.

The institution of the commissars is a school of heroes. Commissars have fallen in the forefront of the battle. They have, by their example and their ardent words, solved the most difficult situations. They never cease to explain to our army the meaning and object of the struggle. The commissars are the backbone of the Spanish Republican Army.

Commissar Belmonte, of the Socialist Party, bequeathed to the Commissars as his last will and testament the correct slogan: "Be the first to advance and the last to retreat." Belmonte was killed in Madrid. He fell while urging his men forward, a living example of what the mission of a Commissar should be.

Commissars like *Santiago Alvarez* of the Lister forces, like *Marquina* who served with El Campesino, like *Delage* are the heroic expression of the ideas represented by the Commissars.

The list of their dead and of their heroes would be endless. The Commissars were the soul of the resistance which saved Madrid from the fascist invasion.

Our corps of Commissars based its activities on the historic example of those Commissars of the Red Army of the Soviet Union, who forged the Bolshevik conscience of that force and made the weapons of the workers invincible.

Side by side with the heroes given by the people to the battle fronts stand those heroes who win battles of sweat and toil in the workshops.

It must be remembered that the *Communist Party* fought from the very first moment for the intensification of the production of armaments. It demanded that the nationalisation of the war industries should ensure the planned equipment of our armies. Meanwhile it formed voluntary shock brigades who disregarded the holidays of the calendar and worked without more respite than was absolutely necessary to keep themselves going.

There is as yet no statistical record available of the feats of these heroes of labour. Madrid, a shining example in everything, has also shown an example in this field of activity. The *Women of Madrid* have been able to replace the men in most war industries. Thus the factory of electrical material, “*Standard*,” was converted to war purposes, and the girls working there had to learn a difficult technique. But the heroism of heart which is characteristic of the people, the ardent desire to serve the war and with it the cause of victory, enabled these girls to shorten to a few hours the training which normally would have required several months. The production of the “*Standard*” works has risen steadily. Groups of Stakhanovites have been formed. Rewards are given the best workers. The girls of the “*Standard*” works are also heroines of the anti-fascist and democratic cause.

Many munition works, among them the Central Artillery Park, are staffed by women whose husbands and brothers are at the front and who know that their work at home will help their men to win a victory in the field.

This popular, national heroism – national in the only legitimate sense of the word – is characteristic not only of our workers, though they are its shock troops, not only of the popular masses of the cities, not only of the anti-fascists, of the democratic, liberal, progressive elements, but of the *peasants* as well. The great peasant masses of Spain, oppressed and trampled upon for centuries, have also taken up arms to defend the soil and their freedom. They threshed the grain with shotguns strapped to their backs. They left the harvest to defend the crops from the barricades. They defended the land which *Vicente Uribe*, Minister for Agriculture, one of the representatives of the Communist Party in the People’s Front Government, handed over to them by the law of October 7. Our peasant masses immediately understood that our struggle meant their emancipation.

One of the leaders of these heroic peasants was *Cicuendez*, a Communist. He was the Mayor of Villadonadrique, a village with a revolutionary history. A village in the very heart of Toledan absentee landlordism. Cicuendez organised the peasant militia of the province of Toledo, seventy per cent, of which was doomed to fall under a hail of fascist lead. Cicuendez himself died like a hero while defending Spanish earth in the literal sense of the word.

The countryside, which is already free, was defended by those who after the fascist rebellion were given the land to till it and thus contribute to the rise of Spain to greatness. With the same tenacity with which some of them defended the land at the front, others are now tilling it in long working days no less heroically, bending over their furrows in order that the soldiers and the people of Spain may lack nothing.

Such are our heroes. They are the unforgettable heroes of the Spanish people. They wield the weapons of the Republic in the struggle for a complete victory. They hold a seat of honour among the workers of the world and among all decent men and women. They fight for mankind and will not perish in a sea of blood. They were able to form the strong army which guarantees the victory of the Republic. They are the sons and daughters of the working class, of the peasants, of the intellectuals, of the people.

They are the heroes of the whole world, for they have given to the world of labour, the world of dignity and progress that final inspiration which will save humanity from fascist barbarism and regression.

The Role of the Women in Spain's War for Freedom and Independence

By Emilia Elias

Among all those who are taking part in the heroic fight which the Spanish people are at present waging against fascism, are great masses of Spanish women. From the very first moment of this war for our freedom and independence they gave their services unreservedly to this cause. They not only gave material help in the war, to the extent of sacrificing their lives, but also, through their words and strong convictions as to the needs of the struggle, inspired their sons and husbands to join the great masses of men who had seized arms and gone forth to defend Spain's soil against the invasion of fascism.

This, however, does not mean that the women of Spain had taken no active part in revolutionary struggles before the 18th of July, 1936; on the contrary, through the organising and carrying through of industrial strikes and women's demonstrations, they had openly resisted tyranny and all the enemies of the real Spain.

When in 1931, at the time of the establishment of the Republic, a mass movement was initiated which aimed to crush completely and for all time the regime of oppression and tyranny, the women also were seized by this awakening of the masses of the people, and helped in no small measure to overcome the indifference of certain sections. And when the Republic, in striving to establish justice, granted them a part of the demands which had been raised and fought for by those who were at the head of the movement for women's emancipation (right to vote and hold office; equal rights for legitimate and illegitimate children; recognition of women as political citizens, etc.), these women were strengthened and encouraged by the public authorities. And this encouragement caused them to recognise their responsibilities – especially the responsibility of working for their complete emancipation and taking part in the political struggle.

In 1934, with its tragic succession of injustices, the women bravely fought against the reactionary forces. Women played an important part in the heroic days of the *October revolution*; in the streets, in the trade unions, in the political parties, they worked with zeal and confidence to defeat the barbarous reaction, which shot down many women in the streets of *Asturias*, who were defending the right of themselves and their children to a life of freedom and justice.

The symbol of this heroic struggle, which will live for ever in the memory of all women, is *Aida Lafuente*, the heroine of *Asturias*, who lost her life in defence of her battle post in October, 1934.

In August of the same year, the first *conference of anti-fascist women* from the countryside was held in *Madrid*, at which they announced their open resistance to tyranny. A little later in the month the women organised the *big women's demonstration*, under the leadership of *Pasionaria*, which was called as a protest against Prime Minister Samper's decree to call up the Reservists.

In the year 1936, when the elections were called, which on the 16th of February were to result in the triumph of the People's Front, the women were given new opportunities for struggle and work. They understood how to utilise this occasion and the work of election propaganda to give new proofs of their responsibility and political maturity. Public meetings, congresses, discussion groups and extremely effective agitation and propaganda work were organised with the assistance of the women, by which the masses in the cities and in the country were roused and inspired. And on February 16 the *People's Front* triumphed, largely through the watchful intervention of the women, who partly as members of the electorate, and partly as voluntary guardians of the honesty of the elections prevented the greater part of that corruption which the reactionary forces had instituted in their attempts to prevent the triumph of the People's Front.

The tragic appeal of the 18th of July completed the political development of the women and fully established their participation in the revolutionary struggle. As always, we had the inspiring example of *Pasionaria* before us. In every contingency she found the necessary slogan and the effective course of action.

In the face of the rise of the fascists and the advance of the invading armies, she hurled defiance at the enemy. Her call was widely spread by wireless stations.

Twenty-four hours had hardly elapsed after the outbreak of the rebellion when the whole world heard her slogan, "No Pasaran!", which from then on became the battle-cry of the Spanish anti-fascists. And the women adopted as their own this slogan which had become the invincible battle-cry of the people, and proceeded to make it a reality. And this it became. Her confidence stirred the souls of all women, and, inspired by her, they joined in the struggle enthusiastically.

Therefore, the war in Spain has become for the mass of the women an important school of experience. Enlistment in the war and in war work has been achieved not only of those women who were in the vanguard of the women's movement, but also of the large numbers of women who had been indifferent to political and social questions. Now they saw clearly and definitely that, with the blood of the people of Spain, with the daily self-sacrifice of the men of all countries who had come to offer their services to the Spanish people, the struggle for the future of all the oppressed, was being decided on their soil – and also that the future of these enslaved women, downtrodden through misery, illiteracy and injustice, was being determined.

From the very beginning they fought; from the very beginning their voices were heard urging participation in war services, so that they might also share in the victory.

The endeavours of the women found outlet in all sorts of activities. Altogether, they did everything possible to bring about a victory. They started workshops and worked in them; they started children's homes to remove the children from the misery of the cities which were being barbarously bombed by the aeroplanes of the fascists. They helped on the Front; they worked in the hospitals as nurses and as social workers. And in the difficult days of the siege of Madrid they worked heroically so that this city might be properly provisioned; they were in the militia; they worked in the educational services at the Front, and finally they accomplished a task which proved their political reliability and their efficiency in industry, in that they took the leadership of political parties and trade unions.

In addition to this, women carried on active agitation and propaganda work, and in the cities of the less ravaged hinterland they succeeded in raising the morale and making the people conscious of the needs of the hour and the necessity of living on a war-time basis.

We should also like to illustrate the spirit of sacrifice and the high level of political consciousness of the women by citing a task which they fulfilled with the greatest devotion and with the most touching modesty. We refer to the giving of their blood to the wounded. In this task the women worked most compassionately and with the greatest unselfishness. And they did this not only out of an idealistic humanitarian feeling, but also from more comprehensive motives which give added significance to their contribution. They know and declare that the life of a wounded man is sacred; they know that to save the wounded from being sacrificed to the enemy is just as important as winning a battle.

We would like to be able to give the names of many of these women and tell of their accomplishments, but there are many women, Very many women, whose names we will never know because of the characteristic modesty with which they carry on their anonymous work; we know, however, of the case of *Eloisa Cano*, who gave her blood 32 times; then there is *Catalina Mayoral*, a first-aid station assistant, who has already given her blood on many occasions; and a young woman, really only a girl, who had formerly been a house-maid, who has already given her blood nine times and is prepared to do

it again as often as necessary – very proud to be known as “The Universal Donor,” which means that she will give her blood more frequently in the future.

The women took an active part in *relief work* among those who have been evacuated and the refugees. They began by giving assistance in the work of evacuating women and children from Madrid, Malaga, Almeria and other cities which were attacked by the fascists, into cities removed from the front line. They offered their homes and their services to the refugees. In these ways the women did what they could in facilitating this work.

These are countless instances of women who gave up their beds, their clothing, their linen and their whole houses to the women and children war victims. We know of the case of a woman who lived in a house even too small for the needs of her own family, but who yet took in a family of 2 women and 3 children. She spoke happily of the satisfaction which she experiences at night on seeing the joy and well-being of the children sleeping in her bed, although she herself slept on the floor.

The women carried on the same service of relief work for women and children in *kindergartens* and *children's homes*. Here they lived with the children and carried on their work with zeal and devotion and genuine mother-love. There are prominent teachers in this service, including many who had voluntarily retired from service before the 18th of July, but who to-day have returned to active life, taking charge of homes for homeless children, where life is not very easy, although it is a satisfaction to fulfil war-time duties.

In October, 1937, on the occasion of the second *National Conference of Anti-Fascist Women*, which was held in *Valencia*, the voices of peasant, working and intellectual women were heard. At this conference it was shown that there was not a single activity in which women did not take part. Women from Cordoba, Guadalajara, Cuenca and Valencia spoke at this conference. Almost all of them came from places which were very near the front line. From them we learned how the olive harvest, how the harvest in general, was saved in many little villages which were without men because they were all at the front – saved by the strenuous efforts of the women. We recall the peasant woman from *Cordoba*, who told us enthusiastically:

“Only a few kilometres from the Front we saved the olives, because we realised that with every single olive which we gathered we had won a victory over the enemy.”

We learned of the spirit of the shock workers in certain workshops in Madrid, who, like the woman worker *Soler*, know how to increase production to such an extent that they could bring up the number of trousers scheduled to be completed in one day, from 5 to 18. And the women workers of the army commissariat workshop “*Pasionaria*” (organised and run by the Committee of Anti-Fascist Women) established shock-work days and women shock workers' groups, among whom were those who, like Comrade *Maria Martinez Carton*, were able to produce 25 tunics in a week. There are many women in these workshops who are capable of extraordinary exertion, which considerably increases production.

In the *war industries* the women are equally capable of important efforts, which show how justified were the demands of the women that they should immediately be given full share in the work. Now these women, who are to-day prominent workers, had not always been factory workers. Many of them were from the exploited middle-class strata; others did not feel that they should accept help and support, although their needs were urgent: but they had all suffered the oppression and insecurity in which the reactionary forces had held the women of Spain for centuries. For this reason their accomplishments are so much more remarkable. They, too, utilised the war as an auspicious opportunity to further their struggle and the struggle of all those who suffer oppression. And they realise that active participation in working for our victory is a task which will achieve freedom for themselves and their children, as well as independence for the country.

These statements are proved by the case of *Maria Aeon*, turner in the Ferrobellum factory, leader of her work department, who before the 18th of July had been a nursemaid; and *Margarita Sanchez*, from the Moreno factory in Madrid, who succeeded in raising production by 100 per cent, in two weeks. We are constantly hearing of women who set themselves similar tasks and are able to impress on their fellow-workers the necessity of doubling their efforts in order to increase production. This is naturally no accidental matter, nor is it a simple matter of competition between workers: it is rather an expression of that complete understanding of the political problem with which the war confronted the women. The heroes of production have just as active a share in the final victory as have the heroes at the Front.

The women did not work alone in the task of raising their political consciousness to this point. On the contrary, they felt strengthened and roused by the fiery zeal of the Communist Party and its leaders who constantly spurred them on and led them along the paths which they had to follow. No woman forgot or failed to benefit from the words of *Jose Diaz*, who stated in his report to the plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party:

“It is necessary for the Communists to improve and extend the work among the women. It is important to consolidate the already existing organisation of *Anti-Fascist Women*; but it is not enough. It is necessary to mobilise all women for the defence of the fatherland and national independence; it is important to build up a women’s movement in the new Spain in which all women are enrolled who are bringing about the defeat of fascism and who are willing to sacrifice themselves, if necessary, in order that their children may live in a cultured, prosperous and happy Spain. It is important to strengthen our work with regard to the women, for when we consider the tremendous militancy and enormous sacrifice displayed by our heroic women we must recognise the fact that the number of women who belong to our Party is not so great as it should be and as it can be.”

It is not only in this document that we find this profound guide and inspiration for work, but in all his writing and in all his reports he always deals with precisely those points which clearly analyse the present position of women.

With this burning enthusiasm, with this inspiration, with the wonderful example of *Pasionaria* always before us, we women of Spain will know how to make further forward strides. Thus we are taking our part with all our energy and all our ability, to the extent of giving our lives if necessary, to bring about the defeat of barbarous fascism and the triumph of democracy and independence.

The United Socialist Party of Catalonia

By J. Comorera

The United Socialist Party of Catalonia is a child of our democratic Revolution, a child of the struggle which our people is carrying on against the generals who have betrayed their country, a child of the war for the independence of our land.

A few days after the revolt of the reactionary forces, and immediately following upon the defeat of the people of the military-fascist insurrectionary movement in Barcelona and other localities of Catalonia, the *United Socialist Party of Catalonia* (P.S.U.C.) was formed on July 24 by the amalgamation of the four working-class parties formerly existing in Catalonia.

The relations between the four amalgamating parties, i.e., the Communist Party of Catalonia, the Socialist Union of Catalonia, the Catalan Federation of the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party, and the Catalan Proletarian Party, were most cordial long before the fascist rising. There was also a liaison

committee in existence, linking the four parties, two of which – the Socialist Union of Catalonia and the Catalan Proletarian Party – were not affiliated to any international organisation, while the Catalan Federation of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party adhered through the intermediary of its central organisation to the L.S.I. and the Communist Party through the intermediary of the Communist Party of Spain belonged to the Communist International.

In spite of the fact that they belonged to different international organisations, the four parties were already united prior to the military-fascist rising by their absolute acceptance of the decisions of the 7th Congress of the Communist International, and particularly by their complete acceptance of the masterly report of our great comrade, *Dimitrov*. They were united by the conviction that proletarian unity and a solid People's Front were absolute necessities in face of the everyday more aggressive and provocative attitude of the fascists, whose sinister machinations were making themselves felt more and more in Spain as the days went by. They were further united by the firm determination to defend unreservedly the U.S.S.R., fatherland of all the workers of the world. They were united by the conviction that only by following the road traced by the glorious Communist International, only by creating a mass proletarian party, which is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party, could the road be barred to fascism, and the working class and the people of Catalonia and of all Spain be liberated later on.

JUAN COMORERA, <i>Member of the Generalidad of Catalonia.</i>
--

What prior to the rising was a mere conformity of views and a wish, had to become an immediate fact in the new situation which had arisen. Such was the categorical requirement of the historical moment. So the amalgamation of the four parties became an accomplished fact less than a week after the outbreak of the military-fascist rebellion. It was done without lengthy conversations, without bargaining, without solemn assemblies or congresses. It was done because it was indispensable for the interests of the proletariat, of the people, of the popular revolution and of the war of independence. Unity was achieved without formalism, of the free will and with the full agreement of all – just as the subsequent activities of the party were directed towards the systematic consolidation of this unity on the basis of a clear political line.

The situation did not permit long discussions on programmes and statutes. Agreement on fundamental problems was reached at the moment of amalgamation, and that was enough. The four parties which amalgamated in the P.S.U.C. decided to accept, without reserve, the programme and the statutes of the Communist International and to affiliate with that organisation through the intermediary of the Communist Party of Spain. The affiliation to the Communist International through the Communist Party of Spain bore witness to the firm decision of the forgers of unity and their profound understanding that it was necessary to form a close bond of union with the most consistently revolutionary political force of the country as the expression and the means of the unity of the Catalan proletariat and people with the proletariat and the people of Spain.

The four parties amalgamated in the P.S.U.C. represented at the moment of amalgamation an aggregate membership of about 6,000 militants. To-day, 18 months after its formation, the United Socialist Party

of Catalonia numbers more than 60,000 militants and wields a decisive influence in the U.G.T. of Catalonia, an organisation now grouping more than half a million workers. The enormous majority of the militants of the United Socialist Party are of Catalan nationality. Many of them came to the Party from the nationalist movement because, in the struggle and by their own experience, they gained the conviction that only in the ranks and under the leadership of a revolutionary Marxist- Leninist party could they realise not only the national aspirations of the Catalan people, but also the desire of the working class for liberty and social justice. The industrial workers are in an absolute majority among the militants of the United Socialist Party (about 62 per cent.). The peasants constitute an important minority (about 20 per cent.); they are followed by the group of non-manual workers such as clerks, domestic workers, teachers, etc. (about 16 per cent.), while other categories represent a tiny minority of about 2 per cent.

The tremendous increase in the membership of the Party and the even more considerable growth of its influence over the working masses in town and country and in the army find their essential explanation in the correct attitude taken up by the Party with regard to practically all the great problems raised by the war of independence and the popular revolution; in the selfless struggle and the spirit of sacrifice which it has shown *in the* common cause and also in the correct methods of organisation which it applied when putting into practice its political line.

, From its birth the P.S.U.C. appeared as the party of the war of independence, as the party of the popular revolution. When other groups opposed a fierce resistance to the militarisation of the militia and the creation of a regular People's Army as the united army of the Republic, the United Socialist Party not only launched the slogan that such an army must be created, but, in close co-operation with the Communist Party of Spain, fought hard to form such an army. The P.S.U.C. was the first to transform, on the Aragon front, the militia columns it had created, and particularly the *Karl Marx column*, into genuine army divisions and to put them at the disposal of the Government of the Republic.

Realising from the very first months of the war that without good anti-fascist discipline in the rear, and without a government which really governed, it would be impossible to apply all the energies of the country to the struggle against fascism, the United Socialist Party took up without hesitation the struggle against the so-called "uncontrollables" who hampered the organisation of the forces of the country in coping with the necessities of war and who by their nefarious activities endangered the fate of the war and of the revolution, thus helping Franco and his masters, Hitler and Mussolini.

Arguing that the struggle against fascism and against the invaders concerned not only the proletariat but the whole people and all anti-fascists, the united Socialist Party opposed a decided resistance to the tendencies advocating the expropriation of the petty bourgeoisie and the compulsory collectivisation of the land held by the peasants; thus, while defending the conquests of the revolution, the Party at the same time defended the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie and made every effort to organise these sections under the leadership of the working class.

Itself a child of unity, the Party has fought and is fighting for the *unity of the working class* and the union of all anti-fascists in a solid *People's Front*. The first liaison committee linking the proletarian forces of Catalonia (P.S.U.C., U.G.T., C.N.T., F.A.I.) on the basis of a programme of demands was formed and then indorsed by a monster meeting held in Barcelona on October 26, 1936. However, this liaison committee did not achieve all the results desired. The Party, mainly by reason of its youth, was unable to overcome all the difficulties and resistances which obstructed the consolidation of proletarian unity, and has not succeeded in developing this unity by means of a persistent and tenacious policy, into the crystallisation of a genuine and solid People's Front.

It was not without some delay that the Party understood the necessity of a desperate struggle in Catalonia against Trotskyism as represented by the so-called P.O.U.M. This explains why the P.O.U.M.

could for many months legally carry on, in responsible official positions, its work of disruption, provocation and espionage, and why its activities could finally culminate in the bloody putsch in May, 1937, at a time when the armies of Hitler and Mussolini intensified their attacks on Vizcaya.

It is one of the great achievements of the Party that from the very beginning of the war of independence it insisted with great emphasis on the absolute necessity of a close union between Catalonia and the Spanish Republic. When as a result of the military-fascist mutiny the central authorities were tremendously weakened and the machinery of the State was almost completely thrown out of gear; when through the false policy pursued by Largo Caballero, as Prime Minister of the Spanish Republic, Catalonia lived isolated from the rest of the country; when the anger of separatism arose as a part of the fascist policy directed towards breaking up the fronts of the Republic, the united Socialist Party opposed this disastrous tendency with a rare energy and clarity. The first enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee of the P.S.U.C. (held on January 30-31 and February 1, 1937) formulated the question of the relations between Catalonia and the Republic in the following manner:

“The Republic of 1873 died because of the cantonalist adventure. One can safely say that this was the final cause of the end of that Republic. We must on no account repeat this mistake because if we repeated it we should come to the same result. Cantonalism would fail in 1937 as cantonalism failed in 873.

We must strengthen the Government of the Republic not merely co-operate with it. We must strengthen it economically, financially and morally so that it may wield the greatest authority over all, regulate economic life in conformity with the needs of war and create the army which we need in order to win the war.... We must do this loyally and not play with the idea of separatism.”

The first national conference of the P.S.U.C., held in July, 1937, defined in a clear and transparent slogan the attitude of the Party towards the national question: “Catalonia cannot be free if fascism is triumphant in Spain. Spain cannot be free without the help of Catalonia” and the gathering repeated afresh that was necessary to carry on a desperate struggle against separatism, that direct instrument of fascism.

The struggle initiated by the P.S.U.C. for the establishment of a complete People’s Front in Catalonia has not as yet given all the desired results, but the Party has achieved certain partial successes in this field and is firmly determined not to rest until a People’s Front, embracing all the anti-fascist forces of Catalonia, has become an accomplished fact.

The Central Committee of the United Socialist Party of Catalonia, at its last Plenum held on January 8 and 9, 1938, has laid down as the three fundamental conditions of victory: working-class unity, complete establishment of the People’s Front and close unity between Catalonia and the Republic. This triple unity is indispensable if the urgent tasks of the moment are to be fulfilled, tasks whose realisation will decide whether the Republic will win new victories on the battle fronts. These fundamental tasks at the present moment are first of all: the creation of a mighty war industry whose main basis must be Catalonia because of the development of her engineering, chemical and textile industries and also because she possesses an advanced working class and workers of a high technical qualification,

The United Party participates in the Government of the Generalidad and holds the portfolios of Economy (industry, trade, transports and public services), Labour and Public Works.

The present position faces the P.S.U.C. with enormous tasks, which require of the Party a far greater effort than it has ever made before. The P.S.U.C., as the only great proletarian party in Catalonia, has a great responsibility towards the masses and towards the whole people. It is the prime mover of the unification of the working class, of the unity of action between the U.G.T. and the C.N.T., of the unity of the People’s Front, of the unity of Catalonia and the Republic. There can be no doubt that the

P.S.U.C., in close co-operation with the Communist Party of Spain, will be able to justify the confidence which the working masses of Catalonia have placed in it.

Towards A United Party of the Proletariat

By Pedro Checa

The most important points of this document are published in another part of this number. – Ed.

The powerful movement for the unification of Socialists and Communists in Spain began shortly after the elections in November, 1933, when the victory of the parties of the Right forced the proletariat to place itself at the head of the masses in the struggle against reaction. For this reaction, scarcely had it gained power, commenced an offensive all along the line against the political and economic achievements which had been won by energetic struggle during the first two years of the Republic.

The wave of economic strikes began to rise, the wage of great mass actions lasting all through 1934, against fascist provocations, such as those of El Escorial, Cavadonga, Asamblea del Monumental Theatre, Pinema, etc., the strike of the peasants, and finally the glorious epic of October, when Socialists and Communists united in joint action, as the vanguard of the Spanish people against fascism and its allies now in power, in the mountains of *Asturias*.

The C.P., as the consistent champion for proletarian unity, repeatedly appealed to the leaders of the Socialist Party, especially on the eve of the struggle in October, 1934, calling upon them to join in united action. For united action was the decisive weapon against the sinister forces of reaction and fascism; it was the weapon with which victory could be won in the struggle. But all the efforts of the C.P. led to no unity agreement.

It was only after October, during the period of the bloody suppression of the revolutionary movement, that the idea of unity between Socialists and Communists commenced to spread in the works and factories, in town and country. Communists and Socialists, who were subjected to the same common oppression, combated it jointly, conducting the work of the Relief Committees for the victims of reaction, and thus prepared themselves for the fresh struggles. These Relief Committees in aid of the victims of reaction were thus able to do magnificent work.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International with the historical speech of Comrade Dimitrov, aroused great response in Spain, especially among the Socialist workers. Their urge towards unity increased as they realised that the struggle for unity carried on by the C.P. of Spain was absolutely correct.

It is obvious that if anti-fascist unity had existed sooner, especially the unity of the working class, then there would have been no election defeat in 1933, and the glorious October movement in 1934 would not have been crushed. It was the growing realisation of this fact which brought about a powerful urge towards unity among the Left of the Socialist Party and among Socialist youth; these Left trends were in full sympathy with the consistent struggle of the C.P. for unity, and supported it.

This great movement towards unity, developing after the October movement was crushed, received tremendous impetus in 1935 by the amalgamation of the C.G.T.U. (Confederation General del Trabajo Unitaria = United General Trade Union Federation, under the leadership of the C.P.) with the U.G.T., the old trade union federation. The U.G.T. thus became the largest trade union federation of the proletariat, as it was strengthened and consolidated by the Red Trade Unions, and by the affiliation of numerous independent trade union organisations. The U.G.T. became the tie binding the two parties

together, and ensuring a closer collaboration and rapprochement of the members of the C.P. and the S.P. in the trade unions.

The negotiations carried on between Communist and Socialist youth, the groups whose urge to unity was strongest, led finally on the eve of the fascist rebellion in July to the amalgamation of the youth, and the formation of the *United Socialist Youth*. This led to the organisation of the main masses of Spanish youth and set a magnificent example, spurring on the efforts towards the unification of the Socialists and Communists.

All these factors, the resolute and stubborn struggle of the C.P. for unity, and the intense desire for unity inspiring the Socialist and Communist rank and file, brought about the magnificent triumph of February 18, over reaction and fascism, along the line of the People's Front and of the unity of the whole people, based on the united front of the Communists and Socialists.

It was, however, the rebellion of the traitor generals allied with German and Italian fascism which was the decisive factor bringing together the Socialists and Communists. For they found themselves fighting side by side in the foremost ranks of the people in the bloody war thrust upon the people of Spain. And it was the fascist rebellion which led to the rapid formation of the *United Socialist Party in Catalonia* where the first signs of the insurrection gave such great impetus to the development of the unity movement. This was another splendid success for unity, another great step forward on the road to the establishment of the united party of the proletariat.

The unity between Socialists and Communists continued to gain ground steadily at the beginning of the struggle of the Spanish people against the traitors and invaders, especially after the *Caballero Government* had been formed. Both parties shared the responsibilities of government, both bore the main burdens of guiding the country. In the trenches, trade unions, and works and factories, the Communists and Socialists, fully conscious of their new and tremendous responsibility, discussed their problems in common, and in common they faced all the great difficulties arising out of the situation of the country.

Both parties competed in the effort to secure for the Government the full support, love, and devotion of the masses. The Communist Party, in particular, concentrated its utmost endeavours on this. The whole Communist Press, all Communist demonstrations, made passionate appeals for unity and discipline under the authority of the Government.

The C.P. further made strenuous efforts to transform the heroic militia of the first period of the war, now no longer able to cope with the changed situation, into regular military formations under the uniform high command of the Government. The transformation of the "*Fifth Regiment*," numbering over 70,000 men, into units of the regular army, was the first and most important step in this direction. With this the C.P. showed the way to all other organisations, and demonstrated the correctness of its political appraisal of the situation and its support to the policy of anti-fascist unity; and with this it placed in the hands of the then Minister of War Caballero, the most effective weapon for the final victory.

