

HEROIC SPAIN



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MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL



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By ANDRE MARTY

FOR over a year now the people of Spain have been waging a struggle in defense of the independence of their country, for land and liberty, for bread, work and peace. For over a year Madrid has been holding out as the invincible citadel of anti-fascism. Meanwhile, in spite of the difficulties with supplies, in spite of bombs and bullets, the people of Madrid are fighting today with the same courage as during the terrible days of November, 1936.

Throughout the whole of Spain, among all sections of the population, there is an unparalleled spirit of self-abnegation and self-sacrifice which is keeping back the barbarous hordes of fascism.

In the face of such heroism (and in order to find anything to compare with it, we have to rise to the heights of the Paris Commune and the years 1917-19 in Russia), why is the outcome, that is to say, the crushing of the fascists, so long delayed? This question has been raised throughout the world by millions of factory workers, of working people generally who are following with anxiety and hope the great struggle that is taking place in Spain. They fully understand that "the liberation of Spain from the aggression of the fascist reactionaries is not the private affair of the Spanish people, but the common cause of all advanced and progressive mankind" (Stalin).

I. WHAT IS THE PRESENT SITUATION IN SPAIN?

At the end of April, there was a considerable improvement in the military situation as a whole. The month of February saw the fascists, who had taken Malaga, held back at Motril. But above all their great offensive against Jarama not only failed to cut Madrid off from Valencia, but resulted in a crushing defeat and seriously exhausted their best troops.

March brought the republican forces a great victory at Guadalajara, their first since the beginning of the war. The defeat of the Italian fascist divisions had such military and political consequences in Spain, such political consequences in Italy and throughout the whole world, that certain "well-intentioned" spirits from London and Paris, who refused to move a finger so long as the republican forces were being beaten, or when the women and children were being massacred, were immediately moved to talk about *mediation*, and to demand that an armistice be concluded. Then there was the difficult republican counter-offensive of March and April on the Southern front, the reoccupation of the mercury mines of Almaden, the success at Pozoblanco and the taking of the Cabeza monastery.

Everything goes to show that the months of March and April marked the beginning of a change in the entire military situation in favor of the republicans, the beginning of the passage of the initiative into their hands. The frenzied offensive of the fascists against Bilbao, despite the partial successes gained by them, has not changed the general situation.

Whence these favorable changes in the situation? The causes must be cleared up if we are to establish the methods and the line to be adopted to win as quickly as possible the war started by