But instead of recognising in the People's Front Government the expression of the collective will of the parties and organisations forming it, instead of unifying the endeavours towards the acceleration of the victory, instead of utilising the experience and support of every Minister for the solution of the various problems, and accepting and promoting the initiative of the Ministers, Caballero arbitrarily declared himself to be the sole person responsible for the whole policy of the Government. And woe to the Minister who demanded discussion of the war problem, or took up any question not directly connected with his own Ministry.

Caballero's hatred of the Communist Party increased steadily, until finally it found crude expression in

the notorious manifesto known under the title of “Serpents.” This manifesto served as a signal for the outbreak of a savage campaign against the Communists, in order to drive them from the leading positions in the army, the industries, the public institutions, etc., and with the aim to shatter the Communist Party – the creator of the People’s Front, the main guarantor of victory, and of the security of the achievements of the people’s revolution.

But the C.P., in its struggle against the disastrous policy of Caballero, was supported by the overwhelming majority of Caballero’s own party, the Socialist Party, which clearly recognised the necessity of breaking with such a fatal policy.

After this crisis had been overcome, thanks chiefly to the unity between the two parties, co-operation between Socialists and Communists was closer than ever, in order to help the Government to carry out its great tasks. The opposition set up by Caballero and his group against the new Government also promoted co-operation between the C.P. and the S.P.

After the resignation of the Caballero Government, a new basis existed, for the unity problem.

With the long duration of the severe war, the necessity for supreme sacrifice, the increasing responsibility of the Socialist and Communists, and the common experience of the struggle, welded an inseparable bond of unity between the rank and file of the two parties engaged in the fight. They had become fully conscious that it was only on the (basis of this unity that they could overcome the perils and dangers of the path, and that it is only by unity that the final victory can be won.

The rank and file of the two parties realised that many, of the difficult situations could have been avoided, or could at least have been overcome without such frightful sacrifices, if united action had been brought rapidly to its final goal: *the organic amalgamation of the two parties*. And therefore the rank and file of the Communists and Socialists are to-day demanding *the formation of the United Party* as the sole means of overcoming the existing enormous difficulties and of accelerating the process of defeating the fascist invaders.

The Communist Party, as faithful representative of the interests and wishes of the masses, convened its Central Committee in Valencia in July, 1937, for the purpose of studying the problem of the unification of the Socialists and Communists. After Comrade *Pasionaria* had given her address, it was resolved to apply to the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party, and to propose to it the formation of a committee for the unification of the two parties, on the basis of a programme of immediate action. This programme of action contained the following main points referring to questions of war and the other problems of the country: –

Strengthening of the fighting forces of the regular people’s army of the Republic; establishment of a large war industry; active assistance in the organisation and upkeep of the lines of communication to the fronts and for the army; active participation in the organisation of fortification building and the provision of dug-outs; co-ordination and planning of economy; a practical policy for the systematic and tangible improvement of the standards of living, and of the working, living and cultural conditions of the working class in town and country; an agrarian policy for the intensification of agricultural production, and promoting unity between the town and rural proletariat on the one hand and the working peasants on the other; recognition of the democratic national rights of independence of the Catalans, Basques and Galicians; a policy for the maintenance of amicable relations with the industrial lower middle classes and the handicraftsmen of the towns; a war and food policy according the utmost consideration to the soldiers and to the workers engaged in the transport service and the war industry; strictest observation of public order on the whole territory of the Republic; defence of the Soviet Union; trade union unity and international unity.

The Political Bureau of the C.P. submitted this programme to the Executive Committee of the Socialist

Party immediately after the Plenary Session, and made an official and definite proposal for the unification of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

In its session held in July, 1937, in Valencia, the National Committee of the Socialist Party decided, in reply to this appeal, to elaborate the programme suggested by the Communist Party for joint actions and to increase the number of representatives of both parties in the National Co-ordination Committee of the two parties in order to enable it to elaborate the draft of the unification programme.

The National Co-ordination Committee drew up by August 17, 1937, a unanimous programme of action, agreeing in its essential points with the above-quoted proposals of the Communist Party.

This identity of programme clearly shows the existence of an intense wish for unity in both Parties, naturally arising out of the war experience, the common work and the common struggle.

Since this time, August, 1937, when the programme of united action was published, the two Parties have been co-operating with complete unanimity, under the directives of the National Co-ordination Committee, in various fundamentally important spheres of work.

The organisation of the work itself has made great progress.

The Co-ordination Committees, as laid down in the programme of action drawn up by the National Co-ordination Committee, have made remarkable progress in the different provinces and towns, in the trade unions and the army, in the works and factories, and in the rural districts. Socialists and Communists deal conjointly with the problems set them by war and production, and solve them conjointly. Groups of the two Parties have been formed in the trade unions. In the municipal and provincial councils, one group is constituted of Communist and Socialist representatives.

The desire of the masses to attain the unification of the two Parties as rapidly as possible has found expression in such action as that in *Jaen*, where Socialists and Communists, meeting at a Provincial Conference, merged into one single Party on the basis of the programme of action of the National Unification Committee.

Realising the excellent preconditions for unity, the Plenary Conference of the C.C. of the C.P., meeting in November last year, adopted the following resolution: –

“The C.C. notes with satisfaction the cordial political relations and working conditions existing between the Communist Party and the Socialist Labour Party, and emphasises its determination to continue on this path until the two great political parties of the Spanish proletariat have been unified and the United Party of the Spanish working class created.

“This policy of unity between Socialists and Communists will render it possible rapidly to achieve the complete unity of the Spanish Labour Movement, and to ward off every attempt to split the anti-fascist forces.”

The National Unification Committee sends delegations to the fronts, to the provinces, to the works and factories, in order to draw closer the ties binding the fighters at the fronts with those behind the lines. These delegations are received in triumph by both the soldiers and leaders of the glorious people's army and by the heroes of production, and are met with the unanimous demand:

“Speed up the unification in order to accelerate the victory.”

Comrade *Diaz*, General Secretary of the C.P., stressed this demand, and presented it as follows to the whole Spanish people, especially to the Socialists and Communists: –

“How greatly we could strengthen the army if all our Socialist comrades and brothers recognised the necessity of speeding up the unification of our two Parties, and the fighting call reaching us from our trenches and battle-fields were realised: *“One membership card for Socialists and*

Communists.”

To-day all the necessary conditions exist in Spain for the formation of the united party of the proletariat. This may be seen in the existence of the many hundreds of Unification Committees all over the country. It may be seen in the co-operation of Socialists and Communists in the U.G.T. (in its trade union branches, in ‘the provincial federations, and in the national committee), as a result of which all manoeuvres of the group aiming at a split of the great trade union federation of the U.G.T. were frustrated’.

It may be seen again in the daily co-operation for solving the war problems by the leaders of the two Parties and, above all, in the unanimity regarding the problems of world conception, of appraising and dealing with the problems of war and revolution, on the part of the Socialists and Communists.

One example of unity is the actual merging of the two parties in *Catalonia*, where to-day there is now only *one* Party for the Socialists and Communists. And this Party has further been the architect of the powerful U.G.T. of Catalonia, whose membership has risen to over half a million during eighteen months of war, enabling it to give powerful assistance to the cause of the final Republican victory. The advance of unity may be further seen in the formation of the *United Socialist Youth*, in which the youth of both trends fight together, supported by the thousands of young people attracted to them by the unification. These are instances and experiences, showing what unity gives the people, and what may be attained by unity.

All nations and all anti-fascist organisations will welcome with enthusiasm a fact of such importance as the political and organisational unity of the Socialist and Communist Parties. Unity exercises a tremendous influence over the development of the joint struggle, and it furthers the interests not only of the two parties, but of all anti-fascist elements, and of the whole people.

The situation within the *U.G.T.*, too, demands the unification of the two parties. It is true, the attempts at splits staged by the foes of unity have failed, but the U.G.T. needs strengthening, in order to enable it to cope with the great tasks confronting it. The unity of the two parties will remove the dualism in the leadership of the U.G.T., and establish a firm political leadership. At the same time, the unification of the two parties will promote the amalgamation of the U.G.T. with the C.N.T., and will thus become the most effective factor towards trade union unity in Spain.

The present situation is full of perils, difficulties, and gigantic tasks, and it demands more than ever before the rapid realisation of the united party of the proletariat. The impending great struggles, the creation of new and mighty reserves to reinforce the Republican army, require the united party.

The creation of a large-scale war industry, capable of meeting the requirements of the war.

The intensification of political work at the fronts and behind the lines in order to lift the heroic morale to the utmost and to inspire the whole people with energy and endurance.

The strengthening of the People’s Front closely in order to weld together all organisations and the whole masses of the people.

All this necessitates the united Party of the proletariat.

There is only one solution of the fighting tasks confronting us: complete unity between Communists and Socialists, one single organisation, one single party of the proletariat. And this united party would be the representative not only of the tremendous forces already grouped in these two parties to-day, but of those countless thousands of sincere anti-fascists who would stream into the united party.

To-day, therefore, Spain is passing through a stage decisive for unity. All favourable preconditions for its realisation have been created: The rank and file and the situation demands this unity. The leaders of

the two parties must accede to these demands and take immediate steps for the constitution of the United Party of the Spanish proletariat. For this united party is the most powerful weapon of all for the victory of the Spanish people over Franco and the invaders, and it is the guarantee of the complete triumph and consolidation of the People's Revolution.

The Nationality Problem in the Spanish War for Liberation

By Arlandis

The problem of nationality is of particular importance in the obstinate struggle which the masses of the people of Spain are waging to-day against the conglomeration of exploiters, reactionaries and fascists who are drawn up against them, a conglomeration which wishes to impose its economic and political domination on the Spanish people by terror.

The hatred of the Spanish reactionaries aroused by the demands for national autonomy put forward by the peoples of Catalonia and Euzkadi (the land of the Basques) was one of the chief causes of the fascist rebellion. The proclamation of the right of self-administration by the Government of the Republic served the Spanish fascists, and indeed all Right-wing parties in Spain, as an excuse to whip up hatred against the Republic by incitement against the Catalonians and the Basques as separatists and enemies of the idea of Spanish unity and national integrity. The fierce centralistic and totalitarian character of fascism naturally made it fight more fiercely than ever against the autonomous rights of the Basques and the Catalonians as soon as they were recognised by the Republican Constitution.

Fascism intends to reinstall the despotism of the large-scale landowners of Andalusia, Castille and Estremadura with the assistance of that old centralistic-authoritarian State edifice the Monarchy, so that the people of the whole of Spain, but in particular the peoples of Catalonia, Euzkadi and Galicia, shall once again be helots. The Spanish reactionaries and fascists deny the existence of a national problem altogether and declare that the national revolutionary movements of the Basques and the Catalonians are entirely artificial creations on the part of traitors and renegades, and must therefore be destroyed with a hand of iron.

Whoever is acquainted even superficially with the historical development of Spain and with its present situation is also well aware of the absurdity of this fascist contention. Spain has never been one and indivisible either ethnologically or politically, or even linguistically. All the attempts of the centralistic monarchs from Ferdinand II to Alphonso XIII to crush the national aspirations of the Spanish minorities by terror and brutal oppression, and to weld them all by force into one autocratic State, have always failed, and they have resulted merely in hampering the economic and cultural development of Spain as a whole, and in provoking endless rebellions and civil wars.

For five centuries the Catalonians and the Basques, and the peoples of Navarre, Galicia and Valencia have fought against forcible assimilation and their subjugation to the absolutist rulers of Castille. The obstinate resistance put up by the national minorities in Spain has assisted them to maintain their own mother tongues, and their own economic and cultural characteristics, so that their customs and habits have found documentation in the common law of the country. All these are the decisive characteristics of a homogeneous nationality, and it is to these things the Catalonians, Basques and Galicians appeal expressly in their fight for the defence of their national rights and liberties which have been so brutally attacked by the fascists.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN EUZKADI

Euzkadi, which includes Navarre, occupies a comparatively small area of 17,482 sq. kilometres, which

is inhabited by 1,355,000 people. Both ethnologically and linguistically the Basques represent a separate nationality, and this is true not only of the Basques of the Iberian Peninsula, but all over Europe. The Basques are one of those few nationalities about which scientists know nothing definite concerning their origin or relationships. Their geographical situation, the mountainous nature of their country, the toughness and energy of their race, their industry and material well-being, and, above all, their untameable nature, has up to the present permitted this ancient people to resist innumerable invasions of their soil and all attempts on the part of centrally inclined Spanish monarchs to assimilate them.

The Basques are perhaps more closely bound to their old traditions, beliefs and liberties than any other people in Spain. When the Basques supported reactionary and absolutist Carlism during the course of the civil wars of last century they did so, as they thought, in defence of their threatened liberties, traditions and privileges, which the pretender to the Spanish throne, Don Carlos of Bourbon, demagogically pretended to uphold. When the Cortes of Cadiz attempted to impose a uniform legal code over the whole of Spain their effort failed on account of the resistance of the Basques who regarded the Liberals as the enemies of their national liberties. A Decree issued on November 25, 1839, practically abolished the autonomous liberties of the Basques, and later on this centralistic policy was continued by the Conservatives and monarchist Liberals, from the Regency of Queen Isabella Espartero (1843) and to the beginnings of the united Republicans under the Republic of 1873. This policy strengthened the reactionary tendency of the Basque national movement which developed in the middle of last century into one of the strongest pillars of the clerical Carlist movement.

The economic system of the Basques reveals peculiarities which are to be seen nowhere else in Spain. There is a powerful smelting industry, the most important in Spain, in fact, a highly developed small and medium-scale industry, a prosperous though semi-patriarchal system of agriculture and cattle-breeding, and flourishing shipping and fishing industries.

The Basque privileges, the so-called “fueros,” which form the basis of the national movement in Euzkadi, are very old and in their essence fundamentally democratic traditions, and a cardinal principle of Basque tradition is the indisputable superiority of the civil authority.

In connection with an attempt made at the end of 1904 to abolish the special agreement which had been come to on the economic field, a powerful league (*Liga Foral*) was founded to defend Basque privileges, and apart from the Basque Nationalists also the Republicans, the Liberals, the Carlists and the Integralists belonged to it. In the municipal elections of 1906 and in the parliamentary elections of 1907 this League for the Defence of Privileges won a sensational success, and all its candidates were elected.

In 1894 the *Basque National Party* was founded by *Sabino de Arana* and greater homogeneity was given to the loose and unorganised nationalist movement. This party then drew up the fundamental principles of Basque nationalism and dissociated itself from Carlism, which was content with the demand for a certain amount of autonomy in administrative affairs. Since then the Basque Nationalists and the Carlists have fought each other tooth and nail, so that the Carlists became the shock troops of the fascist insurrection in the Basque country, whilst the Basque Nationalists, despite their rather intolerant Catholicism, joined the People's Front for the defence of the Republican and their own national liberties.

In the beginning Basque nationalism was completely Catholic, but under the influence of the workers and peasants who began to enter its ranks in increasing numbers, a certain change took place. The Basque nationalist movement influenced thousands of workers and peasants, who were organised in the *Solidaridad de Obreros Vascos* (Basque Workers Solidarity), which included 40 per cent, of the workers and clerical employees of the Basque provinces Viscaya, Guipuzcoa and Alava. This

organisation of the Basque workers was originally founded at the instance of the Basque industrialists in an attempt to rescue their workers from the revolutionary influence of Socialists and Communists, and to use them on occasion as strike-breakers. However, the organisation freed itself instead from the influence of the employers, and became an organisation of a definitely trade union character which fought together with the socialist U.G.T. and the anarchist C.N.T. for its class demands.

Despite the sectarian deviations of a number of its leaders, the Basque Communist Party strove zealously to apply the lessons and tactics of *Lenin* and *Stalin*, and in consequence it was able to play an important role in the winning of these Basque workers for the class struggle and for the anti-fascist movement. The Party succeeded in working amongst the masses of the Basque Nationalists, and its work there contributed very considerably to winning the masses for the armed struggle against the centralistic and totalitarian fascist attack and in defence of the democratic Republic and its People's Front, a fact which made it easy to secure the ratification of the autonomous Constitution of the Basques.

The Constitution was adopted at a national gathering of Basque representatives in *Pamplona* on June 19, 1932, with 400 against 10 votes. The fact that all the dissident votes came from Navarre resulted in a decision to exclude Navarre from the writ of the new Constitution until such time as the people of Navarre should themselves request their inclusion. One year later the Constitution was finally ratified by a national gathering of the Basques in *Vittoria* on August 6, 1933. On November 5 of the same year the Constitution was submitted to a people's referendum and adopted with 86 per cent, of the total poll. In December, 1933, the Constitution was then placed before the Republican Cortes for approval, but thanks to the machinations of the reactionary Lerrox Government, which was in office at the time, it was shelved.

After the great electoral victory of the People's Front on April 15, 1936, the autonomous Constitution of the Basques was again placed before the Cortes for ratification. On October 1, 1936, it received the necessary ratification, and on the 7th of the same month the new autonomous Government of Euzkadi was formed, and included in its midst a representative of the Communist Party. The Basque Constitution regulates the following main administrative problems:

- a. the Parliamentary system,
- b. the establishment of the regional Government,
- c. the independence of the judiciary,
- d. the lack of any Conservative veto (no two-chamber system),
- e. direct democracy,
- f. the decentralisation of the administration,
- g. autonomous bodies for constitutional law and technical advisory bodies for the economic needs of the people,
- h. a uniform and free educational system,
- i. the two-language system, and
- j. an independent fiscal system, and economic and finance agreements.

Without the tremendous strength of the Basque nationalist movement there is no doubt that the Catholic population of the Basque country would have supported the fascist rebellion in the same way as the Carlists and Catholics of Navarre did. This fact also explains why the great majority of the Basque clergy opposed the fascist rebellion, and why very many Catholic Basque priests fought at the front shoulder to shoulder with Socialists and Communists against the fascists. Many thousands of Basque Catholics paid with their lives in the struggle against fascism for their love of national liberty and for their loyalty to the People's Front.

THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN GALICIA

The people of Galicia are of Celtic stock. Galicia has an area of 29,151 sq. kilometres stretched out over a long length of coast from the Portuguese frontier to Asturias. The density of its population is very great, and it is inhabited by 2,362,000 people, although there is no single town with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Approximately 10 per cent, of the total population of Spain live in an area which represents not more than 5.8 per cent, of the total area of Spain. There is a further million Galicians approximately living on the American mainland in Cuba and Porto Rico.

The economic activities of Galicia are based chiefly on agriculture, cattle-breeding and fisheries, which are highly developed in this part of Spain. There is also a moderately developed metallurgical industry and some shipbuilding in El Ferrol, Corruna and Vigo. Generally speaking it can be said that Galicia is among those countries which are still living in a pre-capitalist era. The national demands of the Galicians are based chiefly on their Celtic origin, on their neo-Latin tongue, which contains considerably less Arabic admixture than the language of Castille and Catalonia, on historical claims which result from the structure of feudal Spain, on their century-old autonomy, and on their special administrative structure of which the parish forms the centre with direct ties to the villages. Small-property holdings are characteristic of Galicia, leading to the existence of a great mass of poor peasants, both owners and leaseholders, who, despite all their efforts, are unable to maintain their invariably large families comfortably.

This great mass of people living in penury compels a section of the population to emigrate, and to go into the towns where they strive to obtain employment in industry and retail trading, or to the coast where they hope to obtain employment in the fisheries and sea-going boats.

The impoverishment of the Galician peasants is so great that most of them are compelled to go to usurers, and to burden their crops and their animals with mortgages at high rates of interest in order to be able to pay their taxes and buy seed for their fields.

Galicia was, it is true, never independent, but all the necessary conditions for a national life are present, such as have been defined by both Lenin and Stalin. One of the most logical and far-seeing Galician Nationalists, *Alfonso R. Castelao*, writes:

“We have kept our nationalism alive because we have always fostered it despite the fact that Galicia has always suffered under the heavy yoke of centralised monarchy, and in this way we have developed and preserved clearly defined national characteristics.”

The administrative reform decreed in 1833 by Ferdinand VII (the division of Galicia into provinces) abolished the “Supreme Assembly of the Kingdom of Galicia,” the last remnant of Galician autonomy, and the centralistic legislation passed between 1839 and 1876 did the rest.

However, the resistance of the Galician people developed. The rights of Galicia were formulated as early as 1840 at the meeting of *Lugo* which demanded complete independence. The pioneers of the independence of Galicia who were executed at *Carral* in 1846 after the rebellion of that year, declared “all the actions of the Madrid Government to be invalid.” At a further conference in Lugo which took place in 1868 a “Draft Constitution for a Future Galician State” was drawn up. In 1873 555 delegates at the conference of *Santiago de Compostela* put forward a document “For the Autonomous Rights of Galicia” within the framework of a federal Spanish State.

However, the nationalist movement in Galicia was very confused. *Alfredo Branas* was the first to give it any homogeneous political lead in his book “Regionalism” which was published in 1889.

The *Galician League* was organised in 1897 on the basis of these teachings, and it was followed in 1911 by the formation of the “*Galician Solidarity*” organisation. The aims of the present nationalist movement in Galicia were formulated in 1916 in the “*Brotherhood of the Word*,” and later in the conference of *Lugo* in 1918.

Under the dictatorship of *Primo de Rivera* the nationalist movement in Galicia suffered a certain setback, although even during this period there was powerful agitation for the abolition of the feudal impositions which still burdened the peasantry from the Middle Ages. In 1929 and 1930 the movement increased in strength once again. And in 1931, on the eve of the proclamation of the Republic, the Galicians drafted a Constitution whose first article read:

“Galicia is a free State within the framework of the Spanish Federal Republic.”

On December 19, 1932, the assembly of Galician municipalities ratified the draft Constitution, which, it was decided, should be placed before the people in a referendum. On June 28, 1936, the proposed Constitution was ratified in a people’s referendum with 80 per cent, of the total poll. On July 15, 1936, three days before the outbreak of the fascist rebellion, the Constitution which, had been approved by the Galician people was presented to the Cortes for ratification. This Constitution is fundamentally the same as the present Constitutions of Euzkadi and Catalonia, although certain regulations and rights are less exactly defined in it, for instance the laws which refer to the maintenance of public order and to the right of the Galicians to use their own language before the courts.

The Galician section of the Communist Party of Spain, which is being transformed into *the Communist Party of Galicia*, was at the head of a broad campaign for autonomy, thereby obtaining still closer touch with the masses of the Galician people. As a result, the Galician nationalist youth and a very considerable part of the following of the Galician Nationalist Party (*Partido Galleguista*) worked in close co-operation with the Communist Party because they saw in it their best representative and the staunchest and most active defender of (he autonomous rights of Galicia.

Many, many thousands of workers, peasants and intellectuals – Communists, Galician Nationalists, Republicans, Socialists and trade unionists – were shot, tortured, murdered, but the resistance of the Galician people remains obstinate now as before. Thousands of Galician toilers are now waging a guerrilla warfare in the mountainous districts, poorly armed but desperate. Thousands of young recruits forced into the army of the enemy desert at the first opportunity to the ranks of the Republicans despite the reprisals committed by the fascists against their families.

THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN CATALONIA AND ITS PART IN THE ANTI-FASCIST STRUGGLE

The national character of the Catalonian people is firmly rooted historically and ethnologically. Culturally the Catalonian people have their own language and its literary roots go back into the ninth century like the Castilian, and there are documents of this era still extant to-day.

Under the rule of *Ramon Berenguer IV* the territory of the one-time principality of Catalonia extended beyond the present limits of Catalonia and included the French district of *Roussillon* and the whole of Sardinia. Thanks to the marriage of Ramon Berenguer IV with Petronella of Aragon, Catalonia and Aragon were united, and under the rule of *Jacob I* and *Peter IV* (in the XIII century) the Balearic Islands and the district around Valencia, was included in the Catalonian-Aragonese federation, whereby the district around Valencia represented an autonomous monarchy within the league. In the XIII, XIV and XV centuries the Catalonian State experienced considerable territorial and commercial expansion and it included *Corsica*, *Sicily* and *Naples*, and extended even to *Greece* and *Turkey*. In 1410, when the Cortes of Caspe elected *Ferdinand of Antequera* King of the Catalonian-Aragonese federation, the civil war began which led to the decline and disruption of the Catalan State, and the death blow was delivered by *Philip IV* in the bloody days of 1640.

Catalonia lost its national freedom finally in 1714 as the result of a bloody and unequal struggle with the hordes of *Philip V*. However, the violent suppression and subjugation of Catalonia killed neither the national spirit of the country nor the wish to be free once again. Catalonia, although subject to the

oppression of the centralistic power, maintained its language and continued to nourish its love of liberty. However, the terror waged against Catalonia by Spanish imperialism and the ravages of the Inquisition which worked closely together with the centralistic power weakened the nationalist movement in Catalonia so greatly that in 1792 the Catalonian masses were not able to utilise the support of the French Convention to free themselves from the yoke of the Spanish monarchy.

One of the most zealously repeated arguments of the Spanish imperialists against Catalonian liberty is that “Catalonia lives and flourishes as a result of its trade with the rest of Spain, and because it receives more from the central State than it gives.”

A few figures will be sufficient to demonstrate the gross inaccuracy of this argument. Catalonia has a territory of 32,193 sq. kilometres or less than 6 per cent, of the total area of Spain, and a population of 2,780,000 (with the present fugitives a total of 3.5 millions!), or 11 per cent, of the total population of Spain. It is well known that trade and industry are most strongly concentrated in Catalonia. The proletariat of Catalonia represent 40 per cent, of the total proletariat of Spain. Catalonia’s agriculture and cattle-breeding are also – in proportion to their size – at the head of the whole of Spain.

There were 23,132 taxpayers in Catalonian industry and they contributed 13,750,500 pesetas to the State treasury. Out of a total of 523 million pesetas which were paid in taxes in the whole of Spain in 1930, Catalonia paid 218,500,000 pesetas, and of this sum over 170,000,000 pesetas were the result of consumer taxation. Catalonia alone pays 40 per cent, of the total transport taxation of Spain. Out of a total of 4,324 joint-stock companies with a total capital of 10,927 million pesetas, 1,650 with a total capital of 3,800 million pesetas are in Catalonia, or over 35 per cent. Catalonia has an annual national income of three milliard pesetas, or 1,200 pesetas per head of the population. The rest of Spain has an annual national income of seven milliard pesetas, and this, reckoned over a total population of 20.5 millions, represents an annual income per head of the population of 333 pesetas. Catalonia’s agriculture and cattle-breeding production accounts for more than 12 per cent, of the total production of Spain, and the total production of Catalonian industry represents a value of 5,294 million pesetas, including textile products to the value of 2,998 million pesetas.

Let us now take a glance at the statistics which show us what Catalonia pays and what she receives:

EXPORTS FROM CATALONIA TO SPAIN

(term payments)

Woollen stuffs 200 millions, cotton goods 192 millions, silk 125 millions, other textiles 100 millions, furniture 80 millions, toys 25 millions, spun yarn 75 millions, commission goods 60 millions, manufacture^ goods 90 millions, dyes, etc., 25 millions, trusts and mines 105 millions, miscellaneous goods 270 millions, Government expenditure 97 millions, metal goods 150 millions. Total 1,523 million pesetas.

IMPORTS FROM SPAIN TO CATALONIA

(cash payments)

Raw wool 135 millions, cork 70 millions, oils 250 millions, wine 220 millions, coal 370 millions, fish 230 millions, iron-ores 240 millions, fruit 270 millions, grain and leguminous plants 290 millions, gold silver and mercury 100 millions, timber, etc., 175 millions, cattle 430 millions, Customs duties 400,000 millions, monopolies 1,200 millions, telephone equipment 200 millions, railways 1,100 millions, shipping 100 millions, direct and indirect taxation 100 millions. Total 6,780 million pesetas.

Or in other words, the active balance in favour of the rest of Spain totals 5,257 million pesetas. Catalonia meets this deficit in its balance of trade with the rest of Spain first of all by its exports abroad, and secondly by the profits made by Catalonian capitalists on their holdings in industry, trade and transport undertakings in other parts of Spain, in undertakings which they exploit together with

other Spanish capitalists.

The national question in Catalonia represents a problem of first-rate importance and its influence on the political and military events in Spain is of the greatest importance. For many years Catalonia has been the arena of extremely bitter social struggles as a result of its industrial concentration, its widespread commerce, its prosperous and flourishing agriculture, the intensification of the agrarian problem, and of the high development of the revolutionary consciousness of its proletariat. Catalonia is the country of mass organisations and bitter revolutionary struggles, and it has often been at the head of the rest of Spain as far as the political and revolutionary movement is concerned.

In 1873 the nationalist movement in Catalonia, which up to then had been very badly organised, attempted under the leadership of *Almiralls* to proclaim an independent Catalan State of the first Spanish Republic with the intention of becoming a member of a Spanish Federal State. The attempt failed because the nationalist movement had not yet won over the people.

In 1892 the Catalan nationalist movement united in the "*Unio Catalanista*" and drew up the famous *Principles of Manresa*, containing the fundamental principles of Catalan nationality and the immediate demands of Catalonia to the central State.

After the loss of the Spanish colonies in 1898 the nationalist movement grew considerably, and in 1901 the Catalan nationalists won a great victory in the elections in Barcelona.

The nationalist movement in Catalonia attracted ever greater masses from all sections of the population to its cause, but it still remained under the leadership of the Catalan bourgeoisie and the Catalan reactionaries who were organised in the "*Liga Catalanista*." As the greater section of the working class and also the progressive elements amongst the peasants regarded the leaders of the nationalist movement as their class enemies and as their exploiters (the industrialists and large landowners) they remained for the most part on the fringe of the movement, and in this way the nationalist movement in Catalonia was deprived of the democratic and revolutionary character of the proletariat and its energy in the struggle. This situation made it possible for the finance and industrial plutocracy of Catalonia, which was at the head of the "*Liga Regionalista*," to compromise with the centralistic power of the monarchy and to hamper the nationalist movement for over forty years.

During the seven years of the dictatorship of *Primo de Rivera* the nationalist movement in Catalonia, spurred on by persecution, assumed greater dimensions. However, the magnates of the "*Liga Regionalista*" bowed down to the dictators although the latter were persecuting Catalan nationalists. In return the dictators protected the class interests of the bourgeoisie and waged a fierce terror against the workers and Rabassaires (a sort of share-croppers). The iniquitous attitude of the Left-wing bourgeois leaders of the "*Liga Regionalista*" intensified the process of radicalisation which was going on amongst the masses and encouraged their development to the Left. The "*Liga*" split and the "*Accio Catalana*" was founded. The movement "*Estat Catala*" (Catalonian State), led by *Macia* represented the most uncompromising nationalism, and considerable sections of the clerical workers and of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie joined it.

When the Spanish Republic was proclaimed the "*Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*" (Republican Left of Catalonia) was formed and it included almost all the Republican nationalist elements in the country, and later the "*Accio Catalana*" joined it too. Only the "*Liga Catalana*," the former "*Liga Regionalista*," which represented the industrial plutocracy and the rich landowners, remained outside the movement and continued to support the plans of the bourgeoisie and the rich landowners of Spain under the cloak of Catalan nationalism.

On April 14, 1931, even before the proclamation of the Spanish Republic in Madrid, the provisional Presidency of *Francisco Macia* over the Catalan Republic was proclaimed in *Barcelona*, the second

Republic in the history of the country. This Republic had only a short life of three days because at the first reprisals instituted by the Provisional Government of Spain it abandoned the sovereignty claimed for it by its instigators. It must, however, be pointed out that this rapid renunciation of sovereignty was also a result of the lack of interest shown in the Catalan Republic by the proletariat. Neither the anarcho-syndicalists nor the socialists realised the tremendous importance of the intensification of the bourgeois-democratic revolution by the conquest of the right of self-determination by the Catalan, Galician and Basque nationalities.

The Catalan Constitution, which was adopted on August 2, 1932, in a people's referendum with 93 per cent, of the total poll, was ratified on September 15, 1932, by the Cortes but not, however, without watering down one or two important clauses and limiting the autonomous rights of the country.

Neither the democratic parties nor the working-class organisations offered the necessary resistance or summoned up the necessary energy to the reckless campaign which was then carried on throughout Spain by the Right-wing against the Catalan Constitution. No one realised that this campaign against the Catalan Constitution was the signal for a legal reorganisation of the counter-revolutionary forces, and for the mobilisation and incitement of the petty bourgeoisie and of the peasants against the Republic, who were told that the Catalonians and the Basques were intent on dismembering the Republic. However, the prominent role played by the Communist Party of Spain and by the Communist Parties of Catalonia and Euzkadi in the campaign for the national liberty of Catalonia and Euzkadi must be stressed because it brought about a profound change in the attitude of the masses of the Spanish people.

Republicans, socialists and trade unionists realised the importance of the national question and the necessity of defending the Catalonians and the Basques against the fierce attacks and the irreconcilable hatred of the imperialist reaction and fascism. The results of this campaign were the enormous mass movements, for instance in connection with the arrival of a delegation of Catalan landowners in Madrid to demand the annulment of the law passed by the Catalan Parliament concerning the tillage agreements, the movement to defend the joint sessions of the Basque municipalities, and the insurrectionary movement which broke out on October 6, 1934, whose chief aim was the defence of the Catalan Constitution which was brutally attacked by the reactionary *Samper and Gil Robles* Government.

Both Catalonia and Euzkadi took an extremely important part in the war and in the organisation of the war industry. Their soldiers, 220,000 strong, fought on all fronts in the firm conviction that the liberties of Catalonia and Euzkadi were being defended before Madrid as much as on the Eastern front.

Only the magnates of industry and commerce fled and sought protection under the wing of the insurrectionary generals who were determined to destroy the Catalan and Basque nationalist movements root and branch. These were the same magnates who controlled the "Liga Catalana" and boasted, of their Catalan nationalism: *Cambo, Ventosa, Calvell, Puig, Cadafalo* and others. It was they who attempted to sell Catalonia to the invading fascists.

To-day Catalonians, Basques and Galicians know that their national liberty is indissolubly bound up with the liberty of the people of Spain as a whole, and therefore they are fighting enthusiastically shoulder to shoulder with the men of Castille, Andalusia, Aragon and Estremadura against fascist aggression. They are well aware of the common interests of the whole Spanish people against fascism, and they know that victory over fascism can only be obtained by the closest co-operation of all the peoples of Spain under the banner of the People's Front.

The betrayers of Catalonia in the "Liga Catalana," and the Trotskyists are doing their best to destroy this splendid unity of the people of Catalonia with the other peoples of Spain by propagating the separation of Catalonia from Spain proper and the conclusion of a separate peace with the Franco

hordes.

All such attempts have broken down completely against the firm determination of the Catalan people to fight shoulder to shoulder with the other peoples of Spain for the final destruction of fascism and its allies the Trotskyists and the separatists of the *Denca* type.

The Youth of Spain Occupies a Place of Honour

By Santiago Carillo

Broad masses of the Spanish youth took part in the revolt of October, 1934. The names of hundreds of young people – dead, tortured and imprisoned by reaction – appear on the lists of losses. But the brutality of the police in dealing with the youth did not cause the latter to lose courage. During the period after the October struggles, thousands of the youth repeatedly joined in the fight against the reactionary governments, which were preparing civil war.

Working-class youth understood that its immediate task was the unification of its forces, in order, by means of this unification, to create a basis for the unity of the whole anti-fascist youth of Spain.

During the last months of 1935 the *unity campaign* was developed on a broad scale. The young Socialists and Communists drew closer together, in a fraternal spirit. With the formation of the People's Front in January, 1936, the unity movement increased in extent, and found expression most of all in the joint publication of the periodicals *Juventud Roja* and *Renovacion*, the organs of the Communist and Socialist Youth.

SANTIAGO CARILLO, <i>General Secretary of the United Socialist Youth.</i>
--

April 1, 1936, is the historical date of *the unification of the Communist and Socialist Youth*. In Madrid and in many provincial towns, mass meetings took place, at which the creation of the *United Socialist Youth of Spain* was solemnly proclaimed. Steps were immediately taken to form provincial committees. In the period following the elections which brought with them the victory of the People's Front – a period of such great revolutionary significance – the union of young Socialists and Communists provided an example worthy of emulation.

Spanish youth is being steeled in the fire of struggle against fascism. It is the new, hardened generation which has been brought up in a spirit of love and loyalty to the cause of the people, and of hatred against fascism, in the spirit of boldness and revolutionary enthusiasm for the struggle.

More than half a million young Spaniards are under arms; thousands and thousands are taking courses in military training; hundreds of sons of workers and peasants are airmen, tank drivers and seamen; they have learnt the technique of war during the war itself and show that the youth of Spain is worthy of its place of honour in the struggle.

From the very first day, side by side with the Fifth Regiment – organised by the heroic Communist

Party of Spain – were established *the Battalions of the United Socialist Youth*; these are some of the troops who provide the best guarantee of victory in the struggle against the fascist invaders. In the campaigns on the Guadarrama heights, in Talavera, at the defence of Madrid, the young soldiers of the “*Pasionaria*,” “*October*,” “*Aida Lafuente*” and “*Tomas Meabe*” battalions wrote with their blood some of the most glorious pages in the story of the struggle against invasion.

When the People’s Army was created, the youth battalions, which were organised on a military basis, systematically transformed themselves into regular units.

How was it possible for the youth to take part in the struggle in this way?

The lessons of the October rising and the persecutions which took place after the October events had shown the young Socialists and Communists *the necessity of unity*. Thus it came about that at the moment when the fascist rebellion broke out there already existed one single organisation of Socialist and Communist Youth – the United Socialist Youth – which, built up on the lines of the resolutions passed by the Sixth Congress of the Young Communist International, was in a position to mobilise enormous masses of the working-class and peasant youth of Spain, and to develop and strengthen the unification movement of the rising generation of anti-fascists and revolutionaries.

The United Socialist Youth comprises more than half a million members and plays an important part in the war against fascism. Half of its members are soldiers and officers in the army, navy and air force.

The United Socialist Youth has provided magnificent examples of courage and heroism.

Apart from popular figures such as *Cornejo*, who became famous by holding up and driving back a number of tanks at the defence of Madrid, and to-day is one of the leaders of the United Socialist Youth, one can quote examples of local organisation in Madrid which had to be closed down on November 7 because all their members had gone to the front. Some hundred officers between the ages of 17 and 20 are members of the United Socialist Youth and fulfil their duties with courage and expert knowledge. One of the brigade commanders of the division named after the popular “*Campesino*” is a nineteen-year-old boy, a member of the United Socialist Youth.

During the recent struggles in the North, the young Socialist *Antuna* shot down with his rifle four German and Italian planes. Thus began the anti-aircraft movement which now extends over the whole army. Numerous infantry soldiers have already followed this example and have organised sniping groups which specialise in shooting down aeroplanes. Since the recent occupation of Teruel by the enemy, this movement is beginning to develop particularly strongly. But even before this the infantry had shot down eight planes in the battles around Teruel.

The example of a village in the province of *Cuenca* (one of the provinces where reaction had its firmest stronghold) demonstrates the enthusiasm of the young Spaniards. In this peasant village there was a small organisation of the United Socialist Youth which was dissolved in the first days of the civil war, since all its members had gone to the front.

In February of the previous year, the first news of the National Conference of the Youth reached this village, and a group of young people resolved to reorganise the youth movement. At the first meeting the situation was discussed and a comrade read out a few passages from the resolution of the congress, which said that it is the duty of all members of the Youth League to defend the fatherland, which fascism has subjected to armed attack. The reorganised youth section immediately decided to go in a body to the front.

For the third time the Socialist Youth in this village was reorganised and adopted a similar decision.

This example is not one isolated case. Many sections of the United Socialist Youth have repeatedly been dissolved because all their members were at the front, and have then been reorganised.

The United Socialist Youth has carried on widespread education work during the struggle. Everywhere at the front, right into the front line trenches, there exist schools and small libraries. Under the leadership of the war commissars, whom the Socialist Youth have greatly assisted in their work (many young Socialists are political commissars), tens of thousands of young peasants have learnt to read and write. A special role is played by the cultural militia, which has been created by the Ministry for Popular Education, and which, by its self-sacrificing work, regardless of all dangers, has considerably diminished the amount of illiteracy in the country.

The United Socialist Youth has made the question of education one of its chief concerns, so that to-day there may be seen, in every village *youth-home*,

school benches where the children learn their lessons under pictures of Lenin, Stalin, Pasionaria and other leaders. The United Socialist Youth League has established hundreds of schools in the villages, where young people learn reading and writing, as well as the nature of the internal combustion engine. Here the character of the struggle in which the Spanish people is engaged is also made clear to them.

The war and the people's revolution have produced an enormous thirst for knowledge among the youth. All young people want to be better equipped, in order more efficiently to serve the common cause of the Spanish people's struggle for liberation from the fascist invaders.

The war and the people's revolution have also speeded up the process of the unification and organisation of the Spanish youth. The youth movement to-day includes, in various forms, wide masses of the new generation, who formerly stood aside from all organisations and were not interested in the vital questions confronting the Spanish people; now they are beginning to organise and actively take part in the work and the struggle. We are not referring only to the hundreds of thousands of new members of the United Socialist Youth or the development of the Anarchist and Republican youth, which is also considerable, even though less than that of the Socialist youth; new organisations have arisen, with a broad basis and a democratic revolutionary character; there is, for example, "*Alerta*," an organisation for physical culture and military training to which members of the United Socialist Youth, Anarchists and Republicans all belong on the basis of a joint unity programme; there is the "*League of Young Girls*" which is beginning to win the sympathy of all young girls in Spain; there are numerous clubs and youth circles and youth homes which are being organised even in the most remote villages. All these organisations draw in enormous masses of the youth, who do not take part in the general mobilisation, but who are now abandoning their passive attitude and doing useful work for the war against fascism.

Let us take as an example the town of *Alicante*. Here the "League of Young Girls," in conjunction with the trade unions, has sent girls into the factories, and to work on tramway services; they are taught these jobs by the workers. As soon as young workers are mobilised, the girls take their places and receive the wages which the workers had received. Thus the League of Young Girls in Alicante is

LENA ODENA, <i>Member of the Central Committee of the United Socialist Youth.</i>

working at the task of establishing women in the work of production; for the first time women are seen in Spain working in printing works, in tramways and in all public services.

The League of Young Girls and “Alerta” are open to all young people and provide excellent reserves of the Spanish people in its struggle for the right to a free and happy life.

But the most outstanding achievement of the Spanish youth is the *Alliance of Anti-Fascist Youth*, in which young Socialists, Anarchists and Republicans participate. This is daily consolidating itself and imbuing the younger generation in Spain with the feeling of unity and loyalty to the People’s Front.

The anti-fascist youth alliance, with all the force gained by unity, is to-day the guide of millions of young Spaniards. The United Socialist Youth played a decisive role in the creation of this Alliance.

At the memorable conference of the United Socialist Youth in *Valencia*, the slogan of the formation of an Alliance was issued. During the eighteen war months this slogan has become the slogan of the whole of the younger generation, in spite of the criminal activities of the fascist-Trotskyists, who tried by means of demagoguery to cause splits in the ranks of the Socialist youth and, after these attempts had failed, sought to incite the Anarchist youth against the Alliance; this also failed. The youth of Spain has learnt what unity means, and has been convinced by practice that the worst enemies of this unity, and thus also those who oppose the victorious participation of youth in the struggle, are the Trotskyists of the International Fifth Column, whose most important section has just been destroyed by Soviet justice.

The Alliance is constantly increasing in stability, and forms a guarantee that Spanish youth, united side by side with the People’s Front, will struggle untiringly until Franco is defeated and the last fascist driven out of Spain. The victory of the people, for which the youth of Spain is shedding its life-blood, will make it impossible for a regime of fascist terror to be established in their country; this victory will ensure for the Spanish youth a happy future. The glorious youth of Spain is fighting without wavering, against the traitors and against the armies of foreign invasion. Thus it is creating the necessary conditions so that to-morrow Spanish youth will be free to work and study, with no limits to the force of its creative spirit.

The Trade Unions in Spain

By Antonio Mije

The trade union movement, organised on a national scale, dates in Spain from 1888, the year in which the General Union of Workers (*Union General de Trabajadores*, known as U.G.T.) was founded.

The influence of the U.G.T. in the Spanish working-class movement made itself felt throughout long periods of the struggle, in which it contributed to the development of the class consciousness of the working class through the work of the organised trade union forces, the true organisers of the masses in Madrid, Vizcaya, Asturias, etc. It was intensely active in the revolutionary general strike of August, 1917, fighting against the monarchy, the representative of a feudal despotism of a military type and the main support of the forces of the landowners and the Church.

During the dictatorship of *Primo de Rivera* from 1923 to 1930 the U.G.T. turned its activities mainly towards the organs of class conciliation (parietic committees, provincial Labour administrations, industrial tribunals, etc.) and towards maintaining the number of its adherents. At the same time the leadership of this trade union centre launched a violent offensive against the trade unions and trade unionists who advocated the class struggle instead of “class conciliation” – a campaign which culminated in the expulsion of individuals and groups and even of whole unions by the leadership of

the U.G.T. But it was not only the U.G.T. that pursued such a policy. The same happened in the C.N.T. From 1922 onwards the leaders_ of the U.G.T., on pretext of an incident which occurred at a congress of that centre, proceeded to expel from its ranks all Communists and even such unions which refused to accept these expulsions as they were imposed "from above." The C.N.T. adopted the same procedure especially in Catalonia and Andalusia where all Communists were expelled from the unions on the grounds that they "were political." As a result there were in Spain a great number of unions which belonged to neither of the two trade union federations but nevertheless always advocated trade union unity. The idea of unity gained ground and in the summer of 1931 a *unity conference* was held in *Madrid* which resulted in the constitution of a united trade union centre, the *C.G.T.U.* which included the majority of the autonomous unions and the unions expelled from the U.G.T. and the C.N.T.

It is mainly since the establishment of the Republic that the U.G.T. began to develop considerably, conquering strong positions on the countryside.

The class struggle was increasing in intensity throughout the country and the forces of reaction began to organise themselves, making use of the discontent existing among important sections of the small peasants who found no solution for their problems in the legislation which the Republic was drawing up to deal with the questions of the countryside.

The elections of November, 1933, put power into the hands of reactionary elements who used it from the beginning to attack the demands and achievements of the workers, and the reactionary parliamentary majority proceeded to abolish the small reforms granted the working class by the legislation promulgated by the constituent assembly in the period 1931-33.

As a result, the whole first half of the year 1934 saw the development of bitter struggles of the working class for the improvement of its living conditions. The struggle of the Madrid engineers, of the building workers of the same city, the general movement throughout Spain of the agricultural workers on June 5, the general strikes in Madrid against the Catalan landowners, against the Escorial concentration and many others.

The movement of October, 1934, found its most clearly revolutionary expression in the *Asturian struggle*. The trade unions took active part in this struggle, both by economic assistance and later by a general strike on a national scale. That the movement had no greater revolutionary effects was due in the first place to the fact that unity of action was as yet insufficiently mature and despite the class consciousness which the working class showed in all its struggles it lacked a true united leadership of all the revolutionary forces which took part in the struggle. This led to a position where important forces of the trade unions took no active part in the movement, as it occurred in Catalonia, in respect of the C.N.T.

It was after these events that a rapprochement was initiated between the unions affiliated to the U.G.T. and those of the C.G.T.U., and contact was established by representatives of the two trade union centres. After full discussion and numerous meetings throughout the country the forces of the C.G.T.U. affiliated with the U.G.T. and the same decision was taken at the same time by a number of autonomous industrial federations such as the federation of the telegraph, the tobacco workers, the postal workers, as well as many important autonomous trade union groups throughout the whole country. Thus the U.G.T. became a centre for the unification of the trade union forces of Spain.

The middle of 1935 marked the beginning of a period of reorganisation of the forces of the U.G.T. throughout the country, though with some delay on the countryside. The trade unions began to accept the idea of a People's Front put forward by the Communist Party as a means to fight reaction and fascism.

In the second half of 1935 the trade unions already definitely co-operated with the political forces of

the People's Front which then began to organise and to prepare for a general election. The trade unions affiliated to the U.G.T. make a mighty contribution to the anti-fascist movement of the people.

After the victory of the People's Front the U.G.T. became a force of prime importance. With the affiliation of the C.G.T.U., of individual industrial federations, of hundreds of independent trade unions, the U.G.T. has grown to an enormous mass organisation exercising considerable influence throughout the country. At the same time the work of the Socialists and Communists within the working class brought about an intensification of the recruitment to the trade unions affiliated with the U.G.T. and soon that organisation grouped in its ranks more than a million members.

When the military-fascist rising broke out the U.G.T. proclaimed a general strike on the national scale and participated throughout the country in the struggle against the treacherous officers. It organised militia battalions, sent great numbers of leading trade unionists to the fronts and immediately appealed to the factories, workshops, shops and rural areas in order that production should not be paralysed through the flight of the immense majority of employers and landowners.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE U.G.T.

The U.G.T. is at present the strongest trade union organisation in Spain. It is estimated to group more than two million members in the loyal territory alone. It consists of 44 National Industrial Federations of which some of the most important are the Federations of the Agricultural Workers with more than 700,000 members, Federation of Metal and Engineering Workers with about 70,000, Transport Workers' Federation with 80,000, the Textile Federation with over 100,000 and the Building Trades' Federation with about 85,000.

As a consequence of the military-fascist rebellion certain factories, workshops, shops and estates abandoned by their owners, were sequestered by the trade unions. The U.G.T. participated in this movement of confiscations together with the C.N.T. Hence the confiscated industries and factories were in their great majority operated by committees consisting of members of both trade union centres. The U.G.T. also participated in certain instances in the so-called Socialisation of factories and other centres of production. This was in the first place due to the lack of leadership on the part of the former executive of the U.G.T., which left it to the trade unionist groups to solve the existing problems on their own. It was precisely for this reason that in many unions of the U.G.T. the so-called "uniform wage for all workers" was accepted, a position which was soon sensibly modified through the pressure exercised by the Communists and by the activity of the workers themselves who rejected this method of remuneration as it did not take into consideration the capability and qualifications of each worker.

The same explanation applies to the action of the unions of agricultural workers who at the beginning in many localities imposed an enforced collectivisation on the peasants without thinking of the harm they were doing, as the peasants in many cases were unwilling to permit the collectivisation of their little bits of land. The lack of a political work of enlightenment in order to convince the peasants was in many instances compensated by violent and coercive measures.

The same "Socialising" tendency led many unions of the U.G.T., to usurp the functions of the political parties and strive for a hegemony in the municipal administrations. It was precisely this tendency which the anarcho-syndicalist elements made use of in their struggle against the political parties of the working class and their function of political leadership.

This was one of the most characteristic features of the *Caballero* followers in the U.G.T. between July, 1936, and October, 1937. Marching together with and sometimes in the wake of the anarcho-syndicalists, they wanted to convert the trade unions into instruments of power in opposition to the organised political forces of the working class, the Socialist and Communist Parties. This attitude of the followers of Caballero in the leadership of the U.G.T. created in fact a divorce not only between this

group of the leadership and the rank and file of trade unionists, but also between this little group and the rest of the national leadership (National Committee) of the U.G.T.

This divorce was clearly revealed during the Government crisis in May. A representative of the executive of the U.G.T. (a Caballerist) explained to the President of the Republic that the U.G.T. would not give support to any Government unless Largo Caballero was its Prime Minister and also held the portfolio for war. This point of view was shared by the leadership of the C.N.T., but opposed and condemned by the National Committee of the U.G.T. at its plenary session in May, 1937.

At the same plenum the majority of the National Committee decided that the U.G.T. should give support to the Government in order to win the war and also pronounced itself in favour of maintaining the traditional relations with the Socialist Party and improving the relations existing with the Communist Party. The Executive Committee, under the leadership of Caballero, did not carry out these decisions.

The majority of the Industrial Federation (22) demanded that an extraordinary National Committee meeting be called to enforce the carrying out of the decisions taken by the previous plenum. The Caballerist executive replied to this perfectly justified demand, provided for by the rules, by expelling for “non-payment of dues” nine National Industrial Federations.

Convened by the majority of the National Federations, a national plenum met on October 1, 1937, removed the executive headed by Largo Caballero and appointed another headed by *Gonzalez Pena*.

This executive decided to readmit to the U.G.T., with all their former rights, the Federations expelled by Largo Caballero; to re-establish the relations which it had always entertained with the Socialist Party, and to establish fraternal relations with the Communist Party and, further, to draw up a plan of united action with the object of concluding an agreement with the C.N.T. on this basis.

The dismissed Executive declared itself in rebellion, refused to accept the decision of the National Committee, and attempted to convene a congress, but later found itself compelled to abandon this plan.

On October 27 the National Committee of the U.G.T. met again, together with representatives of 33 federations and the representatives of the Catalan organisation of the U.G.T. For the first time the National Committee of the U.G.T. faced squarely all the fundamental problems of the workers in relation to the necessities of the war and the requirements of the revolutionary movement. It realised the necessity of creating a war industry and nationalising it under the control of the Government to set up a people’s army and a united command; support for the Government in all matters relating to production and to the war; unity of action with the C.N.T. to promote production and assist the Government; re-establishment of the relations which had always existed between the U.G.T. and the Socialist Party – but which were broken off by the Caballerist group – and the establishment of cordial relations with the Communist Party (whose work and whose efforts in favour of both trade union and political unity were recognised by the National Committee of the U.G.T.); amalgamation of these Parties which the U.G.T. regards as its representatives within the Government, etc.

The “dispute” within the U.G.T. had passed beyond the frontiers. The leaders of the International Federation of Trade Unions saw fit to intervene, of course, in favour of the removed executive. A first meeting in Paris did not give the desired results. A delegation of the I.F.T.U. then visited Spain, under the chairmanship of Comrade *Jouhaux*. After a few preliminary meetings, it was agreed that a new national plenum should be held with representatives of “both” executives, the members of the National Committee and representatives of the provincial federations or, where there was no provincial federations in existence, of the local federations. A formula • submitted toy Comrade Jouhaux was accepted, which consisted in increasing by four the number of the members of the executive (11), the new executive thus being reconstituted with four new consultative members. These four places were

filled by four members of the formerly removed executive. The proposal also included the application of the decisions of the National Committee taken in May and October.

THE C.N.T.

The National Confederation of Labour (Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo, C.N.T.) was constituted in 1910 as a trade union centre, but its influence as a mass organisation began to grow and develop in 1917. The situation created by the war and the formidable movement evoked by the Russian revolution gave rise to a state of unrest and revolutionary evolution of the masses which the C.N.T. used to draw into its cadres important sections of the revolutionary proletariat which was eager to fight for the improvement of its living conditions.

In this period the C.N.T. expressed its sympathies for the Russian revolution, gave it its support and sent a delegation from its midst to the Soviet Union. It was only later that the specifically anarchist groups succeeded in getting this attitude modified by the Saragossa conference, held in 1922, and put forward the idea of organising the International Association of Workers of anarcho-syndicalist tendencies without the slightest political or revolutionary influence over the struggles of the workers throughout the world.

During these years the C.N.T. continued to develop, not without suffering much persecution from various reactionary governments.

In the second half of 1923, *General Primo de Rivera* established his military dictatorship in Spain.

At the end of the same year the C.N.T. was voluntarily dissolved by its leaders. During the period of the dictatorship the activities of the C.N.T. were very slight. Its signs of life are of little importance and consist in the publication of a few periodicals in Catalonia, the Asturias and Galicia. The specifically anarchist groups concern themselves mainly with themselves and refrain from all activity in the independent trade unions which in many provinces were still legal.

It was during the period of the dictatorship that the specifically anarchist groups united to constitute the *Iberian Anarchist Federation* (Federacion Anarquista Iberica, F.A.I.).

From 1930 onwards, after the fall of the dictatorship and the establishment of the Government of General *Berenguer*, the trade unions of C.N.T. begin to reorganise.

This reorganisation is carried out in the din of great struggles throughout the country, struggles which herald the advent of the Republic. A general strike in Galicia lasts five days, there are general strikes in Sevilla, in Malaga and other provinces. The revolutionary movement of December 12 is set in motion by the rising of *Galan* and *Garcia Hernandez* in Jaca, and shortly afterwards the Republic is established on April 14, 1931.

From this time onward two tendencies may be observed within the C.N.T. One is the tendency of the "pure" anarchists who wished to transform the C.N.T. (to which part of them belonged) into a mere appendage of the F.A.I. and the other, the trend which wanted to keep the trade unions free from all political or ideological influences. This difference of opinion gave birth to a movement of opposition within the C.N.T., known as the "Treintists" (thirtyists), because the manifesto in which the divergencies were explained was signed by thirty prominent militants of the C.N.T., among them *Pertana*, *Peiro* and *Juan Lopez*. The signatories of the manifesto, having been expelled from the C.N.T., the "thirtyists" created a trade union movement of their own.

In the years 1932, 1933 and 1934, the C.N.T. organised great mass strikes for the economic demands of the workers. The radicalisation of the masses reached a considerable degree, and this was used by the C.N.T. to initiate the organisation of putschist movements in January, 1932, and January and December, 1933. These movements served as a motive for the authorities to take repressive measures, deport

militants and close down locals and unions, etc.

In October, 1934, the C.N.T. took part in the rising, especially in the Asturias, where it had joined the Alianza Obrera, together with the U.G.T. and the working-class parties. But in Catalonia, where its strength and the fact that it possessed good nuclei of very militant elements, justified the hope that it would participate strongly in and carry forward the revolutionary movement directed against the radical-cedist reactionary coalition which had come into power, the C.N.T. held back the action of masses instead, ordered the workers who had come out into the streets to go back to work, and thus permitted the reactionaries to concentrate their main forces in the Asturias against the insurrectionary Centre there. This led to great internal struggles within the C.N.T. between the elements favourable to the Alianza and the united front and those who were deeply hostile to unity. After the October events, the C.N.T. suffered much persecution; its affiliated bodies were closed down and many of its leading militants imprisoned by the reactionary *Lerroux* Government. In the middle of 1935, the trade unions regained the possibility of functioning, and the trade union life of the C.N.T. began to develop again. In the electoral campaign, the result of which was the victory of the People's Front, the anti-electoral campaign of the anarchists ceased to bear the aggressive character it had taken on in the elections of 1933. Although they did not publicly proclaim their support of the People's Front ticket or recommend their adherents to go to the polls, the majority of the masses grouped in the C.N.T. did in fact vote for the People's Front.

At the national congress of the C.N.T., held in May, 1936, in *Saragossa*, a thorough discussion took place of the problems of internal unity and of unity with the U.G.T. It was decided to restore the internal unity of the organisation by the affiliation with the C.N.T. of the trade unions constituting the opposition to the C.N.T. and composed of anarcho-syndicalists and syndicalists. The discussion on the establishment of an alliance with the U.G.T. resulted in a decision favourable to the conclusion of a revolutionary alliance of the C.N.T. with the U.G.T.

At the present moment the C.N.T. can be regarded as numbering about 1,200,000 affiliated members, although the "economic plenum" recently held in Valencia put the figure at 1,700,000. Of this figure, about 450,000 are in Catalonia, about 250,000 in the West, and the rest in Central Spain, Aragon and Andalusia.

The forces of the C.N.T. have actively participated in the struggle against the military-fascist rebellion by organising battalions and chiefly by organising production.

From the beginning they favoured and developed the occupation of factories and workshops and developed collectivisation on the countryside. In the field of production they made many economic experiments with the socialisation of factories, introducing a uniform wage for all workers, and creating – as in Catalonia – economic committees which were the real masters in the enterprises. In organising the control committees they often distorted the functions of these committees and transformed them into economic organs of management of the factories and directors of production, thus atomising economic life.

The participation of the C.N.T. in the work of the Government served to convince many leading militants of this trade union body that the road of economic licence in Socialisation and control which they were pursuing was leading towards a real catastrophe with very painful repercussions for the war.

The enlarged plenum held in Valencia and dealing mainly with economic problems showed the willingness of many leaders of the C.N.T. to revise largely the demands which they had defended up to the present. It was decided to organise the forces of the C.N.T. in 14 strong National Industrial Federations to reorganise the internal organisation in the form of "one big union" existing in many provinces to establish a differential wage with a family bonus and other things.

This plan shows certain dangerous tendencies of a syndicalist character. There is *the* proposal to create a kind of federal economy based on the profits earned by the sequestered factories, workshops and other centres of production and consumption.

PERSPECTIVES

The work of bringing about unity of action between the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. is being intensified in order thus to prepare the way for the trade union unity of the Spanish working class. The unity of action of the U.G.T. and C.N.T. trade unions must be based on a programme providing for the solution of the fundamental problems now facing the workers: to improve and increase war production, to combat speculation and profiteering, to ensure the minimum ration of necessary food for every worker and his family, to increase and improve production in general both in industry and agriculture through the establishment of minimum plans, the nationalisation of the basic industries and their adaptation to the necessities of war.

The wage agreements must be brought up to the level of the cost of living and workers given the wage proportionate to the effort they make according to the principle of more wages for more and better production.

After negotiations lasting for several weeks, during which both the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. submitted their programmes for joint actions, in the middle of March an agreement was reached and a joint programme signed which constitutes the basis for close collaboration. The two organisations set up a contact committee consisting of representatives of the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. and called upon all trade unions to set up similar committees locally.

This agreement now acquires very great political importance. The U.G.T. and the C.N.T., which include in their ranks almost the whole of the Spanish proletariat, play an important role in the country. The questions of mobilisation for the People's Army, for questions concerning industry, agriculture, trade, etc., can only be solved with the immediate assistance of the trade unions which are not torn by inner dissensions. For the first time in the history of Spain the two largest trade union organisations of the country have signed an agreement on unity of action and close collaboration.

At a time when some elements of the Trotskyist P.O.U.M. opened the Aragon frontier to the attacking Italian-German hordes, the trade unions, together with the other political parties, placed themselves at the head of the Spanish people, mobilising all forces in order to defeat the enemy. And numerous recent examples show what the united forces of the working class can achieve.

Thus, for instance, at a demonstration in Barcelona on March 16, in addition to the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the United Socialist Party of Catalonia, there also took part the Federation of Anarchists of Iberia (F.A.I.) the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. After this demonstration the delegates of the C.N.T. and F.A.I., together with the representatives of the other proletarian organisations, went to Negrin, the Prime Minister, in order to assure him of the determination of the people to fight until the fascists are completely smashed.

After signing a programme for joint action the C.N.T. joined the People's Front and declared its readiness not only to support the Government, but also to send its representatives into it.

The establishment of unity of action between the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. not only assisted in the welding together of the Spanish people but facilitated to a considerable extent the task of creating a united party of the Spanish proletariat.

The Fascist Incendiaries and Intervention in Spain

By V. Stern

“A glance at the map shows the strategic importance of Spain in a war between Germany and France.” These are the introductory words of the secret memorandum found in Barcelona, with several thousand other significant documents, on the premises of the German National Socialists in Barcelona after the mutineers’ putsch had been defeated there. These documents, whose genuineness the German fascists have never been able to dispute, are to-day more significant than ever. They show down to the last detail how German fascism operated in Spain in the preparation of a fascist putsch, how it built up an organisation of its own all over the country – an actual state within a state – commissioned with the task of influencing public opinion, of systematically bribing the press, of smuggling fascist propaganda material and arms into Spain with the aid of diplomatic privileges, of spying on everything (one very interesting document shows how thoroughly even the German Embassy and the Ambassador himself were watched by spies), of carrying on mass espionage, especially military espionage, of organising terrorist acts and kidnappings of opponents, of carrying on undermining work in French Morocco from the base of Spanish Morocco, and of influencing political conditions in Spain in the interest of German imperialism and its war aims.

These documents form only one part of the innumerable incontestable proofs of the fact – clear in any case to those with their eyes open – that German and Italian fascism deliberately prepared and fanned the frightful conflagration in Spain, which has already brought such frightful suffering upon the country, and whose flames are already spreading across the frontiers and menacing the whole world. Long before the beginning of the rebellion, there were many conferences between the Spanish mutineer generals and the rulers of Germany and Italy, all details were discussed, arms and money promised to the rebels, and plans laid down for the favours to be granted in return by the Spanish fascists after they had gained the victories they dreamed of – how they were to place the foreign policy of Spain at the service of the fascist war plans, and hand over the natural wealth and the most important strategic positions of Spain.

The fact that these conferences took place is well known. General Sanjurjo, who was originally chosen to be the dictator of Spain, stayed for months in the “Kaiserhof” Hotel in Berlin, where Hitler’s guests always take up residence. In the spring of 1936 he was given an official audience, together with the Spanish monarchist leader Sotelo. Many of these conferences were also attended by the notorious Spanish multi-millionaire and large-scale exploiter Juan March. By the beginning of July, 1936, 6 heavy bombers and 12 light aeroplanes from the great Heinkel Works had already been shipped in Hamburg with the destination of “Spain.” Immediately before and after the outbreak of the rebellion, German and Italian fliers went to Spain, a fact which cannot be disputed by the fascists, if only for the reason that a number of these aeroplanes crashed in French Morocco, and some of them even landed on Republican territory, not knowing that the putsch in Barcelona had been defeated.

When it became apparent that the rapid victory of the rebels was not going to come off, but that on the contrary the rebels would be speedily wiped out, in spite of their great superiority of arms, organisation and military experience, if they did not receive aid from abroad, then the fascist Powers engaged in a boundless intensification of their intervention, accompanying it by a campaign of lies and calumnies, and employing their bands of Trotskyist criminals to further their slander-drive. Enormous quantities of up-to-date arms and war material of every kind were sent continuously to Spain from Germany and Italy. Hamburg became a centre for these shipments. At first the rebels only possessed 18 aeroplanes of their own, including three from Morocco. To-day there are hundreds of Italian and German aeroplanes fighting on the rebel side. One single ship, for instance, leaving Leghorn for Spain on October 14, 1937, carried 250 small, quick-travelling tanks and caterpillar tractors, and over 100 flame-throwers.

Ever-increasing sections of the front have been taken over by German and Italian troops, and to-day their numbers have reached about 200,000.

After a time, even Hitler and Mussolini themselves no longer considered it necessary to dispute the fact of their intervention, though it continues to be obstinately denied by their diplomatic representatives. Mussolini, in an article in *Popolo d'Italia*, on June 26, 1937, declared that: "The victory of Franco will be in part a victory of Italy, for Italy has not remained neutral, but has taken part in the struggle." German and Italian warships have been sent to Spanish waters, and have been of great assistance to the rebel fleet. Germany has sent, among others, the following warships: "Deutschland," "Admiral Scheer," "Panther," "Albatross," "See Adler." These fascist warships have made it possible for Moorish troops to be conveyed to Spain. They have done reconnoitring and blockade work for the rebel fleet, they have protected the rebel ships against attacks, and secured freedom of manoeuvre at sea for the rebels. German and Italian submarines – at first the mutineers did not possess even one – have taken a direct part in the struggle. That part of the Balearics which the rebels have been able to seize, with Italian aid, has been occupied by the Italians and converted into an Italian naval base. German troops have made themselves at home in North Africa in a similar manner. Hence the rebellion of the Spanish generals has developed into a regular war of robbery and subjugation by Germany and Italy in Spain.

This war has been, and continues to be, conducted on characteristically fascist lines. Without any declaration of war, of course, and even accompanied by solemn promises of "non-intervention." Every tenet of international law is brutally violated, with a barbaric inhumanity which horrifies the whole world. Wherever the fascist bands can make their way, their one object has been the mass murder of the civilian population. Who does not remember the cruel slaughter after the conquest of Badajoz? The peaceful towns behind the lines have been mercilessly bombarded, the women, children and old people wiped out. According to official data, eleven thousand children have been killed in this war, and 15,000 wounded. German fliers have earned for Germany the eternal shame of the brutal annihilation of Guernica, of the cowardly bombardment of the open town of Almeria. German and Italian submarines have been carrying on a pirate war in the Mediterranean, and while Germany and Italy "undertook" to combat this piracy.

During the first months of 1938, before and during the fascist offensive on the Aragon front, German and Italian intervention increased to an unprecedented degree. The interventionists continued to negotiate in the notorious "Non- Intervention Committee" about "withdrawing" their troops from Spain, but at the same time they were sending enormous quantities of modern war material and fresh divisions to Spain. The German pilot Kurt Kettner, taken prisoner in March this year, reported that at the end of February 40 heavy bombers of the Heinkel 101 type arrived in Spain, via France and Mallorca. The German air fleet known as the Condor Legion, fighting in Spain, comprises eight squadrons of Heinkel bombers type 101, two squadrons of Dornier observation aeroplanes, a patrol of Heinkel machines type 45, and three heavy and two light aircraft defence battalions.

Lieutenant Mario Minvervi, who arrived at the Aragon front on March 14, stated that there are already 700 German and Italian aeroplanes in Spain, including 150 Fiat and 100 Savoia machines. In January, 600 wagons of war material arrived in Seville and Cadiz, in February and the beginning of March, 1,000 wagons and 200 motor lorries.

The Italian flier Antonio Ussaro, taken prisoner on April 12, reported that as late as the beginning of April several groups of Italian bombers arrived in Spain, including 8 super-rapid bombers of a new Savoia-Marchetti type, capable of speeds up to 480 km., armed with five machine guns, and able to carry 600 kg. bombs. The Italian air fleet in Spain has 120 bombers and 200 pursuit planes. An Italian army is fighting on the Aragon front, consisting of the divisions "23rd March," "Littorio," and "Arrows," besides artillery regiments and tank battalions. The divisions are supplemented by armoured car companies. Each division is provided with an artillery regiment of its own with heavy and light

batteries of 65, 75, 127, 149 calibres. The division "23rd March" is operating, according to Ussaro, on the right bank of the Ebro, the division "Littorio" between Cardesa and Tortosa, the division "Arrows" north of the Ebro. The command is in the hands of General Bugonzoli, and the General Staff includes Generals Berti, Frusci, Fabrogosa, and Colonels Pescarcho and Babbini. Even Chamberlain's paper the Daily Telegraph and Morning Post reports that apart from the "volunteers" there are 60,000 men of the regular Italian army taking part in the fighting in Spain, that General Garda holds the supreme command over the whole man Major Hellinghausen commands the German air base at Italian air fleet in Spain, that Colonel Mari commands the squadron which bombards Barcelona from Palma, and the Ger- Pollensa.

These facts must be taken into account if the heroism of the Spanish struggle on the Aragon front is to be fully appreciated. Here the Republicans are offering fierce resistance to such a technical superiority. It is heartrending to see how thousands of these heroes, sacrificing themselves unreservedly for the freedom of the country, must perish because the lawful Spanish Government is not permitted to purchase the arms which it requires for its defence.

There is nothing more utterly shameful than the toleration, indeed actual promotion, of this crime, by the great bourgeois democratic States, especially Great Britain. And yet the vital interests of these States and peoples too are most dangerously menaced by the fascist intervention in Spain. Spain, as a member of the League of Nations, has the right to demand aid and protection. But instead of receiving them, it is actually barred from the most elementary right of any government, that of buying arms, by the so-called "non-intervention" policy.

This attitude maintained by the bourgeois democratic Powers, and tolerated by the reactionary leaders of the Second International, has made it possible for the fascist robber States to intensify their intervention enormously of late. Such magnificent

Republican victories as those of Guadalajara and Teruel have destroyed the legend of the invincibility of the fascist troops, and shown that even under the most difficult conditions, and in spite of the fascist intervention, the Spanish people knows very well how to defend its freedom successfully, and that their powers of resistance are growing and promise them victory.

The fascists are making fresh efforts to prevent this, and are sending fresh enormous supplies of arms and troops to Spain. They are intent on forcing the victory here at any price, in order to complete the encirclement of France from the south and to threaten its communications with Africa, to be able to destroy Gibraltar from North Africa, and to have the raw materials and men of Spain at their disposal in time of war and even in peace.

All this cannot but greatly weaken Britain's position in the Mediterranean. German and Italian fascism are striving to extend the fascist sphere of influence, and to create the conditions for the great war which appears to them to be the sole means of escape from their growing internal difficulties. Spain is for fascism the first step on that road which was followed by the rape of Austria, and threatens to lead to a raid on Czechoslovakia. The events in Spain during the last two years, the rivers of blood and tears flowing there, show only too well what fascism will bring to the world, and what fate awaits it if continued tolerance and retreat on the part of the bourgeois democracies permit fascism to proceed to its goal.

Fascism would not carry off the victory, even should it succeed in this manner in setting the rest of the world on fire as it has set Spain and China on fire. This is proved by the blows dealt to fascism in China and Spain, and even in Abyssinia, and it is assured by the existence of the Soviet Union and the international proletariat. But the overcoming of fascism on these lines would be purchased at the price of frightful and annihilating chaos all over the world, and generations would suffer from its effects. There is still time to save the world from this disaster.

Aid for Spain is a decisive link in the chain of this world- historical struggle, and the utmost effort must be made, by means of unity and determination, to render this aid most effectively.

The Cause of Spain is the Cause of Progressive Mankind

By T. Mayo

The fight against fascism in Spain is a fight for freedom and peace throughout the whole of Europe. Stalin expressed the opinion and feeling of the workers of the whole world, when in his telegram replying to the general secretary of the Communist Party of Spain, Jose Diaz, he wrote:

“The liberation of Spain from the yoke of the fascist reactionaries is not the private concern of the Spanish people, but the common cause of the whole of advanced and progressive mankind.”

There is not one country in the world where the friends of peace and democracy do not prove their solidarity with Republican Spain, where meetings and demonstrations do not take place, where there is no collection in aid of the wives and children of the Republican fighters, not a single country where the workers are not demanding the abolition of the farce of “non-intervention” and putting forward the demand: “Arms and aeroplanes for Spain.”

There is not one country in which a mighty wave of indignation is not rising against fascist barbarism, against the bombardment of open towns, against the murder of women, children and old men; where there are no anti-fascists leaving family and position in order to hurry to Spain and there take part in the Spanish people’s struggle for liberation, in the ranks of the International Brigade – the International Brigade which has become the symbol of the unity of the masses of all countries in the struggle for freedom, peace and bread.

Stalin’s stirring letter provided a powerful incentive to the development of international solidarity. People of the most varied political tendencies, even some who until then had stood aside from politics, responded to this call, and understood that the cause of Republican Spain is their cause. They understood that the victory of the assassins would mean a further strengthening of fascism and a fresh imperialist slaughter.

In all countries of the world, committees have been formed to aid Republican Spain. On these committees the representatives of all anti-fascist organisations are united. They were later amalgamated into the International Committee for the Co-ordination of Aid for Spain.

The best writers of the world, scholars of world-wide reputation, academicians, members of Parliament, lawyers, doctors, teachers – Upton Sinclair, Jean-Richard Bloch, Andre Malraux, Professor Langevin, Victor Basch, William Dodd, Senator Branting, Norman Angell, the Duchess of Atholl, Leon Jouhaux, Jean Zyromski, Isabella Blum, Marcel Cachin and many others – were the directors of this committee, whose task it is to render aid to Spain in all spheres. It sends to Spain clothes, food, medical supplies, field ambulances, etc. It organises the dispatch of ambulances and medical units. It helps the Republican Government in the evacuation of the civil population from menaced areas, and for this purpose it placed a large number of lorries at the Government’s disposal; it also organised the sending of children to other countries. It mobilises public opinion throughout the world, and pillories the barbarity of the fascist interventionists.

The expressions of international solidarity are most numerous and impressive. There is not a single group of workers which would not aid Spain in one way or another.

The refusal to load war material on to ships for the rebels, the holding up of suspicious vessels; strikes

of dock workers – these are all forms of the solidarity of sailors and dock workers. The making of clothes and underclothes – these are forms in which the solidarity of many women in the various countries shows itself. The bombs which do not explode when they are dropped on Madrid from Italian aeroplanes, but contain presents for the anti-fascist fighters, and the German artillery shells which did not explode – these are all proofs of the solidarity of the Italian and German workers.

Solidarity with the Spanish people is also displayed by those workers from whom the fascists would least expect it. Here are a few examples: in the Polish port of Gdynia the dockers refused to load arms on to a ship for the Spanish rebels and when a yellow organisation was called out to break the strike, the workers in this organisation refused to take part in loading the arms, and threatened a protest strike. In Naples, the workers set fire to a hangar at the aerodrome, containing three three-motored planes for the Spanish rebels, and five reconnoitring planes; in this way they aided the Republicans. In Hamburg the Gestapo arrested the crew of a ship, who had refused to take the vessel to Rebel Spain. And the crew of the German steamer Henrik struck when the boat arrived at Rotterdam, refusing to transport arms and war material for the assassins.

The crew of the Danish steamer Karl, which was supposed to take in a cargo of Benzine in Bordeaux, for the Spanish rebels, refused to carry out this work and left the ship. Another ship belonging to the same company was to take in a cargo of benzine in a Mediterranean port. The crew demanded a written assurance that the benzine was not intended for the Spanish war zone. When the company refused to give any such assurance the crew stopped work.

The International Union of Seamen and Dock Workers organised at many ports a kind of observation system. Every incoming and outgoing boat was to be observed and exact information was to be sent out concerning ships of a suspicious nature.

These observation points from time to time send out various pieces of information which provide the dockers with guides to action. Thus for example in one of their announcements they wrote:

“The dockers of Marseilles and Antwerp, together with the crew of the French ship Belle lie have held up a shipment suspected of being for the rebels.

Transport workers, dockers, seamen, follow this example! All ships and all cargo for the mutineers must be held up....

Observe the following ships:... (there follow the names of various ships). These ships are carrying suspicious cargo, or it is thought that they are doing so.

Prove your solidarity! All and everything for the victory of the Spanish People’s Front. Ships and cargoes destined for Spanish ports which are in Government hands must be dealt with as rapidly as possible.”

Anti-fascist seamen in Hitler Germany take advantage of the least opportunity to prove their fraternal solidarity with the Spanish Republic. In Antwerp, seamen visited the Red Aid Committee and brought gifts with them. In New York a sailor on a Hapag Line ship handed the Committee for the Defence of Spain 10 marks and promised to bring further support on his future journeys. A Hamburg docker gave an American seaman his weekly wage of 25 marks to help the Spanish fighters. And this, in spite of the fact that these workers are threatened with prison, perhaps even worse punishment, for such proofs of solidarity.

The call for aid to Republican Spain has found an echo even in the most remote corners of the earth. The Committees for Aid for Republican Spain are receiving banknotes as well as small copper coins. French and English intellectuals, American workers and Indo-Chinese coolies have all contributed.

Moving and simple words accompany the gifts of money:

“We are sending 100 francs from the workers of Saigon. This money was collected in spite of the bad material situation.”

“We are sending you the first instalment of the sum of 2,500 francs, which is intended for the purchase of first-aid supplies. Try to spend this money as advantageously as possible. We would like it announced that this money came from Tunis.”

“We are sending the money immediately. Although the sum is not large, it is sent with heartfelt wishes, to aid the Spanish workers in their struggle. Our workers take great interest in the affairs of Spain. Even the S.A., who have learnt by bitter experience, hope for the victory of the workers and peasants.” (From a letter written by a German miner.)

“The announcements of successes of Republican troops, which we have received from Madrid and Barcelona, are our daily bread, our hope. We should like to help the Spanish workers to the best of our ability and resources – the Spanish workers who are giving up their lives for the democratic Republic, for freedom and bread.” (From a letter by a group of Ligurian workers, who collected 612 liras.)

Collections of money for Spain in the fascist countries meet with enormous difficulties. Nevertheless the workers are not deterred.

After an armed clash between workers and police at the arms factory in Terni, many were arrested and brought before the Special Court, accused of “distributing leaflets and collecting money for the Spanish Republic.” The Special Tribunal condemned the workers either to death, or to prison sentences of thirty years. In Milan, Turin, and Genoa, Leghorn, Venice and other towns, hundreds of people were arrested, who were “suspected of supporting the Spanish Republic and had demonstrated this sympathy.” In the electro-technical works in Aix-la-Chapelles, arrests were made on account of collections which had been made for Republican Spain. Fourteen workers were condemned to 4 to 6 years imprisonment. In the Krupp factory in Rheinhausen the Gestapo arrested a number of workers on the charge of having collected money for Spain. On the same charge many workers from the arms factory in Gleiwitz, and from the Siemens works in Berlin were also arrested.

In Knittelfeld in Styria (Austria), a miner was brought before the court on a charge of collecting money for Spain. The court was only able to prove that he had collected 2 schillings and 60 groschen, but this was sufficient to get him condemned to 2 years imprisonment. A worker from Muerzzuschlag was condemned to five years imprisonment for being found in possession of a leaflet against Franco.

Many such examples could be quoted. Neither terrorism nor mass arrests and severe sentences can prevent solidarity from growing throughout the whole world.

These are a few of the facts of international solidarity, whose protagonists and organisers are the workers of the whole world, and their advance guard the Communist Party. There is no country in the world where aid is not being given to Republican Spain in some form or other.

The present days are serious and decisive ones in the struggle of Spanish democracy against the Spanish interventionists.

A powerful protest movement against this monstrous vandalism, against the fresh slaughter, against the farce of non-intervention, is increasing throughout the world. This is shown by the demonstration of 200,000 in Paris, the demonstration of 100,000 in London, the demonstration of 25,000 in Antwerp; it was shown by the French workers, who declared themselves ready to work overtime every day to produce arms for Republican Spain.

“Arms for Republican Spain!”

“Down with the farce of non-intervention!” “All forces to the aid of the Spanish Republic!”
These slogans are resounding with increased strength from all corners of the earth.

The cry of the French proletariat echoes forth with ever increasing violence: “Open the frontier! Down with the blockade!” This demand is being raised by numerous People’s Front organisations, by Socialist and Communist organisations and by Trade Unions, among them the District Congress of the Paris Trade Unions, which comprises 1,200,000 members.

The International First Aid Centre has sent out 82 ambulances, for which in all 3.2 million francs have been collected; of these a million each came from the U.S.A. and Sweden, 500,000 from France and Norway, and 150,000 from Switzerland. In addition to the continuous collections of food and clothes, the International Spanish Aid Committee organised a collection of lorries, spades and picks for Spain. The Metal Workers’ Union bought 15,000 spades and picks and 2 four-ton lorries. The Young Communist League of Paris provided 500 spades. The Building Workers’ Union of Paris gave 20,000 francs, and the Paris Trade Union Council 40,000 francs towards the collection.

This mass expression of solidarity, this unanimous demand for active aid, finds expression also in the article by the Radical Socialist Albert Bayet, which appeared in L’Oeuvre of April 12:

“We demand of the new government, what we have been demanding for twenty months: arms for the legal Government of the Spanish Republic.... If we betray the Spanish Republic we betray ourselves!”

The mood of the masses in England is expressed in the revival of the actions and protests in aid of Spain which originated from the bourgeois circles (Liberals, and the Oxford Student Unions). The Committee of Friends of Spain, of whom Arthur Henderson, M.P., Archibald Sinclair (Lib.), the Duchess of Atholl (Con.), the Pacifist Norman Angell, are members, appeals for a collection of £1,000 and a great campaign of meetings. Numerous Trade Union organisations (Scottish Trade Union Council, South "Wales and Northumberland Miners’ Federation, etc.) appealed for a boycott of Franco and active’ aid for Spain.

The collection organised by the numerous Spanish Aid organisations have yielded extraordinarily good results. The Scottish Ambulance Committee acknowledged in the News Chronicle the receipt of £1,100. The Liberal Press continues to publish appeals, e.g., the appeal of the Manchester Guardian on behalf of the local Spanish Aid Committee.

The *Daily Worker* publishes every day reports, letters from readers and appeals.

The *Chinese* people, in their struggle, are thinking and feeling with the heroic Spanish people, which is carrying on a most severe fight on another section of the front. It was the expression of a deep feeling of solidarity and inner unity, which the leader of the Communist Party of China, one of the most outstanding protagonists of the anti-Japanese united front movement, Mao Tse Dun, expressed in a manifesto to Republican Spain:

“We do not believe that the struggle of the Chinese people can be separated from your struggle in Spain.... We know that your victory will directly aid us in our fight against Japanese fascism. Your cause is our cause also. We read with enthusiasm of the international volunteers, organised by the peoples of all lands, and we rejoice that there are also Chinese and Japanese among their ranks.”

Practical and active international solidarity – this is the most solemn duty of all honest men and women. It must not be forgotten, as G. Dimitrov wrote in one of his articles:

“that in order to speed up and facilitate the victory of the Spanish people who are defending with their blood not only their own freedom and independence, but also the democratic freedom of

other peoples, as well as the cause of peace, a still greater strengthening of solidarity action on the part of the international proletariat and all democratic forces is necessary. Platonic, passive sympathy with the Spanish people is by no means an actual help to them.... There is to-day no higher duty for the international proletariat, for the masses of the people in all countries, for all honest men and women, than to increase as much as possible aid for the Spanish people, to bring about their victory. There is no more pressing duty than that of influencing public opinion, and the governments, and bringing about the abolition of the present ostrich-like policy in the matter of the fascist interventionists. There is no more urgent task than the active support of the peace-policy of Soviet democracy, which aims at checking the fascist interventionists in Spain, curbing the aggressors, and defending the independence, democratic rights and freedom of all the peoples.”*

* G. Dimitrov, “Problems of the United and People’s Front.”

The Soviet Union and Spain

By A. Claire

The newspapers are delivered in the early morning. A general glance at the latest news, and the report on the position in Spain is studied carefully. For millions of people in the Soviet Union this has become a habit and a necessity. In every house one finds a map of Spain on the wall. Many girls are called Dolores. On the streets of Moscow or Kiev girls in spotlessly white coats sell oranges, but only “Spanish oranges.” The children play at Spaniards. General Miaja is the most important figure in the game, and the lad there with shining blue eyes is saving women and children from a house wrecked by fascist bombs. The forage cap of the Spanish militiamen is the favourite headgear of all Soviet children. The wireless announces meetings in Barcelona, and immediately there is dead silence in the room. Eyes look up from books or newspapers and everyone present listens closely. Every book, every pamphlet about Spain is sold out in no time. The names of Spanish towns, rivers and mountains are difficult for Russian tongues to pronounce, but for all that every collective peasant, every worker, every child in the Soviet Union knows them.

And that is how it has been, literally, since the first day of the fascist rebellion on July 18, 1936. Spain, up to that time little more than a geographical conception for most Soviet citizens, suddenly became the centre point of interest, and a shape on the map took on the living form of a gallant people fighting for liberty. The enormous distance away suddenly seemed nothing. All the peoples of the Soviet Union love and respect the peoples of Spain, who rose like one man against the Italian and German intervention. They recall the experiences of their own struggle for liberty, their own hatred of the oppressors and exploiters, and they live with the Spanish peoples in their struggles, feeling like an elder and experienced brother who has already victoriously fought out a hard struggle, towards a younger brother who holds a rifle in his hands for the first time, and who stands as a new recruit in the ranks of the fighters against fascism and war for the working people, for national independence and liberty.

How is it possible to awaken a feeling of fraternal solidarity in a people of 170 million souls, a feeling embracing each individual? It is the result of a long and complicated process, the education of a whole people in the spirit of fraternal solidarity. And it was possible because the national hatred, which tore the peoples of the Tzarist Empire asunder for centuries, was overcome, because it disappeared when the exploiters responsible for it, and all the fratricidal strife they engendered – was wiped out once and for all, the exploiter who incites one people against another so that he may rule more securely in an atmosphere of bloodshed and chauvinist excitement. The Soviet Union has loyally maintained its

normal policy towards Spain too, the policy it has pursued day after day unflinching since the day of its foundation: the policy of peace and assistance for the struggling peoples, an honest policy of proletarian solidarity and proletarian principles.

At the beginning of August 1936, 200,000 men and women gathered on the Red Square in Moscow to demonstrate their solidarity with the people of Republican Spain. As far as the eye could see were banners with the slogans: "Down with the Fascist Rebels! Away with the Fascist Traitors! Hands off Revolutionary Spain!" Working men and working women addressed the vast concourse. The author, Fadeyev, spoke, and the member of the academy, Fersman. In the name of 25 million members of the Soviet Labour Unions, Shvernik appealed to the workers of the whole world to organise active support for the people of Spain in their struggle against the fascist generals and their instigators and backers, the German and Italian fascists.

The square resounded with a tremendous shout of "Down with Fascism! Long Live the People's Front! Long Live the Free and Democratic Spanish Republic!"

The voice of the proletarian capital expressed the will of the whole country. Who was the first to propose that funds should be collected to assist the workers of Spain in their struggle? They were all the first, and money poured in simultaneously from all quarters. On August 5 already the representatives of the Spanish Republican Government were handed the first 36 million francs collected by the masses of the people in the Soviet Union. That was only two weeks after the beginning of the fascist rebellion, but it was not a flash in the pan, not a temporary act of enthusiasm destined to die down. On the contrary, it was the beginning of regular assistance on a tremendous scale by the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union for their fighting fellow workers in Spain.

In this same month the masses began to read with deepest attention the reports of Michael Kolzov who was sent to Spain as a correspondent. Michael Kolzov reported the truth. He wrote about the heroism of the masses, the heroism of the youth and of the women of Spain, but he also wrote about their lack of experience and their mistakes, and he reported the slow and complicated process of building up a strong and efficient People's Army. Reports on the negative sides of the great struggle did not depress the Soviet readers because they have firm faith in the strength of the people.

The Spanish people have millions of friends, of honest and devoted friends all over the world, but nowhere else in the world but in the Soviet Union does Republican Spain enjoy such unanimous political, moral and material support. In the Soviet Union the masses of the people, public opinion and the government itself are all one in the work of solidarity.

Everywhere else in the world there is an abysmal difference between the feelings of the will of the working people on the one hand and the policy of their government towards Republican Spain on the other. Everywhere else governmental diplomacy by reason of its hypocrisy, treachery and cynicism has manoeuvred itself into irreconcilable contradiction with the urgent and laudable desire of the masses of the people to assist Republican Spain, to restore the right to purchase arms in her defence, and to put an end to the shameless farce of "non-intervention" which endangers the peace of the world and encourages the war-mongers and fascist aggressors.

Only Soviet diplomacy, a form the world has never seen before, is in rejecting Talleyrand's famous dictum: language is given to the diplomat to hide his thoughts. Soviet diplomacy alone proclaims to the whole world clearly and frankly the ideas and wishes of the people. Soviet diplomacy is the expression of the aims and aspirations of the Soviet people, and only Soviet diplomacy serves the interests of the people,

In September 1936, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Maxim Litvinov, explained clearly and without subterfuges of any kind to the Council of the League of Nations why the

Soviet Government had decided to associate itself with the declaration concerning non-intervention in Spain:

“The Soviet Government adhered to the agreement for non-interference in the affairs of Spain only because a friendly country feared the possibility otherwise of an international conflict. We acted thus in spite of the fact that we consider the principle of neutrality inapplicable to a war levied by rebels against their lawful Government, and on the contrary, to be a breach of the principles of international law.... The Soviet Government understands that this unjust decision was imposed by those other countries which, considering themselves to be the champions of order, have established a new principle, fraught with incalculable consequences, according to which it is permitted openly to assist rebels against their legitimate Government.”

Events developed rapidly. The German and Italian interventionist powers sent General Franco more and more openly and cynically aeroplanes, troops and war materials. Madrid was almost surrounded by a ring of steel. Spanish towns and villages were laid in ruins. Tens of thousands of Spanish women and children were rendered homeless and suffered hunger. But through the hellish noise of exploding bombs, destruction and death, the voice of Dolores, the voice of the Spanish people, reached the ears of the Soviet masses: “No pasaran!” And the Soviet Union came to the aid of the Spanish people with all its might and with all its authority. It sent material assistance to Republican Spain, and it exposed the treacherous policy of the aggressor powers.

One evening in September 1936, one of the older women weavers of the Trechgornaya Manufaktur Djerjinski recalled, whilst reading the war news from Spain, how the artillery of the Tsar had bombarded the workers of that very factory when they mounted the barricades in 1905. And she compared the lot of her own children, happy children in a happy land, with the fate of the Spanish orphans. The very next day a passionate appeal went out to the masses to assist the women and children of Spain.

In the night shift the weavers of the “Trechgornaya Manufaktur Djerjinski” collected 50 roubles, and immediately millions of roubles began to roll into the offices of the labour unions from working women, collectivist peasant women, actresses, authoresses, women scientists and doctors, Georgian women, Ukrainian women, the women of the Komi, from women everywhere in the Soviet Union, on the coasts of the Pacific, from the Western frontier districts, from the sunny South and from the icy outposts in the Arctic circle.

“Dear Sisters, I was never in Spain, but with my whole heart and soul I am with you and your heroic people in their struggle for liberty. The same hatred of the fascist criminals boils in me as in you. Remember that we too went through difficult times in the first years of our struggle. I am sending you my first contribution, a labour unit, which consists of 8 kilos, of grain, 9 kilos of potatoes, 3 kilos of vegetables and 5 roubles in cash.” That was the letter of the collectivist peasant woman Hanna Rubanka to her Spanish sisters.

“Dear Spanish Children, I am sending you 10 roubles. It was given to me to buy toys with, but I have decided to wait until your fathers have completely beaten the fascists.”

The writer of that letter is 8 years old.

The offices of a Moscow newspaper were about to close, and the cashier was about to pull down his little window when he heard children whispering urgently.

“You tell him. Stand on your toes and tell him.”

And then the cashier heard another voice, the shrill voice of a child.

“Please, we’ve got 12 roubles and 24 kopecks, me and Alik. Alik’s my brother. Here it is –

wrapped in this paper. Take it for the Spanish children. We took it out of our money-box. We were really saving it up for a bike, but we can wait a bit. We had to get the money out of the box with a knife, and it took us a long time – that’s why we’re so late.”

On October 15, 1936, the first food ship left the Soviet Union for Spain. The whole country saw it off, and the whole of Spain welcomed its arrival enthusiastically. And this first ship was followed by many others. Soviet factories took the orders for clothes and shoes for the Spanish children with tremendous enthusiasm and they carried them out with magnificent élan. The worker of the factories engaged on work for Spain no longer produced mere commodities, mere use values; his attitude to his product was as though they were personal presents he was making for his own children.

The fascists of the world observed this splendid solidarity of the Soviet people with anger and hatred, and they did everything possible to stop it. They sank the Soviet motorship Komsomol and carried off its crew to prison, and they held up and made piratical attacks on many other vessels, but they were impotent to stop the active solidarity of the masses of the Soviet Union which grew like a snowball.

By the end of 1936 47,595,000 roubles had been collected in the Soviet Union through the Soviet labour unions. The masses of the people were imbued with one idea: to help in word and deed, and never to separate the one from the other. A powerful demand for the abolition of the farcical “non-intervention” policy arose. Angry protests were made in the factories, at the universities, on the collective farms, and in the powerful Soviet press: “Stop the non-intervention farce! Arms for Spain! Restore the lawful rights of the legitimate Government of Spain!”

The Soviet people and the Soviet Government spoke with one voice. The Soviet Union was the only State which exposed at the sessions of the London Non-Intervention Committee and before the whole world the hypocrisy of the so-called policy of non-intervention and the deceit represented by the existence of this notorious committee. On October 23, the representative of the Soviet Union on the London Committee of Non- Intervention declared:

“The Soviet Union is not willing to remain in the position of involuntarily supporting an injustice, and it sees only one way out of the situation which has arisen: to restore to the Spanish Government the right and the possibility of purchasing arms outside Spain, a right which all other Governments throughout the world possess, and to leave it to the signatories to the agreement whether they wish to sell arms to the Spanish Government or not. In any case, the Soviet Government, which is not prepared to bear any further responsibility for the creation of a situation which is obviously unjust to the Spanish Government, feels itself compelled to declare that it does not consider itself bound to the non-intervention agreement in any greater degree than other signatories.”

Thus the Soviet Union held out the fraternal hand of assistance to Republican Spain, and demonstrated once again to the whole world its unwavering pursuit of a firm policy of peace. And through the mouth of the People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Litvinov, the Soviet Union exposed the real significance of the London committee to the whole world:

“The London Committee interpreted the word non-intervention as meaning its own non-intervention in the interference in Spanish affairs. The London Committee conceived its task to see to it that those States which had undertaken definite obligations in regard to non-interference, do not accuse themselves of violating this agreement and that as long as they deny any guilt on their part their declarations are accepted as being satisfactory, which concludes the function of the Committee.” (From the Speech of Litvinov at the Eighth Soviet Congress, December, 1936.)

What impelled the Soviet Union to adopt this courageous and forthright policy? “Language is given to the diplomat to hide his thoughts.” What is behind the language of the Soviet diplomat?

The real reason for the interest of the Soviet Union in Spanish affairs was explained firmly and frankly by the representative of the Soviet Union at a session of the London Committee as early as October, 1936. He declared that the peoples of the Soviet Union saw no reason to apologise for their warm sympathy with the forces of the People’s Front in Republican Spain. However, the issue at stake was even more important:

“The peoples of the Soviet Union are of the opinion that a struggle of paramount importance is proceeding in Spain between the forces of war and peace. The Spanish Government represents the forces of peace, and the rebellious generals the forces of war.

“If the Spanish Government finally succeeds in crushing the rebellion, this will not only mean that another country remains in the camp of the supporters of peace, but it would also have a very considerable effect on the situation as a whole because it would strengthen the conviction of the power of democracy, and stress the possibility of a peaceable settlement of international problems. In this case the clouds of war which were gathering threateningly on the horizon would be considerably lightened, and the political outlook for Europe as a whole would be brighter.

“If, on the other hand, the rebellious generals should be victorious, the same generals who are being supported by certain States against their solemn undertakings of non-intervention, then not only would Spain suffer terribly under an internal catastrophe, but the whole European situation would be very greatly worsened, because the victory of the rebellious generals in Spain would act as a tremendous impetus for the loosing of all the forces of aggression, hatred and destruction in Europe, and the danger of a new great war would have advanced to the threshold of our own houses.

“This and this alone is the main reason why the Soviet Government and the peoples of the Soviet Union are so deeply interested in the events which are at present taking place in Spain. The policy of peace consistently pursued by the peoples of the Soviet Union determines the present attitude of the Soviet Union to the events taking place in Spain.”

These words were uttered over 18 months ago. Have they not proved to be completely true? The robber war of Japanese imperialism against China has now been going on for 9 months. Hitler fascism has seized Austria by military force. Czechoslovakia is threatened with a fascist attack.

The Soviet Union did not only place itself openly on the side of the Spanish Republic, but it also raised its warning voice against the fatal policy of concessions to the aggressors, and it revealed to the whole world the real international significance of the war in Spain.

“Our enemies maintain – declared Litvinov at the Eighth Soviet Congress – that we are striving to create a Communist Soviet State on the Pyrenean Peninsula which we even intend to include in the Soviet Union. Such fairy tales for little children and big fools are, of course, circulated with a view to obscuring the true meaning of our real interest in the Spanish events.”

The Soviet Union wants nothing from Spain, and it has asked Spain for nothing. The working men and women of thousands of factories throughout the Soviet Union who warmly welcomed the statements of the Soviet diplomats, and who, through their representatives Shvernik and Nikolaieva, proposed the formation of a united front on an international scale against war and fascism, and in support of Republican Spain to the International Federation of Trade Unions, were moved only by the passionate desire to preserve peace and save the cause of democracy and liberty. The collective peasants of the Soviet Union who sent their grain and other produce and their money so liberally to assist their Spanish

brothers, were moved only by the desire to help the Spanish workers and peasants in their struggle for bread and peace against their foreign oppressors. And when the Soviet Government raised its powerful voice on behalf of Republican Spain, and gave Republican Spain powerful moral and material assistance, it was moved only by a desire to carry out the will of the Soviet peoples, and to preserve the peace of the world and save it from the horrors of another and even more terrible war.

All this was made clear in a few brief words, but these few words echoed round the world and were heard by all real democrats, everywhere, by all the oppressed and exploited, and by all mothers and all anti-fascist fighters.

“The toilers of the Soviet Union are doing no more than their duty when they assist the masses of Republican Spain to the best of their abilities. They are well aware that the emancipation of Spain from the yoke of the fascist reactionaries is not a private affair of the Spaniards, but the joint affair of the whole of advanced and progressive humanity. With fraternal greetings, Stalin.”

Those were the few brief words which were so well understood by the workers of the whole world.

On November 7, 1936, General Franco hoped to astonish the whole world with his Army Order concerning the taking of Madrid. On the same day the Red Army marched past the Lenin Mausoleum in Moscow, and the great Square resounded to the ordered march of the long columns of infantry, the clatter of galloping cavalry, the clatter of tanks, the roar of squadrons of bombing planes and the high-pitched note of fast fighters as they raced across the sky drowning the music of numerous military bands. Then tremendous columns of armed workers marched through the Square to be followed by endless columns of demonstrating men and women carrying thousands of flags and banners.

And there was not one amongst the millions that marched past who did not greet with especial warmth the men and women of Spain who stood in their uniforms with raised clenched fists on the left side of the Mausoleum. Moscow and Madrid, the Soviet Union and Spain – their hearts beat as one on that day.

And when Stalin embraced each member of the Spanish delegation he represented the Soviet people as a whole, who have extended the helping hand of proletarian solidarity to the Spanish people who are fighting with such heroism under such terribly difficult circumstances.

How many Army Orders on the taking of Madrid has Franco, the marionette of Hitler and Mussolini, signed and issued since then? The forces of intervention in Spain are growing, but the will of the Spanish people to resist is growing too, as well as their organisation and fighting capacities. The bonds of friendship between the peoples of Spain and of the Soviet Union are growing stronger and more intimate. Thousands of Spanish children have found a new home in the Soviet Union, a new home and loving care and kindness. Thousands of Spanish children are being brought up in the Soviet Union to return one day to their own country when it is freed from the fascist oppressors and foreign interventionists. The assistance granted by the Soviet Union to Republican Spain remains in force unaltered. The whole of the Spanish people knows the extent and the importance of the brotherly assistance it receives from the people of the Soviet Union. In fact, the whole world knows it. The Soviet Union is and it will remain the bulwark of peace in the world and the friend of humanity and the hope of all the toilers.

The Spanish people, and humanity as a whole, will never forget the great services rendered by the Soviet Union in the struggle for the preservation of peace. And the world will never forget the scathing words with which the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union exposed the bloody crimes committed against the Spanish people and against humanity committed by those who sought to cloak their actions with lies about a “Crusade against Communism!”

“I think that it is time for those to whom the interests of peace are dear to tell these parrots in

high places that nonsense, even when it is repeated day after day, does not therefore cease to be nonsense, that a spade should be called a spade, and aggression just aggression, no matter what aliases they may use. Further, that whatever the intentions of anti-Communism may be – mineral, commercial, strategic or others – there is no international justification for aggression, armed intervention, invasion of other States and violation of international treaties, no matter how it may be disguised. It is time to tell these avowed praters of hate that it is not for them to profess concern for the interest of humanity – that they who have resurrected the most savage and long dead theories of the evil and dark ages may not dare to speak in the name of modern Europe; that they who bum the finest creations of the human spirit, who persecute the most brilliant representatives of art, science and literature, that they who are despised by the entire world of culture, only make themselves ridiculous when they prate of saving civilisation and use that plea to preach a crusade against other people.” (Speech of Litvinov at the League of Nations Assembly on September 21, 1937.)

The International Brigades

By André Marty

Between October, 1936, and February, 1937, thousands of anti-fascists of all countries hurried to Spain. About 15,000 men of all ages and professions. They came from every country of Europe and America, from democratic countries and fascist countries. They represented every tendency of the working-class movement and the democratic movement, even the most moderate. Veterans of the great war of 1914-18 rubbed shoulders with young anti-fascist fighters. They came to Spain to put their military ability and their experience of the antifascist struggle at the disposal of the Spanish people and its Government of the People's Front.

Their aims? Only one: to help the Spanish people to win the war. Every one of them understood quite well that the fate of all progressive and civilised mankind was at stake in Spain.

Their claims? Only one: to be sent to the most dangerous, to the most decisive spots. Nothing more.

The whole world knows to-day what they have accomplished. The balance-sheet of the last sixteen months of fighting has made known the considerable part played by the International Brigades in the war of independence of the Spanish people. Their epic began in Madrid! Madrid, whose Committee of Defence, with its President, Republican General Miaja, and its Commissar, the Communist worker Anton, inspired, roused, urged forward soldiers, workers, a whole people hour after hour to reinforce, to fortify, to provision. It was at this time, in Madrid on November 7, 1936, that they entered into the struggle and into history. The enemies of mankind, thirsting for blood, for loot, for violence and slaughter, were already reaching out to the Manzanares and the University City. The first six Brigades of the Spanish Army engaged for six days in a battle were already approaching the point of physical exhaustion. Then it was that Madrid saw the first three international battalions, the “Edgar Andre” (German), the “Commune de Paris” (French) and the “Dombrovsky” (Polish) march past with firm tread, unmoved, knowing what battles are. Their very appearance inspired confidence. And while their scanty artillery rattled along with its lorries at top speed to take up its position, the infantry of the 11th mixed brigade shattered the attack of the enemy. Three days later the 12th brigade – the battalions Thaelmann, Franco-Beige and Garibaldi – led by our famous comrade Lukacs, attacked in the south of Madrid and then came up to give a hand to the 11th. And while the international battalions were being thrown without respite into the fight at every weak spot in the Central front, the 13th brigade relieved

the capital by its fourteen attacks on Teruel and the 14th effectively checked the fascist advance on the Cordova front. Then, in February, 1937, came the terrible battle of the Jarama. The front was shaken and the fascists came down towards the Madrid-Valencia road. But the Lister Division and then the 11th, 12th and 14th International Brigades, each in its turn, barred the way. Then came the 15th (Americans), who received their baptism of fire there with others: Frenchmen and Balkanese.

While the 13th brigade was sent to defend Almeria, endangered by the fall of Malaga, the others were at Guadalajara, where they dealt a terrible blow to the Blackshirts of Mussolini. They were at Pozoblanco, where they advanced 30 kilometres, and relieved Almaden, they were at Brunete, Belchite, at Cuesta de la Reina, and finally faced the fascist counter-attack at Teruel.

From North to South they were in every battle, on every front. They were among the best fighters of the new Spanish People's Army. They were among the crack brigades who more than once victoriously barred the way to the fascist bands or drove them back in disorder.

But they have rendered an even greater service to the Spanish people and to the anti-fascist cause. What was the secret of the victorious action of the International Brigades? Why did they and do they fight with such effect? They had no great military specialists to lead them. The number of former professional officers among them was very small. Their strength, their tremendous striking power lay in their organisation and their absolute anti-fascist unity. That was the secret of their victories.

It is well known and established to-day that the main reason why the fascists were able to reach Badajoz, Talavera, Toledo and finally arrive at the gates of Madrid, was that each battalion of militia belonged to a party, a trade union, one particular organisation, and did not obey to any extent orders coming from any other source.

The professional officers who had remained loyal to the Republic were hampered in their activity by this lack of cohesion.

The strength of the International Brigades lay in the fact that from the very first they formed a homogeneous block. All their fighters, Communists and Socialists, Republicans and Anarchists, even Liberals, were indissolubly united irrespective of opinion or nationality by the cement of a People's Front. And because they were so closely knit, fighting and supporting each other like brothers in a well-understood common cause, their discipline was of iron.

They came from 25 different nations. They represented every political tendency. With the overwhelming majority of workers were mingled intellectuals, and here and there a few ex-officers. But despite the differences of political opinion and language, anti-fascist unity was immediately established and closely maintained. One frequently finds cases of a Republican commander with a Socialist second in command and a Communist commissar, each coming from a different country. And yet there have never been political conflicts in the general staffs or in the units themselves.

A hundred times French and German volunteers have discovered that they had stood facing each other somewhere during the war of 1914-18. To-day they are part of the same anti-fascist People's Army and their sole rivalry is that of competition in the struggle. A former British sailor, leader of the Invergordon mutiny, was the superior of the son of a British admiral. Frenchmen, former mutineers of the Black Sea fleet or of the Calvi military prison, are section commanders and models of discipline. Their hatred of fascism, their loyalty to the great ideas of peace and liberty which inspire the combatants of Spain, have welded into a solid block these intrepid men who have come from every country of the world and from every political movement. Moreover, these men are knit closer every day with the Spanish people; between the battles, cleaning their weapons, their wounds hardly dressed, they have always taken a kindly interest in the little ones of the village, the children whose fathers were away in battle and who

reminded them of their own. Hundreds of times they distributed toys and sweets bought out of their scanty pay and found time to organise brilliant festivals for them.

Unshakable unity of action. Such was the second example given by them, the most important in this hour. The international volunteers have shown that the secret of victory lies in anti-fascist unity, a unity knowing no distinction of political opinion or nationality.

Thus the greatest service rendered to the anti-fascist cause and the people of Spain was to have demonstrated in practice what the Communist Party of Spain had untiringly demanded together with numerous organisations of clearly anti-fascist tendency – the formation of a popular army under a united command and strict discipline. When the first International Brigades were formed this was not so. Passionate discussions were going on between political and trade union organisations on this cardinal point. The discussion was further embittered by the open and masked campaign of the P.O.U.M. (Trotskyist organisation) against the creation of a People's Army, which was opposed and openly sabotaged by the P.O.U.M.

The anti-fascist organisations and the Communist Party of Spain in the first place – which had never ceased to fight persistently for the formation of a People's Army under a uniform command – made effective use of the way in which the International Brigades had put this slogan into practice in order to convince all the organisations and all men of good will that in it and in it only lay the road to success.

Thus it was that in the struggle and through the straggle these Brigades, Divisions and Army Corps were formed which so recently showed their mettle in the taking of Teruel. Teruel was a victory of the Spanish People's Army and its united command. Teruel, where for the first time the International Brigades took no part in the first battle. But Teruel was a victory in the preparation of which the International Brigades had directly participated.

For this People's Army is not built up on cadres coming from above: the number of officers remaining loyal to the Republic was so small that their loyalty and their valour could not compensate for the smallness of their numbers.

The only way to form this army, which was indispensable if a victory was to be won, was to convince the anti-fascist organisations of its necessity and get them to co-operate effectively in the fulfilment of this formidable task.

The example set by the International Brigades, their deeds and their anti-fascist character, their non-partisan, People's Front character was one of the most decisive factors, convincing people of the necessity and the possibility of organising a great popular army in Spain.

All this has helped to accelerate the building up of the People's Army. By this very fact the International Brigades have been a driving force in the formation of the great Republican army.

We have already said and shown many a time that the International Brigades have been organisations of the international People's Front. But it must be stressed because it is the truth. It was the mass of the workers constituting the great majority of the volunteers who also constituted the shock troops in the struggle; it was this mass which at the same time supplied the ardent commissars who were the political stimulators of the fighters, the forgers and vigilant guardians of anti-fascist unity. This mass of workers, among whom Communists and Socialists fought closely united; this body of commissars which came from it were the unshakable rock on which the magnificent International Brigades were built tip.

The working class of all countries can therefore be proud of its sons who hurried to Spain. There is good reason to make known their heroic deeds; there is good cause to popularise the example of unity

which the international volunteers have raised to so high a level.

The anti-fascist consciousness of the proletarian soldiers has overcome all difficulties.

Many and many a time at the most difficult moments, sometimes in tragic circumstances, this high anti-fascist political understanding, ceaselessly maintained and widened, has been a creative and inspiring force which worked real miracles. To-day it is a great joy for these fighters to see how in the whole country and in the whole Spanish army this strength of the united workers is growing, merging into one and ensuring the victory.

Many of them have laid down their lives on the fields of Spain, along with Beimler, Picelli, Lukacs, Brugerés, Ralph Fox, Parovic, who will for ever remain proofs of the effective solidarity of the workers with the Spanish people against fascism. They remind the Spanish people that the democratic governments who initiated the policy of “non-intervention,” i.e. the blockade of the democratic Spanish Republic in contravention of international law, acted and act against the wishes of the peoples they govern.

To-day the International Brigades have changed their structure. The closing of the French frontier on the Republican sector, the measures taken by the democratic governments have prevented the effective influx of reinforcements, while on the Franco side divisions of Blackshirts and soldiers, Italian and German officers with enormous materials are arriving. Hence the Government of the Spanish Republic has filled up with Spanish recruits the gaps created in the International Brigades by the Italian and German “non-intervention” machine-guns. But the International Brigades still exist. The young soldiers of the Spanish army are trained and taught by the contact with the old international fighters. While learning the handling of machine-guns and modern fighting tactics they become acquainted with international solidarity and the working-class and anti-fascist struggle of all countries.

Thus the International Brigades constitute an immense antifascist school. That is why they still have a part to play. And on their glorious flags many a great victory of the anti-fascist, of the proletarian cause will yet be inscribed.

The Communist International in the Fight for International Unity

By Franz Dahlem

The masses of the people in the different countries are realising more and more that what is at stake in Spain is not only the cause of the Spaniards, but the common cause of the whole of progressive humanity.

Spain – the cause of all the peoples. The Soviet Union, by its action of practical solidarity for Spain, has once more proved itself the bulwark of all the forces of peace and freedom in the world. But why, then, does the international working class not come forward, at this decisive historical hour, and take the threatened interests of the peoples into its own strong hands, since the governments are pursuing a policy of capitulation and treachery in their attitude towards fascism? Are the people of Spain, fighting as the vanguard against international fascism, to be left alone to their fate, left to bleed to death? And are the other peoples to share their fate to-morrow?

The admirable People’s Army of Spain, faced by the enormous technical superiority of the German and Italian invaders with regard to aeroplanes and artillery, has been forced to abandon its Aragon position. But it is continuing to fight heroically, backed by the inflexible will to freedom and readiness for

self-sacrifice of the Spanish people, and hoping for the solidarity of the other peoples, for whose peace and freedom, too, these rivers of blood are being shed. But all men and women with a sense of reality must surely recognise by now that it is not resolutions on paper, not mere expressions of sympathy or humanitarian action for the heroic Spanish people, which are the imperative demand of the hour. Confronted by an enemy anxious to force the issue of the war, what the Spanish Republic needs is guns, aeroplanes, tanks – and these can be given it only if powerful movements of the peoples in Britain, France, and other countries compel the governments to change their course of policy, only if the Spanish frontiers are opened, and the Spanish army of freedom is given at long last its right to buy arms, in order that it may defend itself and be victorious.

But the prerequisite for the mobilisation of the masses in all countries and for the creation of an adamant peace front of the peoples, against which the fascist warmongers would break their necks, is the achievement of international unity of action of the working class. Everything now depends on this.

In the situation to-day, therefore, all the organisations of the working class in all countries are faced more urgently than ever with the task of clearing away all the hindrances and inhibitions which are hampering the accomplishment of unity of action by the world proletariat. A terrible responsibility will rest upon the leaders of the Labour and Socialist International and of the International Federation of Trade Unions, who are to blame for the fact that hitherto all the efforts of the Communist International to realise international unity of action have been frustrated, if they persist in their disastrous refusal.

Infinite harm has been done by the maintenance of the split in the working class. The errors and omissions which, during the last few years, have prevented the realisation of a united international policy of the working class should serve as lessons to us. From these experiences we must draw the conclusions for the immediate mobilisation of all forces and all reserves of the working class and the peoples in the great struggle against fascism, which is threatening freedom and peace. The following survey of the history of the endeavours of the Communist International for the establishment of united action for solidarity towards the Spanish people may help to further this purpose.

Immediately after the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, where Georgi Dimitrov indicated the policy of the unification of all forces standing for democracy and freedom in the People's Front as the sole possible path to a victorious struggle against fascism, the Communist International addressed to the Labour and Socialist International the proposal that, in order to combat the threatening aggression of Italy in Abyssinia, they should join in united action against fascism in the individual countries and on an international scale.

To-day it is clear to everyone that the warmongers were enormously encouraged by the fact that Mussolini was enabled to carry out his bandit raid with impunity. And to-day it is equally clear that a great historical opportunity was lost at that time, the possibility of such a stand being taken by the international working class that a firm dam could have been opposed to the further aggression of international fascism.

Dimitrov had written in a letter on September 25, 1935, to the Secretariat of the Labour and Socialist International:

“But all that has been done until now on your part and on ours is insufficient in face of the magnitude of the danger. It is necessary to unite the efforts of the two Internationals in order to maintain peace. They must act in concert and by their common efforts stay the hand of the fascist instigators of war. The common action of the two Internationals would mobilise the working class and would secure the support of the forces of peace among other classes of the population. It would draw whole peoples into the fight for peace. It would call forth an international

movement against war of such a power that the League of Nations, under its pressure, would be compelled to undertake really effective action against the aggression of Italian fascism and German fascism.

“It is not yet too late to prevent the terrible catastrophe into which the fascist criminals want to hurl mankind. To-morrow this may no longer be possible.”

In spite of a repeated inquiry on October 7, no reply was sent until October 15 – after the joint session of the L.S.I. and the I.F.T.U. in Brussels – and then it was a refusal. The reasons given throw much light on the factors causing the leaders of the L.S.I. and the I.F.T.U., then and later, to maintain a policy in opposition to unity of action. This letter from Friedrich Adler states:

“With respect to the invitation from the Communist International to a conference with four representatives named by it, the Socialist Parties of Great Britain, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Czechoslovakia have declared that they cannot agree to an acceptance of this invitation, in the first place on account of the composition of the delegation of the Communist International, and secondly because they reject any joint action with the Communist Parties of their own countries, and any joint action of the two Internationals.

“As the Executive of the L.S.I. is obliged to take into account the standpoint of these great working-class parties, it is not in a position to accept the invitation of the Communist International.”

The only result was a statement by the L.S.I. that its President and Secretary were prepared to meet representatives of the C.I. for purposes of information. A consultation of this kind between Vandervelde, Friedrich Adler, Cachin and Thorez led to no practical result. In spite of all this, Dimitrov declared in a letter to the L.S.I. on October 27, 1935:

“the readiness of the C.I. to enter into negotiations at any desired moment on united action.”

The general interests of the working class and of the peoples were thus sacrificed to election considerations, and to the coalition policy of the Social-Democratic leaders with the bourgeoisie of their countries. Hitler and Mussolini were able to venture on their joint predatory raid for the enslavement of the Spanish people, and for the strategic preparations for their war for the re-division of the world.

After the outbreak of the fascist rebellion on July 18, 1936, in Spain, in the midst of the alarming situation created by the march of the rebels on Madrid, Cachin and Thorez requested, on behalf of the C.I., that they might meet the L.S.I. This meeting took place on October 14 between them and de Brouckere and Friedrich Adler. The proposal of the Comintern, that an international conference should be held to deal with the question of international action by all workers' organisations in aid of Spain, was, however, rejected by the representatives of the L.S.I., as was also the proposal of united international action by both Internationals in Spain. In their opinion, each party should act separately and independently.

During these critical weeks, while the fate of Madrid hung in the balance, the C.I. appealed once more, on October 25, to the sessions of the Bureaus of the L.S.I. and I.F.T.U., then being held in Paris. But in vain. On November 7, 1936, when the Moorish Foreign Legionaries had already crossed the Manzanares, the C.I., in another letter, implored the leaders of the L.S.I. to abandon their resistance. And again on December 28, when a Franco offensive was launched against Madrid from the West and North-West. In vain.

Left to their own resources, the militia of the people's army just forming, the heroic battalions of the

5th Regiment, and the Volunteer Battalions of the International Brigades, joining with the workers of Madrid, defended and held the city. Communist cadres and anti-fascist workers from all countries shed their blood at Madrid, and on the other fronts as the war spread, in the cause of peace and freedom.

On March 11, 1937, there took place in London that international Spain Conference of the L.S.I. and I.F.T.U. which will remain as a black page in the history of the Labour movement, like August 4, 1914.

On March 8 the great Italian offensive at Guadalajara had commenced. While Mussolini's divisions were still advancing, the Socialist Foreign Minister of Spain, del Vayo, called upon the Conference to aid Spain. On behalf of the Spanish trade unions (U.G.T.), the Socialist Pascual Thomas proposed the convening of a world conference, to be taken part in by the L.S.I., I.F.T.U., C.I., and the trade unions of the Soviet Union and the United States of America. On behalf of the French C.G.T., the Socialist Jouhaux laid before the conference the resolution of the C.G.T.: "That at last unity of action of all the organisations of the working class for peace should be internationally realised."

But Sir Walter Citrine declared that this united front was "not desirable." Ernest Bevin went further: "The British Labour movement will not let its decisions and its tactics be influenced in any way by the war in Spain." He made an anti-Communist speech, and defended the "non-intervention policy" of the Baldwin Government. Even Vandervelde could not but admit "that with this a cold douche has been given to all hopes of real help for Spain." An empty resolution was passed.

The Spaniards left the conference and went home: "We asked for arms and they gave us literature."

Had the fate of Spain depended at that time on the decisions of the Second International, then Spain would have been lost. But the young people's army, and in its ranks the International Brigades, these representatives of the solidarity of their peoples, won the first great victory over international fascism at Guadalajara.

Since this time even members of the L.S.I., who have been in Spain: Pietro Nenni, Julius Deutsch, Delvigne, have joined in common appeals with Marty, Gallo, Dahlem, for determined international action in aid of the Spanish Republic.

The Communist International, in contrast to the Second International, has mobilised an energetic solidarity movement in all countries.

Thousands of Communists, and also thousands of Socialists and Democrats, have gone to Spain month by month, to fight in the International Brigades. On April 21, 1937, an international conference of 21 Communist Parties was held in Paris, and a united organisation of aid action for Spain was resolved upon. The question of the establishment of united action in every country too was on the agenda of this conference.

In April, 1937, Schevenels and Friedrich Adler visited Spain. They were the guests of the International Brigades. Friedrich Adler, in his greeting to the 14th International Brigade, "Marseillaise," declared:

"that the International Volunteers, by the united front prevailing among them, set an example worthy of emulation by the peoples."

And Schevenels, on seeing the inadequate arms of a Belgo-French battalion, exclaimed: "Comrades, I swear to you that you shall have arms!"

But after the two secretaries of the L.S.I. and the I.F.T.U. had left Spain, Caballero redoubled his efforts against the Communists, sabotaged the question of the formation of the united party of the Spanish proletariat, and threatened to split the People's Front. Was this the effect of the visit of Schevenels and Friedrich Adler to Spain?

On May 31, 1937, the cruel bombardment of Almeria by German warships followed the statement from the German fascists that they were going to act towards Spain as they thought fit. It was obvious to the whole world that this provocation was to be the starting-point for increased intervention by German and Italian fascism in Spain. In all countries the anger of the peoples intensified against the murderous bandits who reduce peaceful towns to ruins and brutally murder women and children. In France and Britain the movement among the masses against the traitorous policy of “non-intervention” increased.

In this situation the Socialist and Communist Parties of Spain and the U.G.T. appealed to the three Internationals for aid. Dimitrov seized the initiative, and on behalf of the Communist International he proposed to the President of the L.S.I., de Brouckere, that a conference be called and a joint contact committee of all three Internationals formed for the realisation of international united action against the military intervention of Germany and Italy in Spain.

De Brouckere, in replying to this proposal, stated that he as President of the L.S.I., and Friedrich Adler as its Secretary, “do not possess the necessary authority to join in the name of the International the committee which you propose.”

Dimitrov thereupon sent a telegram to de Brouckere, stating inter alia:

“It cannot be assumed that the absence of formal powers is decisive when it is a question of the life and independence of the Spanish people, subjected to an attack by German and Italian interventionists. Nor can we share your opinion that the Labour and Socialist International is fully carrying out its duty, inasmuch as it continues to refuse to unite all forces of the international proletariat for the defence of the Spanish people.

“The solidarity movement in favour of the Spanish people is still far from being adequate, chiefly because the actions of the international organisations are disunited. This movement would acquire a tenfold greater force if, in spite of all difficulties, international unity of action could be established.”

Under pressure, after a further exchange of telegrams, de Brouckere agreed to arrange a meeting with delegates of the C.I., for the purpose of an exchange of opinions.

The Annemasse Conference was the result.

Great hopes arose, in the hearts of millions of men and women in every country. The Spanish people looked confidently towards this first meeting of the representatives of the Internationals.

The representatives of the C.I. submitted proposals aiming at united and joint action by the two Internationals for Republican Spain. The representatives of the L.S.I. – its president de Brouckere, and its secretary Friedrich Adler – stated that they had no authority to conclude any such agreement. Nevertheless, an agreement was arrived at in Annemasse on the following three points:

Firstly, it was stated that in regard to Spain the two Internationals have put forward the same demands.

Secondly, that it is now more necessary than ever that action in defence of Spain be carried out in general agreement wherever possible with every means and without unnecessary friction.

Thirdly, both delegations also agreed on the necessity for a new meeting as quickly as possible to discuss concrete measures for rendering moral and material aid to the Spanish people.

A basis appeared to have been formed for the united action of the international working class. But once again the old enemies of the united front came forward, those elements which have already so often subordinated the interests of the working class to the interests of their own bourgeoisie. The British

Labour leaders disavowed the president and secretary of the L.S.I., so that de Brouckere and Friedrich Adler resigned their functions. The Paris Conference of the L.S.I. on June 24 resulted in the retention of their positions by de Brouckere and Adler, but the campaign of the reactionary leaders against Annemasse continued: the leaders of the S.P. of Holland and Czechoslovakia openly threatened to split the L.S.I. Facts speedily proved that the non-acceptance of the resignation had been a compromise at the expense of international unity of action.

On June 26, after the fall of Bilbao, Dimitrov, in view of the danger threatening Asturias, again appealed to the L.S.I. and made definite proposals for speeding up a joint aid action. De Brouckere designated these proposals as a breach of the Annemasse agreement. Dimitrov's proposals were:

that the Communists and Socialists should appeal jointly, or in whatever form, to the Government of their country, with the demand for support for the points upon which agreement had been achieved at Annemasse,

that both Internationals should apply jointly to the League of Nations with the demand that the League of Nations Covenant should be applied to Spain,

that the two Internationals should mobilise all the organisations of the international proletariat and the public opinion of the world for the fulfilment of these demands.

Dimitrov once more expressly declared that the C.I. is prepared to negotiate on any other proposals made by the L.S.I. in favour of joint aid action for the Spanish people.

On July 9, de Brouckere and Friedrich Adler met Cachin and Thorez. The representatives of the Communist International developed and substantiated Dimitrov's proposals, and complemented them as follows: 1. The two Internationals are to support the action initiated by the "International Aid Committee for Republican Spain and the "International Youth Commission for Republican Spain" for July 18, the anniversary of the fascist revolt. 2. The two Internationals come to an agreement on the necessity for the all-round furtherance of the activities of the "International Aid Committee for Republican Spain." 3. The two Internationals send a joint deputation to the League of Nations, demanding from it the immediate convening of the League of Nations for the purpose of dealing with the Spanish question. 4. The two Internationals come to an understanding on the urgent necessity of joint or co-ordinated measures for the all-round strengthening of material aid for the Spanish people, of care for the evacuated children and women, and of measures securing the further necessary evacuation of children and women, especially from Northern Spain.

A communiqué was issued on this conference, stating: "The exchange of opinions resulted in general agreement on both sides with regard to the action to be carried out in favour of Republican Spain."

The facts above cited show clearly that the Comintern for its part does its utmost to facilitate for the Labour and Socialist International any joint action in aid of the Spanish people.

Owing to the passivity of the Second International, the sabotage of reactionary Social Democratic leaders, and the irresolution of the leadership, all further definite action has failed to materialise. The decisions of Annemasse remain on paper.

The leaders of the L.S.I. bear the responsibility in face of history; they have missed a historical opportunity, for it would have been possible, by means of utilising and increasing the great movements of the people in Britain and France, to compel the governments of these countries to change their policy.

But the Spanish People's Army undertook its first offensive action in the Brunete area, alone, depending on its own powers, that it might relieve the North and save Asturias. It was at this time that de Brouckere came to Spain. We organised many a joint meeting: in Albacete, in Madrid, with the

battalions of the International Brigades. De Brouckere said many a true word and made many a promise. But up to now these words have not seen followed by deeds.

The North fell. Not even the successful offensives of the People's Army, the re-conquest of Quinto and Belchite, were able to prevent this. And now that the fascist North army was freed, and Franco was being increasingly supplied with heavy war material by Germany and Italy, whilst the "non-intervention" policy, the closed French frontiers and the piracy in the Mediterranean, made it almost impossible for Republican Spain to obtain arms from outside, a great fascist offensive on Madrid might be anticipated. In this threatening situation, on November 20, 1937, Cachin and Thorez again appealed on behalf of the Executive of the C.I. to de Brouckere and Adler, and asked for a conference. As at the time of the bombardment of Almeria, the Communist and Socialist Parties of Spain had now once more applied to the two Internationals, requesting that a joint conference of both Internationals should be called on the basis of the line laid down in Annemasse, and with the slogan: "No help for Franco." The letter from the Spanish workers' organisations demanded that this help be given, in order to prevent the frightful persecution in Asturias, to secure the evacuation of the civilian population, and to make it possible for the Government to gain freedom of trading and for the frontiers to be opened. They proposed that a boycott be imposed on all goods coming from territory occupied by the fascists, and that a campaign be carried out for the withdrawal of all foreign troops then on Spanish soil, including Moors and Foreign Legionaries.

All in vain. The L.S.I. refused. Valuable time passed. Fascism grew bolder and more impudent, and threw more and more troops and war material into Spain. But the giant proletariat was not fully mobilised to the extent of its powers and sent into action. And yet the People's Front in Spain and France had shown, and the national unification of the Chinese people against Japanese military fascism had proved further, what enormous power unity gives to a people which remains united within itself. How much greater then would be the combined power of the international People's Front, if its proletarian core would unite in international action!

The heroism of the Spanish people, whose sons sacrifice their lives on the battlefield, whose women and children are mowed down by the fascist aeroplanes, still maintained the front, although the great international help to which the Spanish people have a right did not come. Thanks to the heroic courage of the People's Army and the military strategy of its leaders, Teruel was taken, the enemy offensive against Madrid disorganised, and severe losses inflicted on the fascists.

Republican Spain now stands once more in the midst of one of the hardest struggles for its existence, as in the critical days in November, 1936, before Madrid. This people is giving everything that can be given in the fight for freedom and independence. The women seek their children, to find them in charred fragments, but they think as the great Pasionaria has said: "Better dead than a slave!"

Everything would have been different, everything could have been different, if the responsible leaders of the Second International had not cherished illusions for so long regarding the governments, regarding this accursed "non-intervention," regarding the League of Nations with its paralysed capabilities of action, but had based their action on the policy of the workers' organisations which they head, and on the forces of the working class.

But it is still not too late!

Facts utter such hard words on the bankruptcy of this policy that the masses of the workers and the peoples, smelling the powder-smoke of the approaching war, are moving and are dragging along with them those who have hitherto placed obstacles in the path of the mass movement.

The British Conservatives have thrown off the mask. They ignore international law and the League of

Nations, and have openly concluded their bargain with Mussolini, to whom they are prepared to hand over Spain. But the British big capitalists have made their calculation without taking the British people into account, and these are now rising in a mighty popular movement of indignation at the treachery and cynicism of their rulers. Now it is no longer only the Communists, no longer only the brave British Battalion of the Fifteenth International Brigade, who are coming forward energetically for Spain. The Spanish aid movement in the Labour Party, the mighty demonstration of the 100,000 in Hyde Park, the fact that to-day trade unions are collecting funds for the International Brigades, all goes to prove that the masses of the British people grasp the fact that a fight must be made for peace.

In France, where the Government is hanging on to the coat tails of the British Conservatives, the masses are alarmed by the fact that on the other side of the Pyrenees, German long-range guns are being implaced and aerodromes built. The trade union movement, with its five million members, is demanding the raising of the blockade and trading liberties for Republican Spain. On April 10, 200,000 demonstrators marched along the Paris boulevards, shouting: "Open the frontiers! Guns and aeroplanes for Spain!" The French XIV International Brigade "Marseillaise" has more feeling for the security and freedom of France than those whose place it is to-day to guard the interests of this country.

There is still time to stay the arm of Hitler and Mussolini in their piratical raid in Spain.

The appeal made by the Communist International, in its manifesto on May 1, 1938, is to-day more applicable than ever:

"Republican Spain is in danger. The bitterest enemies of the Spanish people have broken through the Aragon front. They are transferring new troops and munitions without a break. World reaction is aiming to achieve the defeat of the Spanish people. But millions of workers all over the world are striving to achieve its victory. They are ready to make supreme sacrifices so as actively to assist in bringing about this victory.

"The ways, the means, all the possibilities exist for rendering real and immediate assistance to the Spanish people.

"In the name of millions of workers, in the interests of defending the Spanish people, the Communist International again proposes to the Socialist and Trade Union Internationals to establish a united international working class front.

"To help Republican Spain, to defend China, means to fight against world war, to defend your hearths and homes, the liberty and independence of your countries, against the fascist butchers. A people that would permit the strangling of Republican Spain or China, would, with its own hands, be preparing the fascist yoke for itself, would strengthen the chains of its own capitalist slavery."

When will the leaders of the Second International and the I.F.T.U. be ready to fulfil the duty imposed on them by their functions at the head of international Labour organisations? What has become of the initiative of those leaders of Social Democratic parties who have seen for themselves what Spain needs? What has become of the promises made by Schevenels, Attlee, Friedrich Adler, de Brouckere, to the Spanish people and to the fighters of the International Brigades? It is in their power to bring about an immediate joint conference of the three Internationals – the conference for which the Communist International has declared for two years that "it is ready at any moment." Let them come forward before the masses, those who venture at this fateful hour to sabotage the unity of the working class against fascism.

Only complete and prompt measures can help to-day. Humanitarianism: food, medicine, ambulances – these are as urgently needed as ever, but they only satisfy hunger and heal wounds. But what the Spanish people need for the victory over fascism is guns, bombers, and tanks. For the protection of its

children and women, Spain needs rapid pursuit planes and antiaircraft guns. 500 aeroplanes and 500 guns placed in the hands of the heroic fighters of the People's Army, across the opened frontiers into Spain – and a decisive victory will be won for world peace.

The working class are being told cynical lies, as the May Day Manifesto of the C.I. points out:

“when it is stated that the Governments of Britain, France, and the U.S.A. are powerless – to put a stop to international fascist' banditry. To stop this banditry is well within their power. But this requires the adoption of the proposal of the U.S.S.R. for joint action of all States interested in maintaining peace against the instigators of war. They must reinforce their action by measures of economic pressure. Let them deprive the fascist bandits of credits, let them refuse to provide them with the raw material necessary for the conduct of war, let them close the channels of trade to them, let them put under blockade not Republican Spain but those who have attacked it. Let them open the frontiers and furnish the Spanish people with the possibility of freely purchasing arms, and this will be enough to ensure that fascism draws back like a whipped cur.”

Upon the achievement of this active solidarity there depends not only the fate of Spain, but the question of whether or not dozens of millions of human beings in Europe and all over the world are to be plunged to-morrow into terror and horror, into death and destruction, by the fascist beasts.

The President of the Republican Government, Dr. Negrin, in his address to the Spanish people, rightly pointed out with justifiable pride that had it not been for the heroism of the Spaniards, there would already be some countries to-day which would no longer be discussing the devious paths of “non-intervention,” for the reason that they would be forced to exert all their efforts in driving the invaders from their own territory. He who wants peace must fight for the people of Spain.

He who wants peace must do his utmost to bring about the international united action of the working class.

If We Fail the Spanish People Now, Who Will Help Us?

By Harry Politt (London)

“We won't leave earth without fighting!” This was the striking declaration made to me by Comrade Hernandez a few minutes after I arrived in Barcelona.

This sentence seemed to sum up the whole of my subsequent experiences in Spain.

It gave a new and pregnant meaning to the slogans with which this calm and steadfast city of Barcelona is placarded. “100,000 Volunteers. 50,000 Workers for Fortifications,” this is what greets the eye everywhere. Madrid, Tarancon, Lerida, Tortosa, all that has happened in these Spanish cities is known only too well in Barcelona, for was it not in this most beautiful city that for three days on end an aerial bombardment was carried through without precedent (happily) in history.

A bombardment deliberately calculated to coincide with and increase, if possible, the crisis in the Spanish Government.

The reply is seen, first, in a stronger and more united Government than ever before, which under the leadership of Prime Minister Negrin is determined to fight on, so long as one inch of Spanish Republican soil remains; secondly, in the calm discipline and order of the citizens of Barcelona.

It has to be seen to be believed. Spain, the country of the siesta, kindly, hospitable, but a little lazy – this was the tourist picture in the old days.

But the Spain of to-day has put up a resistance that has astonished the world. A resistance to fascism that one doubts whether the people of France or Belgium could surpass.

May they never be called upon to try.

When I left London the capitalist press was all full of propaganda, "It's all over"; now, "It's only a matter of time." May I remind your readers that Republican Spain faced a worse situation in November, 1936, than she does to-day, critical as the situation undoubtedly is.

Was it not the drunken butcher and moral degenerate De Llano who broadcasted in October, 1936, that in November Franco would take his coffee in Madrid.

He has not taken it yet. He never will, unless, due to the policy of the British and French Governments, millions of Spanish people have to be wiped out. For, in spite of new atrocities, in spite of unspeakable infamies, in spite of tears, grief and death, the people of Catalonia and Spain are rising to new heights of sacrifice, courage and determination to win at all costs. Retreat there has been. Setbacks in plenty there have been. Franco, Mussolini and Hitler have reached the Mediterranean coast. Treachery, not a lack of valour, has been the cause. Pouring in of aeroplanes, artillery, and Italian and German troops have been the cause. No wonder the Rome newspapers are full of the slogan, "Hurrah for Chamberlain" – for what the fascists have achieved is certainly due to the policy of Chamberlain and the National Government.

And yet, as I look around in the town and villages I have passed through, both night and day, whether the sun or moon was shining, whether people were running into dugouts seeking refuge from mass aerial bombardments or going about their lawful occasions, an ever-present thought in my mind was that of one of Republican Spain's most responsible Ministers – "Politt, tell the British people that so long as one piece of Republican Spain is left the war is not over." That was said in Barcelona. It was also said by Modesto, when by candlelight and within the hearing of fascist open fire we watched this gallant hero of the real Spain, tried but confident, trace the present position on his military map.

It was said by Sam Wilde of Manchester, a Lancashire lad, Commander of the British Battalion, the lad Attlee, Wilkinson and Noel Baker shook hands with last year.

It is what all that is best and noble in Spain are saying.

The new Government has given a confidence that is spreading like wildfire.

The British and French Governments are encouraging the weaklings and defeatists. But the Spain that has resisted since July, 1936, will continue to resist.

I am writing this on the way to London. Out there in the Mediterranean, right opposite the villa of the British representative, Mr. Leche, lies at anchor the great battle cruiser the "Hood." Fred Copeman tells me about its power and gets cynical about it all. Fred has been in most of the great battles. His bitterness, at the policy of Britain is not only a personal expression, it is what all the people of Spain hurl at England.

Around the "Hood," the pinnaces and gigs are sailing around. In Tarragona and Reus the people are fleeing from death from fascist planes. Death comes from the Balearic Islands. It comes in the form of non-intervention. The Union Jack protects it, and in doing so dooms people like you and me to misery, pain and death.

How long shall it continue? How long shall the brave, fearless Spanish people be asked to continue a struggle that is ours as much as it is theirs.

Arms for Spain. Food for Spain. Medical supplies and trucks for Spain.

Let these demands rise louder and louder.

Let the Perths, Chamberlains, Mussolinis and Cianos hear them, knowing full well that behind them means action.

If we fail the Spanish people now, who will help us?

This is the thought I leave with every reader of Inprecorr.

III.

Jose Diaz, General Secretary of the C.P. of Spain

He had hardly completed his eleventh year when he could be seen every morning in the streets of Seville on his way to the bakery where he worked. Son of a journeyman baker and a tobacco worker, Pepe Diaz, from his earliest infancy, experienced the brutal exploitation of the bourgeoisie. Hunger and poverty, the atmosphere in which the Andalusian workers lived, soon roused the spirit of revolt in the lad.

At the age of eighteen he already belonged to the executive of the bakers' union "Aurora" which affiliated with the C.N.T. as soon as that body was constituted in Seville. His revolutionary activities increased and developed. He was the inspirer of many of the strikes and revolutionary movements of which the Andalusian capital and its province were the scene during the second decade of the century. His comrades in the struggle admired and respected the characteristic qualities of the young revolutionary: his calm, his firmness, his intelligence. However difficult the situation – and it must be stressed that the struggles of the Andalusian proletariat constitute one of the most heroic chapters of the revolutionary history of Spain – Jose always remained calm, serene, with his affable smile which put fresh heart in every one round him.

At the end of 1920, in connection with a general strike, which was suppressed with the greatest brutality and much bloodshed in the working-class suburbs of Seville, Pepe Diaz, with extraordinary prudence and skill organised the escape from Seville of several leading comrades of the movement. He himself also travelled to Madrid and Barcelona, to organise the work for the release of the prisoners. He succeeded in rousing popular indignation at the mass imprisonments and torturings to such an extent that as a result no death sentences were passed and no one given life sentences of imprisonment or even long terms. His work well done, he returned to Seville to devote himself to the reorganisation of the trade unions.

1923, under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, José Diaz organised underground work; he set up an organisation to help the innumerable workers thrown into prison and carried on the struggle against the dictatorship.

It was a sunny morning in Madrid. A lad passed through the streets of a working-class quarter with a basket on his arm selling Seville rolls. It was Pepe Diaz. The organisation had instructed him to transfer to Madrid to carry on the struggle there. In order to live and also to conceal his activities he himself baked Seville rolls and sold them. All in vain – the police kept a watchful eye on the young revolutionary and arrested him in a Madrid cafe.

During the first days of his imprisonment he was taken out every morning into the country, in the environs of Madrid, and threatened with death if he did not confess. The chief of the political police at this time was the notorious Arlegui.

After eight months in jail and brutal tortures, Pepe Diaz came out into the streets again with his revolutionary conviction firmer and his determination stronger than ever to fight until the end against

the butchers of the people. But he also came out broken in health. From those eight months of torture in the prison he retained the infirmity which still weighs down the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain.

Again in Seville. Jose Diaz has learned much in prison. A profound change is beginning to come about in him. He has learned that the anarchist methods of struggle, direct action may be very heroic, but they do not lead to the end pursued by the workers. What was needed to overthrow the dictatorship was mass action linked up with the struggle for the workers' demands. It was in this direction that Pepe Diaz now began to carry on his work. At this period he came across Communist literature, and accepting with enthusiasm the political line put forward there, he got into touch with the few Communists at that time living in Seville and joined the Red Aid, taking with him many of his anarchist comrades and rousing the interest of the trade union masses in economic assistance for the political prisoners.

Shortly afterwards, when the local committee of the Communist Party was arrested, Diaz, at the request of the Communist leaders of Madrid and Bilbao, took on the job of reorganising the Communist Party in Seville. A little later, at the regional conference of the party, he was appointed General Secretary of the Andalusian district of the C.P.

It was a period of great revolutionary unrest in Spain, and especially in Seville. Strikes, revolutionary movements, brutal repression, the killing of workers finally ended with the fall of Primo de Rivera and, shortly afterwards, of the monarchy itself (1931).

Mainly as a result of the good work done by Diaz, the Andalusian district of the Party soon became the strongest district of the Communist Party of Spain. But Pepe fought not only against the brutal semi-feudal oppression in Andalusia; he also fought implacably the sectarianism of the Bullejos group, which at that time dominated the leadership of the C.P. He fought against the sectarian leadership of this group which, although limited to certain individuals, prevented the Party from developing and the working masses from joining it. He also fought the incorrect political appraisal of the revolutionary movement. The Bullejos group completely misunderstood the democratic character of the Spanish revolution; it wanted to skip the next stages of the revolution and launched the slogan: "Down with the Republic!" when the popular masses, enthusiastic about the fall of the monarchy, were shouting in the streets: "Long live the Republic!"

JOSE DIAZ, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain.

1932. Congress of the Communist Party in Seville. The tendency represented by Pepe Diaz and all the comrades who opposed the sectarian Bullejos group triumphs. A few months later this leadership is removed and a new Central Committee formed with Pepe Diaz as General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain.

The line and working methods of the Party suffer a radical change. Sectarianism is set aside, and as a result the Party develops rapidly, attracting masses of workers and small Left-wing groups and parties which up to then had been repelled from joining by the intransigent and sectarian attitude of the Bullejos group.

The policy pursued by Diaz in organising the Party

magnificently stimulated its development. Diaz is closely linked with the Party and those who constitute it. With fine proletarian feeling he chooses the best cadres for the Party, allots to them the functions they are best suited to exercise, looks after them, and sees to it that if the work exceeds their capacity they are relieved in good time to prevent them from proving failures; he boldly discovers and educates new leaders – in a word, he builds up the Communist Party as only a working-class leader intimately linked with the masses and loved by them can build.

Under the leadership of Pepe Diaz and the new Central Committee the Party rectifies its political line and begins to work actively for the unity of the working class. In September, 1934, the Communist Party held an extraordinary plenum, in which the Party decided to join the Workers' Alliances (Alianzas Obreras) organised by the Socialists, although these Alliances were by no means perfect expressions of the united front – but the object was precisely to convert them into genuine organs of the united front of the workers and peasants. At this plenum Pepe Diaz said, speaking of the fascist menace: "The problem is not one of months, but of days."

And in fact, a few days later, in October, a Government was formed including three fascist Ministers; the workers came out into the streets and declared a revolutionary general strike in the greater part of Spain. In Asturias this strike developed into an armed rising, during which the miners wrote glorious pages of working-class history.

June, 1935. The persecution following upon the suppression of the October movement is raging. But the people was not daunted even by the most bestial tortures inflicted by the police on its most valiant fighters. The Communist Party did not for a single instant cease to inspire the workers with courage and show them the way to follow. Pepe Diaz, serene, firm, sure of himself, speaks to more than 10,000 workers at the "Monumental Cinema" of Madrid, and says:

"To-day, from this platform, as yesterday, with every means at our command, we repeat our appeal to all workers, to the peasants, to all free men, to the anti-fascists, the Republicans of the Left, and call upon them in order that all of us who have only one point of agreement in this fateful hour may unite in a popular anti-fascist bloc to foil the designs of this Government of fascists and reactionaries."

After the historical Seventh Congress of the C.I., which Pepe Diaz attended as the leader of the Spanish delegation, a mass meeting was held in Madrid at the Coliseo Pardinias. Here Pepe Diaz reported on the congress of the C.I. and explained the policy of People's Front, calling upon all anti-fascist parties to unite their forces against fascism:

"To-day we must concentrate all forces on the struggle against this unpopular Government, which must be overthrown before it is too late. We must fight for the dissolution of the counter-revolutionary parliament. We must enforce the holding of a new general election in which the anti-fascist forces must participate, united and certain that they will thus defeat the forces of fascism and reaction. I repeat once more, the Government will not fall of its own accord. It is we, the workers, we the anti-fascists who must overthrow it by our united struggle."

As the leader of the Communist Party, Pepe Diaz fought untiringly, every minute to create the People's Front. Every day new obstacles and seemingly insuperable difficulties arose, and disputes and manoeuvres had to be dealt with. But Diaz knew that all obstacles must be overcome and the People's Front created in spite of everything so that the people might be in a position to fight reaction and fascism. So was the People's Front in Spain born. The reactionary Government called a general election, and the People's Front triumphed with an overwhelming majority in February, 1933.

"How was this victory possible?" asked Jose Diaz a few days later in his speech at the Teatro Barbieri in Madrid. "It was possible, in the first place, because the political line of our Party was

correct. In the beginning when we first put forward the necessity of a People's Bloc after the October events; later when we put forward the necessity of united action on the part of the Socialist and Communist Parties to ensure the leading role of the working class in this bloc we came up against certain resistances. But reality and the arguments and the political line of our Party have caused the necessity of this unity of action and of People's Blocs to be finally understood."

The People's Front triumphed over reaction. But Pepe Diaz did not lose his head.

"We must always remember," he wrote, in an article in *Mundo Obrero* on June 1, 1936, "that in Spain there is still a danger of reaction and fascism. In order to understand better the significance of this danger we must think of the past and avoid the errors made on April 14, 1931. (The date of the proclamation of the Republic.) We must prevent the revolution from getting into a blind alley or being suppressed and stifled."

He then added:

"The Government must take action against the reactionaries and fascists who at this moment are being encouraged. It must take the offensive against the forces of counter-revolution. The forces of democracy must be rallied. For this purpose the Government must sweep away the reactionary commanders, the monarchist and fascist officers of the Army, the fascist judges and all enemies of the Republic who are even greater enemies of the workers. For it is a disgrace that such known monarchists as Franco and Goded should still remain in command of troops and the army must be purged of such elements in order that the mistakes of 1931 be not repeated."

But the Republican Government was weak. It was afraid of the popular masses and did not wish to put itself in their hands; it was afraid of the fascists and did not want to make war on them, but preferred to curry favour with them by giving them military posts of command or civil authority in the country.

July 18, 1936. A military-fascist rebellion. From this moment onwards Pepe Diaz, although he is seriously ill, has not an instant of rest. The responsibilities of the Communist Party are immense. The people understand – as Pepe Diaz said – that the Communist Party knows what it wants and where it is going, that it keeps its promises and does not promise more than it can fulfil. Pepe Diaz calls upon the Communists to be the first and the best in the struggle, and the Communists respond to his call like one man. He himself goes to the front, speaks to the militiamen, does not allow himself a minute's rest, working incessantly with the other comrades of the Political Bureau and of the Central Committee, giving a firm lead to the Party, which is growing with lightning rapidity. The popular masses pour into the ranks of the Party, which reflects the firmness, calm and the unshakable faith in victory of its General Secretary.

The epic days of November in Madrid. The enemy stands at the gates of the capital. The men and women of the Communist Party, led by Pepe Diaz, show themselves able to mobilise the city to its very depths and defeat the enemy. Pepe Diaz himself takes pick and shovel and builds fortifications with thousands of workers, men, women and children who follow his example. Pepe Diaz visits the line of fire every day – sometimes inside a tank – to remind the Communists that "their lives belong to the Party, and that they should not spare them, but defeat the hated fascist invaders."

In the session of the Cortes, held on December 1 in Valencia, Pepe Diaz, representing the Communist fraction, pointed out how the victory would be achieved:

"I consider it necessary to stress that we shall win the war only if we are able to mobilise all our national resources in men, in arms and in food. We shall win only if we can carry on the war with a firm, united, iron-handed leadership, a uniform military command, a united and disciplined army. In order to win the war we need a uniform leadership in the national production of arms

and foodstuffs. We must satisfy not only local requirements but all general needs of all the fronts who must be provisioned according to plan. In order to win the war we must produce untiringly and without limits to the working time, all that we lack.... If we do not win the war, all doctrinaire theses will collapse like a house of cards under the jack-boots of militarism and fascism. Therefore we, the Communists, without giving up an inch of our ideology and our programme, say that to-day there can be only one programme, only one idea, only one objective: to win the war.”

Regular army, uniform command, reserves, thorough purge of the army, purge of the rear, destruction of the Fifth Column of the fascists and their faithful lackeys, the Trotskyists, fortifications, creation of a strong armament industry, assistance for the peasants, avoidance of compulsory collectivisations and prosecution of the “uncontrollables” who rob the peasants, trade union unity, formation of a united party of the working class, policy of the People Front. Day after day, indefatigably, undeterred by the lack of understanding of leaders of other parties, Pepe Diaz repeats that these are the conditions of victory. He repeats it in meetings, in articles, in plenums of the Party.

It is again November. A year has gone by since the unforgettable November days in Madrid. A year of struggle and intensive work of the Communist Party at the fronts and in the rear. In the fire of this daily struggle the Party has increased considerably, and what is even more important, has trained hundreds of fresh cadres, young, firm, direct disciples of Pepe Diaz, trained in his style of Bolshevik work which he himself learned from Lenin, from Stalin, from Dimitrov.

In the first days of November, 1937, the enemy succeeded in creating some confusion among the weakest, hesitating sections of the anti-fascist camp, among those who have no faith in the people and in the working class. Rumours began to circulate about the possibilities of an armistice, there is even talk of a compromise. Pepe Diaz convenes the Central Committee to a plenum in order that from it may come:

“a firm and categorical line, so that if a Communist walks along the street, a soldier goes to the front, a worker, an anti-fascist passes by, we shall be able to say to all these people with fervent enthusiasm, with an overwhelming certainty that despite all difficulties and despite all the gravity of the situation... the Spanish people will triumph over its foreign invaders and its own fascists.”

“We must 'be vigilant,” said Pepe Diaz at the plenum. “Our Party has the duty, in face of all these manoeuvres, to proclaim openly its position, which is the position of the whole people of Spain. There can be no peace as long as a single soldier of the invading armies remains on the soil of our country. There can be no compromise of any kind with the generals, traitors to their country, nor with the foreign invaders. Evict the invaders, defeat Franco, destroy fascism for ever in our country, such is the only possible compromise.”

In attacking the Fifth Column, the spreader of rumours of a compromise among the masses, we must attack the chief enemy the people has in the rear: the Trotskyists.

“What is the work the Trotskyists are doing in our rearguard?” asks Diaz in his report to the plenum. “It is to undermine the foundations of anti-fascist unity, to demoralise the workers, to serve as spies. The relations of the Trotskyists with Franco, the services of espionage and provocation rendered by the P.O.U.M. to the fascists have sufficiently demonstrated this and the numerous discoveries of the police have proved it conclusively. Against the agents- provocateurs of the P.O.U.M. there is not only the political evidence of the articles published in their press, of their speeches, of the clandestine leaflets they distribute; there is also the criminal evidence of the codes, maps and documents found by the police on their premises and in the possession of their leaders. These criminals deserve no mercy.... The discoveries of the police have proved that the falangists and the ‘poumists’ are co-operating in espionage and underground work. Very well! If

they work together we will destroy them together.”

Faced with these manoeuvres of the enemy, the policy of the People’s Front must be strengthened in order to hasten victory.

“It is necessary,” says Diaz, “for all the militants of the Party to agree always that the policy of the Communist Party of Spain is and should be a firm, consistent People’s Front policy. This signifies two things in essence; That the Party must all the time maintain the closest contact with the masses and be the most energetic defender of their interests, and of the general interests of our people in its struggle against fascism and the foreign invasion. In the second place, the Party should not take any action which might be detrimental to the unity of all anti-fascist forces.”

Pepe Diaz reminded all militants of the Party that they must not let their heads be turned by success, and recommended that they should criticise themselves more severely and more frequently, and observe a Bolshevik modesty even if they occupy high positions in the army or administration.

From the premises in Valencia, half destroyed by fascist bombs, in which the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party was held, the voice of the General Secretary of the Party has issued firm and resolute, and has spread throughout loyal Spain, to all the fronts, through the whole working class in the hinterland, inspiring the people with greater, unshakable faith in its victory; giving the working masses a lead, educating them and reminding the Communists that the present situation demands of them

“a maximum concentration of all their forces, of all their political ability and working capacity, of all their will to resist and to fight.”

The counter-revolutionary rumours of a compromise disappeared completely after the November plenum. They were destroyed by the crushing force of the popular will, firmly expressed by the General Secretary of the Communist Party, teacher and guide of the anti-fascist masses.

Between November, when the plenum was held, and the present day, the atmosphere has been considerably cleared. The bonds of unity between the working-class parties, between the trade unions, between all the organisations of the People’s Front have been drawn closer and knitted more firmly. The popular masses are marching more resolutely towards the final victory led with a sure and firm hand by the Communist Party and its General Secretary, Jose Diaz.

Dolores Ibarruri, “Pasionaria”

She is the daughter of miners; her mother worked in the mine until too many children compelled her to withdraw to her humble hearth. Pasionaria was born in December, 1895, in Gallarta, a small mining village in the Basque country.

Her childhood was the joyless, painful childhood of all working-class children. In her first years of life she already knew the troubles and anguish of the life of a miner, its struggles and anxieties, its aspirations and its hopes.

Socialism found one of its firmest bulwarks in the Basque country, from the very beginning of the spread of those ideas in Spain. Those who were the foremost in the struggle, the workers who were the most ardent revolutionaries, were the miners. The strikes of the Basque miners form some of the finest chapters in the revolutionary history of the Spanish working class. During the strikes the wives of the miners came out with their children to stone the strike-breakers, and the little Dolores was always with them. When the struggle grew sharper the guards fired on the crowd, but the children were used to that;

they threw themselves flat on the ground, only to renew the struggle afterwards.

It was in such an atmosphere of struggle that the childhood of Pasionaria was spent. She passionately desired to be a schoolteacher; she was feverishly devoted to her studies; books were her passion. But she was unable to indulge her love of education; her parents were poor and could not afford the expense of a career for their daughter. At the age of fifteen she went to work in a tailor's workshop; a year later she left this employment to take domestic service in the house of a rich business man. The work was merciless. Dolores had to get up at six: in the morning and went to bed at two in the morning without a moment's rest, not even for meals. Her wage was 20 pesetas a month. She had to wash and scrub, serve the customers, look after the cattle....

Dolores felt the urge to protest; she wanted to leave the place; her parents forced her to carry on.... Twenty pesetas a month paid for the rent of their house, and life was hard.

At the age of twenty she married a miner. The hard, cruel life of the pit again violently roused in her the urge to protest, to fight.... It is necessary to get rid of all prejudices and conventions; to destroy root and branch the traditional barriers which paralysed all action and served as dykes, which up to then had held in check the proletarian indignation which she had felt since her childhood.

Then came the revolution in Russia radiating its powerful light over the whole world of the exploited. The repercussion in Spain was very strong. With passionate enthusiasm Dolores took sides with the heroic fighters of distant Russia.

In 1917 the Spanish workers prepare to overthrow the monarchy. A general strike is to be the starting-point of the movement. The miners are working feverishly. Dolores assists them. She acts as a link between several localities; she carries and distributes arms and dynamite. And yet she is no Socialist.

The movement is suppressed and ferocious reprisals are carried out against the workers. There are dozens killed throughout Spain and thousands are imprisoned. The husband of Dolores is put in prison and long months of starvation and other privations follow. The Russian revolution continues to develop and the workers and peasants seize power. A breath of hope lifts up the spirit of the Spanish workers. The hand of repression is heavy – but what does that matter!

At the end of 1917 Dolores joined the Socialist Party and wrote in several papers under the pen-name "Pasionaria," one who has suffered much and shared the sorrows of the workers. Under this name she quickly became popular among the miners. In 1920 she joined the first Communist groups, and with her example, her work, and her enthusiasm swept along the four hundred Socialist workers of the village of Somorostro, where she lived – they all joined the Communist Party as soon as it was formed. Dolores was elected to the district committee of the Party in Viscaya and nominated as a delegate to the first congress of the Party.

Young Pasionaria carried on the fight in every field; she wrote for the Party press, helped with trade union work, undertook the distribution of Party literature and fought during the strikes against the strike-breakers.

The years of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship (1923-29) steeled the spirit of Dolores even more. They were years of hard trials, of constant and brutal persecution, of house searches by the Civil Guard. Work there was none, and hunger and misery were the inseparable guests of her home. Four of her children fell ill, and Dolores, a passionately fond mother, watched them die because she lacked means to save them. But what does it matter! There are millions of other children worth fighting for; there are millions and millions of mothers who must be helped...

The third congress of the Party (1929) had to be held in Paris. Dolores was appointed delegate. She had

to pass the frontier illegally. She gave her children into the care of a friend and set out with a group of comrades. The roads they had to take were almost impassable. They had to pass the frontier in the night. The Civil Guard was out looking for them and discovered them. Several comrades were arrested. Dolores got away.

In 1930, at the Pamplona conference of the Communist Party, Dolores was made a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain. Two years later the Party summoned her to Madrid to take active part in the central leadership. For a time she worked as an editor in the Mundo Obrero, the Party paper.

A fortnight after her arrival in the capital she was arrested and held for several days in the cells of the Seguridad together with prostitutes, and subjected to brutalities on the part of the police. Finally, she was transferred to prison. Her arrival was viewed with curiosity: a Communist! But a few days turned Dolores into the defender of those unfortunate women. She raised her voice in protest against the infamous exploitation to which they were subjected, when they were compelled to work all day in the workshops for a few centimos. The women grow very fond of Dolores, ask her advice, listen to her and soon her influence has become too dangerous for the nuns who at that time still acted as wardens in the female prisons. So Dolores was separated from the other prisoners and a month later transferred to the prison of Bilbao.

Released and back in Madrid, Dolores took an active part in the struggle against the sectarian Bullejos group which then held the leading positions in the Party. At the congress of Seville in 1932, when the policy of this group was condemned, Dolores was elected member of the Political Bureau of the Party. From that moment she has worked indefatigably together with Jose Diaz for the development of the Party.

The police were constantly on the tracks of this woman so well beloved by the masses. After ten months of prison in Madrid she was transferred to Bilbao to stand her trial. The day of the trial is a day of great activity among the workers. Thousands of them crowd the court to be present at the monstrous proceedings against the valiant Communist leader. The prosecution demands eighteen years of penal servitude for her and penal servitude for life for her comrades. Dolores faced her base judges with all her dignity, with that proletarian majesty which is her characteristic quality. She fearlessly confronted the judges and summoned them for no distant date to appear before a tribunal of the people. The judges were left gaping – they did not know what to reply to the forceful arguments of this extraordinary woman. The prosecution dropped the accusation against her. But Dolores refused to leave the hall if her companions remained behind and finally the police brutally compelled her to leave.

DOLORES IBARRURI, "Pasionaria."

In 1933, after her return from the U.S.S.R., where she attended the 13th Plenum of the Communist International, Dolores was again arrested. It was rumoured one day that the fascists were planning a coup d'état. Pasionaria scoured the working-class areas and the workshops to warn the workers. The police pursued her and arrested her.

Indefatigably, day after day Dolores repeated to the comrades how important it was for the Party to work among the women. She herself organised and put life into the movement of the women against war and fascism. The women who work with her, who know her, no matter to which party they belong, all

adore her. Her mere presence is the best stimulus for work among the women; for when they look at her, the women acquire faith in their own strength and ability. After attending the World Congress of Women in Paris in 1934, Dolores organised in Madrid a demonstration of women against the decree mobilising the reservists which Diego Hidalgo, then Minister for War in the Cabinet of Lerroux, was proposing to issue. That magnificent demonstration in which thousands of working-class women participated – for the first time in the history of Spain – and which was led by Pasionaria, defeated the proposal of the Government and the mobilisation did not take place.

After the revolutionary movement of October, 1934, the hand of reaction struck hard at the proletarian and even simple progressive organisations. The police watched Dolores without respite.

In the Asturias the repression took on a character of inconceivable brutality; no one could go there without being immediately arrested. And yet it was necessary to go, it was indispensable to assist the comrades and put heart into them. Dolores found a way to do it. Her contacts with women of the lower middle class, acquired through the movement of the women against war and fascism, gave her the possibility of carrying out her plan. She set up an organisation of a charitable character “For the Working-Class Child” with the object of assisting poor children and, as at that time the Asturian children were in the worst position of all, she went to Asturias. The butcher Aranda gave a safe conduct, and with that safe conduct, which was of a general character, Dolores went to the Asturias when repression was at its terrible height. She gave money to the families of the prisoners, she ascertained where many comrades were hiding, she collected the information needed in order to organise the means of getting out of the region the comrades who were in danger.

In the midst of these activities she was arrested and taken to the prison of Oviedo. When the news of her arrest reached Madrid a great movement of protest obtained her release. But she was barred from returning to the Asturias. Despite the ban and at great risk to herself she returned there every time she considered it necessary.

In April, 1935, a conference for the relief of the victims of the repression was held in Paris. Dolores was appointed delegate. She had to cross the frontier illegally, at great risk. She found her way through the mountains and dodged the vigilance of the carabineros for two long days. Dolores did not hesitate an instant. She set out with another delegate and a guide; they took a mountain path in the night and were discovered by the carabineros who pursued them with bloodhounds. Only the familiarity of their guide with all the mountain paths saved them from falling into the hands of their pursuers and after many vicissitudes the delegates succeeded in reaching Paris. After the conference comes the return to Spain; there are no legal means of returning and Dolores had to take the same arduous road back. After overcoming all sorts of difficulties, she arrived safely in Madrid.

In June she took part, with Jose Diaz, in the meeting at the “Monumental Cinema,” where the Communist Party outlined the necessity of forming a People’s Front in Spain.

In July she went to the U.S.S.R. as a delegate to the seventh world congress of the Communist International. The road is the same as the one leading to the Paris conference: the Pyrenees, steep and inhospitable, almost inaccessible....

The return from the seventh congress was less full of hardship, more comfortable. The comrades of San Sebastian knew that the Marquis of Luca de Tena, owner of the reactionary newspaper A .B.C., kept a pleasure yacht in that port; the comrades seized the yacht and went off in her to fetch Dolores from a small French port, and set her ashore in the dead of night with the greatest calm, under the very noses of the carabineros, who thought she was a servant of the aristocrat who owned the boat.

In Madrid it was imperative to explain to the masses the epoch-making decisions of the seventh congress. Dolores spoke at a great meeting; the police attempted to arrest her, but were prevented from doing so by the workers.

The People's Front began to take shape. It was the Communist Party that advocated and defended it with the greatest ardour. The Gil Robles Government began to totter amidst the growing discontent of the people. There are several strikes and a great campaign is launched for the liberation of the political prisoners. Dolores took an active part in the leadership of this work. At the beginning of 1936 she returned to the Asturias to fetch miners' children; when she got back to Madrid she was arrested. Gil Robles was no longer Prime Minister, and Portela Valladares had decided to hold a general election. Dolores fled from prison to campaign in the Asturias where she was nominated by the Party on the People's Front ticket.

The Left-wing wins the election. Dolores is elected member of Parliament for the Asturian miners. It is the men who every day risk their lives in the bowels of the earth who put their faith and trust in this daughter of miners, that she may fight for them and defend them. Two days after the electoral victory of the people it demands the release of the 30,000 fighters imprisoned by the reactionaries. The People's Front won the election with the slogan: "Liberate the prisoners of the revolutionary movement of October!"

Dolores visited the prison of Oviedo. There are 940 anti-fascist prisoners in it, many of them sentenced to death, most of them to penal servitude for life. The authorities refused to release them without orders from their superiors. The prison guard was strengthened and the guards given orders to shoot at the people. Machine-guns all ready to fire were placed in position in front of the gates of the prison where the political prisoners were kept. Dolores steps forward surrounded by guards. The prisoners ask her to address them and tell what it all means. Dolores speaks: she tells the prisoners that they are right, that the people are prepared to insist on their release and that she as a member of Parliament Will do everything possible to obtain their release that very day. The prisoners trust her. She undertakes certain steps which produce no result. She returns to the prison. The crowd is ,, threatening to storm the building and the guards are getting very nervous. Dolores enters the prison and tells the prisoners that her attempts have failed. The indignation of the prisoners is terrible to see; with a violent shock they break through the railings enclosing them. It is a perilous position. The soldiers are waiting for the order to fire. Dolores is among the prisoners; groups of soldiers with levelled bayonets compel the prisoners to fall back. In the street outside the people are growing impatient; rumours reach them of what is going on inside. Several members of Parliament attempt to calm the excitement of the masses who demand that Pasionaria should come out. Pasionaria is interviewing the commander of the troops and the warden of the prison, who ask her whether she is prepared to take the responsibility for the release of the prisoners. Dolores replies in the affirmative and is given all the keys. Pasionaria hurries back to the prisoners. "All out into the street!" she shouts to them, beside herself with joy.

It was an indescribable scene. The prison was empty and there was no limit to the joy of the people in the Asturias. Pasionaria was almost smothered with embraces and demonstrations of affection....

Next day Dolores left Madrid. As the news of her departure got about, a demonstration was organised to see her off. It was impossible to enter the railway station: the whole people was there to give expression to their gratitude and their affection for the woman who was now their member of Parliament.

The entry of the Communist members into Parliament, and especially that of Pasionaria, was an event. Very soon she had gained the sympathy and affection of all members of the Left- wing and the respect of those of the Right.

Her maiden speech was one of opposition to the policy of Gil Robles. Her attack on the leader of the

“Accion Popular” made a magnificent impression on the workers, who saw in Pasionaria an ardent defender of the liberties of the people.

A month before the fascist rebellion, Pasionaria, in a historical speech, pulled to pieces the arguments of the two leaders of the Right-wing, Calvo Sotelo and Gil Robles, who wanted to bring about a Government crisis by their attacks on the Republican Government of Cesares Quiroga. The intervention of Pasionaria saved the Government and hopelessly defeated the two leaders of the Opposition.

July 18, 1936. The military-fascist rebellion broke out. The people moved like a gigantic landslide and through the mouth of Pasionaria shouted, “They shall not pass!” – a cry which made the enemy tremble, roused the enthusiasm of all anti-fascists, penetrated into the remotest corners of Spain, and expressed clearly to the whole world the iron determination of the Spanish people to bar the way to fascism.

Pasionaria and the people were closer knit than ever in these epic days. She is the most representative figure of this struggle of the Spanish people against fascism, for the liberty and independence of their country. Pasionaria comes from the very depth of the exploited masses. She has suffered all its miseries, its hungers and the worries which from time immemorial have been the fate of the Spanish people. She saw the agony of those she held dearest in the world, of her children who died because she had no money to pay the doctor and the chemist. She saw many other children of the working class die for the same reason.

The present struggle is the revolt of the exploited and starving masses against the fascist criminals who propose to increase their sufferings still more. The embodiment of the present glorious struggle of the Spanish people is this Communist woman, object of the admiration of the whole world.

From the very first instant of the struggle Dolores understood the seriousness of the position and was able to rise to the heights the circumstances demanded of a Communist leader. She is no longer merely a heroic woman, a brilliant speaker of world-wide fame, a defender of the downtrodden. She is now the leader of a great, strong, powerful, vigorous Communist Party, the chief weapon of the masses fighting against fascism and intervention. With Diaz and the political bureau, Dolores worked out the political line of the Party, applied the political doctrines drawn straight from the midst of the people, educated the Party workers. From the very beginning she contributed to the formation of the army. First she assisted in setting up the militia and was one of the most active organisers of the glorious Fifth Regiment. Later she fought to transform the militia into a regular army.

In those unforgettable days of July and August, Dolores visited the fronts to share the life of the soldiers and could like no one else rouse enthusiasm and inspire the men who went out to fight and to die.

In the November days when the enemy stood at the gates of Madrid, Dolores scoured the streets of the capital at the head of the women, calling upon the people to assist in the construction of fortifications and telling the men that their place was at the front. She broadcast through the wireless, raised the morale of the population, spoke at meetings. She herself, accompanied by Comrade Diaz, took pick and shovel and went to work building fortifications, and thousands followed her example. She herself went into the trenches to urge the militiamen to advance and not to retreat an inch, not to permit the fascist criminals to sully the capital city of Spain. No one in Madrid will ever forget the heroic figure of Dolores in those November days.

The best ambassador Spain ever sent beyond her frontiers is Dolores Ibarruri, who has often been to Paris to attend various commissions of the People’s Front and mobilised with her speeches thousands and thousands of European citizens to help the Spanish cause.

Day by day Dolores receives a voluminous mail from France and Britain, from Czechoslovakia, from America, letters in which progressive men and women who want peace express their affection and admiration for her. Simple workers and high-born aristocrats tell Dolores of their enthusiasm for the splendid work she is doing for the good of humanity.

Workers, women, children, soldiers, officers, airmen, sailors, intellectuals, all leaders of the anti-fascist movement, turn to Dolores for assistance to solve their problems and for advice. The Spanish people puts all its trust in her and gives her all its love. Her speeches, her articles, her reports to the Party plenums, her Parliamentary speeches are applauded and eagerly read by the masses who are inspired by the teachings of this great Communist leader.

The words of Pasionaria quickly turn into mass slogans far beyond the frontiers of Spain. She was the first to launch the historic "They shall not pass!" and it was she who said in her report on the People's Army to the plenum of the Communist Party in November, 1937:

"We are going to help overthrow international fascism. We are contributing mightily to the liberation of the world from the terrible menace of fascism; we are teaching all nations how to fight and how to win. And with the glorious cry: ' We shall pass! ' we are marching towards victory with the invincible strength of our People's Army."

The authority wielded by Pasionaria is growing from day to day, not only in her quality of Communist leader but as a leader of the People's front as well. In the two last sessions of Parliament Dolores Ibarruri made speeches, the last on February 1, 1938, which immediately found an echo throughout the country. The Spanish people acclaimed her words with great faith and enthusiasm, her wise words which show the road we must follow to win through quickly to victory.

Joint Programme of Action of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party of Spain

On August 17, 1937, Comrades Ramon G. Pena, Juan S. Vidarte, Ramon Lamonedada and Manuel Cordero for the Socialist Party, and Comrades José Diaz, Dolores Ibarruri, Luis Gorla and Pedro Checa for the Communist Party, signed the programme of action of the National Unification Committee of the two parties.

This programme comprises 16 points.

The first point refers to the strengthening of the fighting forces of the Republican People's Army. As a condition for this strengthening it advocates the strict application of military discipline, the constant increase of the reserve forces, the promotion of expert leaders who have come from the people to higher positions of command, the energetic and systematic purging of the army, uniform command, etc.

The second point deals with the necessity of establishing a powerful war industry by nationalising and rapidly militarising the already existing armament factories, arousing a spirit of competition and initiative in increasing the output of war material and strengthening working discipline in the armament factories.

The third point deals with the necessity for the construction of air raid dug-outs for the population and the question of fortifications.

The fourth point is devoted to the question of transport; it proposes the construction of new roads, strategic railways, etc.

The sixth point deals with the co-ordination and planning of economy by means of a National Economic Council in collaboration with the trade union organisations and the autonomous provincial administrations.

The seventh point is devoted to the questions of the rural districts and the necessity of adopting an agrarian policy aiming at intensifying agricultural production and strengthening the unity of the town and rural proletariat with the working peasants, not only during the time of war but also after the victory.

The eighth point raises the question of a war policy in regard to food supply, which in the first place is to ensure the supply of the combatants but also that of the civil population.

The ninth point deals with the recognition of and respect for the historic and. legal independence of the peoples of Catalonia, Galicia and Euzkadi (Basque country).

The tenth point reads as follows: "To conduct a policy aiming at maintaining good and friendly relations with the petty bourgeoisie in industry and commerce."

The eleventh point deals with public order and proposes that serious measures be taken against all those who would like to set themselves up in place of the authorities entrusted with the maintenance of public order.

Point twelve demands the strengthening of the People's Front by means of struggle against all those who would weaken or hamper its organised forces, all those who would destroy the unity of the people.

Point thirteen is devoted to trade union unity, and lays down that the Socialist and Communist Parties should work to improve the relations between the two big Trade Union Federations, the U.G.T. and the C.N.T., on the basis of a joint programme of action and collaboration with the People's Front Government in the spheres of production and war in all its various forms.

Unity of the Youth is dealt with in point fourteen.

Point fifteen deals with international unity and states: The Socialist and Communist Parties will advocate joint action of the Second and Third Internationals and of the International Federation of Trade Unions.

The last point is devoted to the necessity of defending the Soviet Union. It recognises the great solidarity of the Soviet people with the whole of the international Labour movement and in particular with the struggle of the Spanish people. It states:

"The Socialist and Communist Parties are of the opinion that the defence of the Soviet Union, the country of Socialism, is a sacred task not only of the Socialists and Communists but of all honest anti-fascists."

The programme of the National Unification Committee of the Socialist and Communist Parties concludes as follows:

"We call upon all organisations and militants to facilitate enthusiastically and resolutely the work we have undertaken for setting up the united Party within the framework of the guiding lines and suggestions drawn up by this National Committee."

Election Manifesto of the Left Bloc

Without prejudice to their respective ideological principles the Republican parties have drawn up and

agreed to a joint political programme which they intend shall serve as a basis for the unification of all their forces in the coming electoral struggle, and as a guide to the policy of the Government to be set up by the Republican parties of the Left, supported by the forces of the workers, in the event of victory. They proclaim now publicly the basis and the limits of their political co-operation, and they place this programme in particular before the other Republican and working-class organisations for consideration in order that, should they regard it any time as in the national interests of the Republic, they may then join the Left Bloc, which is being formed to fight against the reaction at the coming Cortes elections, under these conditions and thereby supplement its strength.

I

The parties of the Left Bloc regard the following conditions as absolutely necessary for the maintenance of public order and security:

1. To grant by legislative means a comprehensive amnesty for political and social offences committed since November, 1933, even where such offences were not recognised by the courts as being in this category. The amnesty must include those offenders who were not amnestied by the law of April 24, 1934. In accordance with due process of law those convictions must be reviewed which were obtained by an unjust utilisation of the law against vagrancy in the case of political prisoners. As long as the institutions provided for in this law are not in fact in existence, the application of the law must be limited in order to prevent it being misused against political ideas and political actions.

2. Those officials and other State or public employees who have been suspended, removed from their posts to others as a disciplinary punishment, or dismissed altogether, without just cause as the result of political persecution must be restored to their old posts.

The Government must take all measures necessary to see that all workers dismissed for their political opinions or in connection with political strikes are restored to their position in the public services and in all those undertakings over which the Government exercises authority and influence.

With regard to private employers of labour, the Ministry of Labour must issue the necessary orders for similar reinstatement in all cases of dismissal for political or social causes. All these cases must come before the mixed commissions in order that the latter may restore those to their rights who were dismissed in accordance with the legislation in force to November, 1933.

3. A law must be passed granting just compensation to the dependents of all those who lost their lives as the victims of counter-revolutionary action, or of illegal actions on the part of the authorities or on the part of the armed forces of the State.

II

The parties of the Left Bloc regard the following as the chief tasks of a Republican and Constitutional Government installed to defend the cause of liberty and justice:

1. The restoration of the Constitution. The violations of the Constitution which have been committed must be punished. The statutes of the Constitutional Court must be subjected to revision in order that the preservation of the Constitution may not be entrusted to persons whose whole upbringing and interests necessarily run counter to the welfare of the Republic.

2. A beginning must be made immediately with the promulgation of those laws promised in the Constitution, and whose existence is necessary to the proper functioning of the Constitution, and in particular laws regulating the activities of the provincial and municipal administrations, which must be imbued with the deepest respect for the principles proclaimed in the Constitution. The Cortes must proceed to revise its standing orders, and in particular the composition and the functions of the

Parliamentary Commissions which, with the assistance of the technical bodies attached to them, are entrusted with the drafting of the laws, must be revised.

3. The principles of authority must be proclaimed beyond all dispute. However, its exercise must be so defined that no damage is done thereby to the cause of liberty and justice. The law for the protection of public order must be revised in such a way that without losing its effectiveness it secures the citizen against any arbitrary use of authority. Measures must also be taken to prevent any misuse of the right to proclaim a state of emergency.

4. The State judicature must be organised in such a way as to be completely free of all the old forces of the social hierarchy, of economic privilege and political position. When it has been reorganised in this fashion the judicature must be permitted to work in the conditions of independence laid down in the Constitution. The civil causes system must be simplified, and the process of appeal to the administrative courts accelerated and its jurisdiction extended. In penal causes the accused must be given greater legal guarantees. Exceptional procedure, and particularly courts-martial, must be confined to definite military offences. The prison regime must be reformed in a humanitarian spirit. Corporal punishment must be abolished and also disciplinary punishment of solitary confinement, unless ordered by the courts.

5. The acts of violence committed by members of the armed forces in former years at the behest of reactionary Governments must be examined in detail in order to discover what individual responsibility exists, and the individual must then be punished. The functions of each State institution must be laid down in the statutes. The directors of these institutions must be chosen carefully. Officials, etc., who have been guilty of maltreating prisoners, etc., or of displaying political prejudice in the performance of their duties must be dismissed. Those forces entrusted with maintenance of public order must be reorganised and composed of suitable persons unconditionally loyal to the Republic.

6. Disciplinary regulations for State officials must be subjected to revision and severe punishments provided for culpable neglect and for any misuse of their authority for political purposes or to the detriment of public welfare.

III

The Republicans do not accept the principle of the nationalisation of the land and its distribution amongst the peasants without payment, as proposed by the delegates of the Socialist Party. They consider that the following measures providing for the redemption of the peasant, and the small and medium-scale agriculturalist, to be suitable not only as a matter of justice, but also as the firm basis for the economic reconstruction of the country:

1. The reduction of taxation and other impositions as an immediate measure to assist the agriculturalist. The suppression of usury. The reduction of excessively high leasehold rents. An increase of agricultural credits. A revaluation of agricultural products, and in particular wheat and other grains, by measures to exclude the middleman and to prevent secret agreements amongst the flour merchants. The export trade in agricultural produce should be encouraged.

2. As measures calculated to improve productive relations in agriculture they propose the following:

Courses of instruction in agriculture must be organised and State and technical assistance provided.

The drawing up of plans to replace certain crops by others with the technical and economic assistance of the public authorities.

Encouragement must be given to pasturage, cattle-breeding and reafforestation.

Artificial irrigation works and water works must be constructed, and the latter adapted to irrigational purposes.

New roads and buildings must be built in the rural areas.

3. As measures of land reform they propose the following:

The immediate annulment of the existing law on leasehold land agreements.

A revision of the notices which have been given.

The consolidation of the property rights of the old and small leaseholders.

The drafting of a new law on leasehold land agreements providing for:

Security of land tenure. Low leasehold rents, which shall be subject to revision. The prohibition of sub-leasing in all its forms overt or covert. Compensation for all useful and necessary land improvements carried out by the leaseholder and becoming effective before he gives up the tenancy. The possibility of purchasing the land after it has been held in lease and tilled for a certain time.

Co-operative efforts must be encouraged in agriculture, and also forms of joint tillage.

A policy of colonisation of peasant families with the necessary technical and financial assistance of the public authorities.

Standard regulations for the redemption of common land.

The abolition of the law providing for the return of the requisitioned lands of the aristocracy and the compensation of their owners.

IV

Spanish industry will be able to overcome the depression in which it finds itself only when the whole system of State protection is reorganised under the strict principle of co-ordinated subordination to the interests of the economic system.

The following measures are therefore necessary:

1. The promulgation of a law or a series of laws laying down the basis on which protection is granted to industry, including Customs duties, tax exemptions, methods of co-ordination, the regulation of markets, and all the other measures taken by the State in the interests of national production. The financial stability of industry must be encouraged in order to free it from the burden of speculation, which hampers its development and limits its profitability.

2. The creation of economic and technical research institutes with a view not only to providing the Government with the data it needs for its political leadership, but also to providing the employers with information to further their initiative more effectively.

3. The introduction of measures intended especially to protect small-scale industry and small-scale trade.

4. The encouragement of the production of the basic industries of Spain by a plan of public works, which will be referred to later, including town buildings and works for the improvement of village life. The prices of the necessary building materials must be fixed in advance in order to ensure the economic profitability of such works.

V

The Republicans regard public works not merely as the usual affair of the State, or as an incidental and imperfect method of combating unemployment, but also as a powerful means of guiding savings deposits into fruitful channels of progress and prosperity otherwise neglected by the employers.

1. Far-reaching plans for the erection of urban and rural dwelling houses, co-operative and municipal undertakings, harbours, irrigation works and land improvement schemes must be carried out.

2. In order to ensure the effective carrying out of these plans, legislative and administrative measures must be taken to control the usefulness of such works, and their effective administration, and to ensure that the private interests likely to benefit from them bear their fair share of the costs. The Republicans reject the unemployment support scheme demanded by the representatives of the workers. They are of the opinion that the measures they propose on behalf of agriculture and on behalf of industry, including the public works and, in short, the whole plan of national reconstruction, must fulfil not only their immediate aims, but at the same time result in the abolition of unemployment.

VI

The financial system and the banking system must be harnessed in the service of the reconstruction of the country, whereby, however, it must not be forgotten that such sensitive organisms as the credit system cannot be driven by violence in any particular direction or encouraged to function outside the normal field of profitability.

The Republican parties do not accept the proposals of the workers' parties for the nationalisation of the banks, but they are well aware that the banking system is in need of certain improvements if it is to perform the tasks which will fall to it in the work for the economic reconstruction of Spain. As examples of such measures we mention the following:

1 The Bank of Spain should be managed in such a fashion that it is able to perform its function of regulating the credit system in the best interests of our economic system, whereby it should lose its character as a competitor with the other banks, and liquidate its fixed assets.

2. The private banks must be subjected to regulations calculated to consolidate their solvency in accordance with those classic financial principles which proved their value once again in connection with the last crisis, and in the interests of their depositors, and the accumulation of the financial means necessary to carry out the policy of economic reconstruction.

3. The organisation of the savings banks must be improved in order that they can better fulfil their task of providing capital, and at the same time all necessary measures must be taken to protect the safety of private deposits, and to define the responsibilities of the founders and administrators of companies of all kinds.

In regard to the financial system, the undersigned parties have agreed on a reform of the taxation system with a view to securing greater elasticity and a more equitable distribution of the burdens of taxation, and to prevent the misuse of public credit.

1. The system of direct taxation, which has been held up in its normal development, must be thoroughly revised and reorganised on a progressive basis.

2. The system of indirect taxation must be revised and efforts made to co-ordinate the taxation on consumption with private expenditure.

3. The revenue department must be improved with a view to developing it into an effective instrument of the new taxation policy.

VII

In the view of the Republican parties the Republic must not let itself be guided by social or economic class interests, but must establish a regime of democratic freedom in the public interests and in the interest of social progress. However, precisely for this reason the duty of the Republic is to raise the moral and material conditions of the toilers to the highest level permitted by the general interests of production, without, however, making compensation for those sacrifices which are to be imposed in all social and economic privileges.

The Republican parties do not accept the principle of workers' control of production as demanded by the Socialist Party. On the other hand, they approve of:

1. The restoration of social legislation in all the purity of its principles, whereby the necessary measures must be taken to make all those clauses invalid which are contrary to the sense of justice, and the sanctions provided for must be examined with a view to securing the loyal observance of the social legislation.
2. The reorganisation of labour legislation from an independent standpoint not only in order that the interested parties will be conscious of the impartiality of its decisions, but in order that the requirements of the general interests of production shall in no case fail to receive the necessary consideration.
3. A stop must be put to the lowering of wages in the country districts, where they have become little more than starvation pittance. Minimum wages must be fixed in order that every toiler may lead a life worthy of a human being. The depression of wages must be declared a common crime, action against the perpetrators of which shall be taken by the Public Prosecutor.

Although the policy of economic reconstruction must necessarily lead to the abolition of unemployment, it is necessary that the struggle against unemployment should be organised better both technically and from an administrative standpoint. This must be done by creating public services for statistics, classification, labour provision and labour exchanges, and in particular welfare work for the unemployed youth, without neglecting the welfare and insurance institutions which must be exemplary and on a social basis as promised in the Constitution.

The Republicans must pay that attention to questions of public welfare, welfare work and public health worthy of a civilised people and without unduly counting the cost of such work. Under the guidance of the State they will amalgamate the various institutions which have been founded by private initiative, at the same time unifying their financial resources without violating the will of their founders.

VIII

The Republic must regard the education system as the indisputable task of the State with the obligation of giving all citizens the highest possible level of knowledge, and thereby the highest possible moral level, irrespective of their confessional views or their social class origin.

1. The Republicans will encourage the building of elementary schools at the same rate as in the first years of the Republic, these schools to have their own kitchens, cloak rooms, colonies and other supplementary equipment. In the interests of national culture, privately imparted education must be placed under public control like that which is exercised over the Government schools.
2. They will build those higher schools and vocational schools which are necessary to give all citizens this level of education where required.

3. They will so concentrate the high school system that it functions appropriately.

4. They will adopt the methods they deem necessary to make the middle and higher schools accessible to the working- class youth and to all students who show the necessary promise in their achievements.

The parties affiliated to the Left Bloc will ratify the laws concerning autonomy adopted by the legislative Cortes, and they will further develop the principles of autonomy laid down in the Constitution.

The international policy of the Spanish Republic must be in accordance with the principles and methods of the League of Nations.

Madrid, January 15, 1936.

Chronicle of Events

The struggle of the Spanish people against fascism actually commenced much earlier than July 18, 1936. It is a struggle which always broke out when fascism endeavoured to come forward and to impose its will. Here, however, we shall only record those actions of the anti-fascist struggle which have taken place since July 18, 1936. Events before this date are dealt with to a great extent in other articles of this number.

July 18, 1936: The rebellion, long prepared by the fascists and army leaders, broke out. Franco, afterwards to become the leader of the rebellion, went by aeroplane from the Canary Islands, where he was military commander, to Morocco, where Yagüe had commenced the insurrection. The Peninsula received the first news of the rebellion, at first confused, later more definite.

July 19: The Government broadcast the fact of the rebellion. The Ministerial Council, including Martínez Barrios, Marcelino Domingo, and Largo Caballero, met. It was resolved to disband the military units taking part in the rebel movement, and to discharge all troops participating in it. Dolores Ibarruri appealed to the people on behalf of the Communist Party, in a broadcast transmitted by the "Union Radio Madrid." The inspiring appeal from Comrade Pasionaria proved a real bugle call, rousing the whole people of Spain to the struggle against fascism. La Pasionaria stigmatised the insurgent army leaders, she appealed to the workers and peasants, to the Communists, Socialists, Anarchists, Republicans, and non-party workers, to gather in their party and trade union premises, to seize upon arms wherever they could find them and to use them in the defence of the liberties menaced by the army leaders and fascists. She closed her glowing address with the words: "El fascismo no pasará!" ("Fascism will not pass!") These were the words which later became the slogan of the whole Spanish people in their struggle against fascism, a slogan which rose to fame, and spread far beyond the frontiers of the country.

July 20: Early in the morning the storm on the Montana Barracks commenced, where the fascists, headed by General Fanjul, had barricaded themselves. The unarmed people hurled themselves against the fascists, and with the aid of the Storm Guards they took within a few hours the Montana Barracks, which represented a regular fortress. The military traitors were taken prisoner. Within a few more hours the people took the barracks of Carabanchel and Vicalvaro. In Madrid the rebellion was crushed.

Seville: *Queipo de Llano* proclaimed a state of emergency. The workers fought in the streets against the rebel general and against the Civil Guard, but were defeated in consequence of lack of arms. The fascists now established an unprecedented reign of terror in Seville.

July 21: In *Barcelona* the people won a complete victory after two days of street fighting, participated in by Republicans, Anarchists, Socialists, and Communists. The telephone headquarters and the Atarazanas Barracks were taken by storm, and General Goded, leader of the rebellion in Catalonia, and other army leaders, were arrested. News came from other parts of the Peninsula, from Bilbao, Malaga, Alicante, Badajoz, etc., that the rebellion had been crushed there. By means of the cruellest terrorism, the fascists seized power in the Castilian province, especially the provinces of Valladolid, Salamanca, Burgos, Avila and Segovia. Many thousands of workers were murdered in Salamanca. One of these victims was the Socialist deputy Andres y Manso.

The Generalidad in Catalonia Organised the militia. In Barcelona a number of reactionary newspapers were confiscated. Sanjuro was killed in an aeroplane crash, just as he was going from Portugal to Spain to take over the leadership of the rebellion.

July 23: The Republican troops penetrated into Toledo, ousting from their positions all the fascists and military academy trainees. Only the Alcazar remained in the hands of the rebels, and here the fascists, the Civil Governor, the academy trainees, and the Civil Guard, took refuge. The fascists took with them a large number of women and children as a protection.

The first groups of People's Militia left Barcelona in the direction of Saragossa. One of these columns was commanded by the Anarchist Durrutti, who fell later on the Madrid front, on November 22, 1936.

Eight hundred and eighty armed militiamen left Madrid for the Sierra. The commanders of these first militia groups were Colonel Mangada, Galan, Captain Sanchez (who fell in the Sierra a few days later) and a number of men who became subsequently the greatest leaders of the People's Army: Lister, Campesino, Modesto, etc....

July 24: Guadalajara was taken by the Republicans under the command of Mayor Ristori.

The President of the Republic broadcast an appeal to the Spanish people. Sentences of his speech were afterwards fully confirmed, for instance, his statement that those who have provoked this attack on the Republic do not know its people.

The trade unions issued instructions for work to be resumed.

July 25: The first attack on Madrid commenced on the Somosierra and Guadarrama fronts. Here the fascists had erected great fortifications during the time when Gil Robles was at the head of the Ministry of War. The People's Militia held up this first onslaught, thus keeping the fascists in check at this front.

The Republican forces reconquered *Albacete*.

In *Valencia*, too, a number of officers were preparing the rebellion, but the people kept watch with arms in hands, determined not to be taken by surprise. In Paterna, an attempt at rebellion was discovered and frustrated by Sergeant Fabra – and a number of soldiers, and the rebels were arrested. This gave the signal to the people to storm the barracks. Within a few hours the people were masters of the situation.

In *Madrid* and *Catalonia* the revolutionary parties and the trade unions confiscated the printing offices of the reactionary newspapers.

July 26: In Catalonia agreement was reached on the introduction of the 40-hour week and a 15 per cent, wage rise.

The Cesares Quiroga Government resigned and was replaced by the Giral Government, in which General Pozas was Minister of the Interior. The offensive was organised for the reconquest of a number of provinces where the rebels had triumphed in the first rush.

July 27: The militia and Republican troops took *San Sebastian*.

August 1: The first People's Front Government was formed in Catalonia, and representatives of the United Socialist Party entered it as ministers.

Numbers of Spaniards from abroad flocked into the country to fight on the side of the Republic.

The crews of the Republican Navy took their fascist commanders prisoner and declared themselves in favour of the Republic. The seamen of the cruiser Libertad were the first to rise against their fascist commanders.

August 9: The Republican forces took the Balearic Islands of Fomenta and Ibiza.

August 14: Pozoblanco fell into the hands of the Republicans. On the same day, a rebel column in Merida, marching against Badajoz, was shattered.

September 5: The Giral Government having resigned, a new government was formed under the presidency of Largo Caballero, with the participation of Socialists, Communists, and Republicans. The Communists entered a government of Spain for the first time, taking over two ministries in the new Cabinet, and placing these in the hands of Vicente Uribe and Jesus Hernandez.

September 9: *Major Rojo*, sent by the Government, went to the Alcazar of Toledo, in an attempt to convince the rebels taking refuge there of the futility of their resistance, or at least to induce them to set at liberty the women and children whom they had shut up with themselves. The fascists refused his proposals.

September 12: The writer *Garcia Lorca* was murdered in a small village in the Province of Granada.

September 19: The Alcazar of Toledo was blown up.

Details became known of crimes committed by the Legionaries in Badajoz, when they marched into this town in the middle of September under the command of Yagüe.

September 27: A new government was formed in Catalonia, including representatives of the C.N.T., which had hitherto refused to take part in any government organ.

October 2: Dissolution of the Central Committee of the Catalan militia. An important session of the Republican Parliament took place. The Chamber declared its confidence in the Government.

October 3: The Chamber approved the Statutes for the Basque country, granting it autonomy and the same rights as Catalonia.

October 4: The fascists commenced their bombardments of Madrid, afterwards to be repeated hundreds of times.

October 18: The population of Barcelona organised a great demonstration in honour of the seamen, of the *Zirianin*, the first ship to arrive in Spain since the military rebellion. The *Zirianin*, which arrived in Barcelona on October 15, brought with it the first proofs of solidarity of the great Russian people with the Spanish people fighting against fascism.

October 22: The C.P. held a conference, on the initiative of its General Secretary José Diaz, in the Monumental Cinema in Madrid. Although this is an enormous building, it was crowded out, and thousands of workers had to be turned away. Jose Diaz outlined at this meeting the attitude of the Communist Party towards the present situation in Spain, and laid special emphasis on the necessity of converting the People's Militia into a regular army, and of creating a war industry. He further stressed the dangerous position of Madrid, and demanded the immediate fortification of the Spanish capital.

October 23: A magnificent women's demonstration was held in Madrid under the chairmanship of Dolores Ibarruri (*Pasionaria*).

November 5: The Largo Caballero Government broadened its basis by the admission of four representatives of the C.N.T.

November 7: The fascists broke through the lines of the central front and reached the gates of Madrid. All Madrid rose to bar the way to fascism. November 4, 5 and 6, there were thousands of women's meetings in Madrid, and great women's demonstrations, putting forward the same slogan: "The men to the front, the women for the rearguard!" These meetings and demonstrations, organised by the Communist Party, contributed enormously to raise the fighting spirit of the population of Madrid, and therewith to creating that atmosphere of readiness for self-sacrifice and belief in victory which has gained the admiration of the whole world. On November 7, 1936, men, women and children rose as one, ready to bar the road to fascism with their bodies, ready to stop the advance of the fascists by force of arms, or by helping to erect barricades. Without the mass actions (meetings, demonstrations) preceding this day, it would have been difficult indeed to create such a morale. The 7th November, 1936, is undoubtedly the most important date of the whole struggle of the Spanish Republic. On this day the people of Madrid barricaded themselves behind the gates of their city, and fascism has been unable to penetrate a step further on this section of the fight.

This same day saw the arrival in Madrid of the first International Brigades, those anti-fascists from other countries who were destined to play so important a part in the struggle of the Spanish Republic, and who had come to Spain to defend its independence and with it their own freedom.

November 8: The Government moved to Valencia. In Madrid the Defence Junta was formed, consisting of representatives of all the forces of the People's Front, from the Republican Union to the Anarchists. The Madrid Defence Junta faced with courage and determination all the problems confronting the Spanish capital at this juncture. It proved capable of organising the armed defence against fascism, of shattering the "Fifth Column," the confederates of the fascists within the walls of the city, and of satisfying at the same time the needs of the million inhabitants. This Junta has played an extremely important role in the defence of Madrid, and the people of Madrid appreciate thoroughly the efforts and sacrifices of the Junta. Their award of honorary citizenship to General Miaja was one mark of this appreciation.

November 10: A demonstration in honour of the Soviet Union was held in Barcelona.

November 12: Durrutti fell at the Madrid front.

December 2: The Cortes met in Valencia

December 5: 400 fascists were arrested in Madrid in a house which was under the protection of the Finnish Consulate.

January 29, 1937: The Government decided to disband the people's militia and to form a regular army. The "Fifth Regiment," organised by the Communist Party, consisting of 70,000 fighters, resolved to enlist in the regular army.

February 10: Malaga fell into the hands of the fascists. A few days later a great demonstration in honour of the Government took place in Valencia, at which demands were advanced for the organisation of a people's army, the establishment of a uniform army command, the purging of the military commands, and a large number of measures creating favourable conditions for the final victory.

March 5: The Conference of the Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party commenced in Valencia. Jose Diaz, in a magnificent speech, laid down the viewpoint of the Party on the present situation, and summed it up in the "Eight Pre-conditions for Gaining the Victory in the War."

March 10: The fascists commenced a savage offensive on the Guadalajara front.

March 14: The Italian troops on the Guadalajara front beat a retreat. The people's army won a great victory on the Guadalajara front, scattering the Italian divisions and taking thousands of Italians prisoner. The International Brigades, especially the Garibaldi Battalion, played an important part in winning this great victory for the Republican People's Army.

Month of April: The fascists launched a frightful offensive in the Basque country, supported by enormous quantities of tanks and aeroplanes, and the forces sent to their assistance by Hitler and Mussolini. In the course of this month, the Italian and German air forces destroyed Durango and Guernica in the most barbaric manner. These monstrous crimes aroused indignation all over the world.

May 1: The rebel ship "Espatia" was sunk near Santander.

May 3: Franco agents, collaborating with the Trotskyists organised in the P.O.U.M., provoked a putsch in Catalonia. The P.O.U.M. elements, tolerated by the authorities, had developed a violent campaign against the People's Front, especially against the Communist Party, in order that they might carry out their criminal intention of stabbing the Republic in the back precisely at the moment of the violent fascist offensive against the Basque country. The P.O.U.M. called upon the masses to rise against the Government of the Republic. Only a very few "extremist" groups followed suit.

May 6: The putsch in Catalonia is liquidated.

May 16: Deadlock in the Largo Caballero Government crisis. The C.N.T. and the Caballero group in the U.G.T. objected to any Government not led by Largo Caballero, and in which he was not at the same time Minister of War.

May 18: The new Government was formed, under the leadership of Juan Negrin. The friends of Largo Caballero and the representatives of the C.N.T. remained outside of the Government.

June 5: Brutal bombardment of Almeria by German warships. The fascist pirates commenced action on their own initiative, and an Italian submarine sunk the ship "Ciudad de Barcelona."

June 24: Bilbao was evacuated, in view of the numerical inferiority of its fighting forces compared with the invaders, after a heroic resistance of over two months. The fascists seized the town.

June 29: A new Government was formed in Catalonia, including representatives of all the People's Front parties and four representatives of the C.N.T. Boch Gimpera was appointed Minister of Justice in this Government. The C.N.T. raised an objection against him.

June 30: The President of the Catalan Generalidad appointed a new government in Catalonia, containing representatives of all the People's Front parties, excluding, however, the C.N.T. on account of the objection raised by this organisation to the new Minister of Justice.

July 8: Republican offensive on the central front. The Republican forces took Brunete, Villanueva de la Canada, and Quijorna.

July 21: On the occasion of the first anniversary of the beginning of the war, the President of the Republic broadcast a speech. In this address Azana condemned the attitude adopted towards the Spanish Republic by certain democratic governments. He designated the "Non-Intervention Committee" as a farce, rendering intervention of the fascist Powers in Spain possible, and said that the best means of defence of the Spanish people in their struggle against fascism was "the half a million Spanish bayonets."

August 10: The Republican Government dissolved the Council of Aragonia led by the Anarchist Ascaso. This was a body of which it might be said that it refused to be under the control of the Central Government, and hindered the organisation of production and of the People's Army in this region.

August 25: The fascist lines were broken at Belchite.

August 31: Belchite fell into the hands of the Republicans. Between August 25 and 31 the Republican troops took a number “of villages, including Quinto, Codo, Puebla de Alborton, and Mediana.

August 31: The Italians invaded Santander.

October 2: The Cortes reopened.

October 23: After a brutal Italo-German offensive, in which the fascists employed an enormous number of aeroplanes, Gijon was taken by the fascists. With the fall of Gijon, the whole of Northern Spain is in the hands of invading fascism.

December 17: Beginning of the Republican offensive against Teruel. Important positions and a number of villages taken.

December 22: The Republican troops entered Teruel. The planning of this operation, and its complete realisation, aroused not only admiration abroad, but great comment at the technical progress of the People’s Army. The fascists, unable to resign themselves to the loss of Teruel, commenced a savage counterattack, bringing up tremendous reserves of troops and war material.

December 30: The fascist counter-attack reached the gates of Teruel. Here their offensive was repelled by the Republican troops. The Republican troops were here under the command of Major Lister, who was raised to Lieutenant-Colonel after this action.

February 21, 1938: The Republican troops, after withstanding the extremely violent counter-offensive of the fascists for two months, evacuated Teruel.

March 16: The Italian and German air forces bombarded Barcelona for three hours with the utmost brutality. On the 17th and 18th these Bombardments were repeated, destroying many houses, and killing about one thousand people and wounding over 1,500.

List and Explanation of Some Names and Abbreviations

C.E.D.A.

Confederacion Espanola de Derechas Autonomas (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right parties): Right coalition from reactionary Republicans to Monarchists under fascist leadership. Leader is Gil Robles. During the years 1933 to 1936, it was the chief organisation of the bankers and big landowners.

C.G.T.U.

Confederacion General de Trabajadores Unitaria (General Workers’ Union), arose as the result of the amalgamation of a number of small trade union organisations which were in favour of unity; in 1934 it united with the U.G.T.

C.N.T.

Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo (National Confederation of Labour), Trade Union Federation of an anarcho- syndicalist character.

F.A.I.

Federacion Anarquista Iberica (Iberian Anarchist Federation), political organisation of the Spanish and Portuguese Anarchists.

I.F.T.U.

International Federation of Trade Unions, the Amsterdam Trade Union International.

CARLISTS

Ultra-reactionary, clerical monarchists, followers since 1833 of line of Don Carlos, brother of Fernando VII, who contended to throne against Isabel II. The Carlists have their chief support in Navarra and have not abandoned their claims to the throne.

PHALANGISTS

Falanga Espanola, the fascist organisation founded by the son of Primo de Rivera on the model of Italian fascism. It came forward for the first time in the February elections of 1936, and suffered a heavy defeat. At present they constitute the political and military cadres of the rebel camp.

P.O.U.M.

Partido Obrero de Unification Marxista (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification), the Spanish section of the Trotskyists who are openly in the service of Franco.

REQUETES

Military formation of the Carlists, chiefly consists of inhabitants of Navarra.

TERCIO

Military designation of units of the Spanish Foreign Legion.

U.G.T.

Union General de Trabajadores (General Workers' Confederation), the class trade unions of the Spanish workers, founded by Socialists in 1888.

Click [here](#) to return to the index of archival material.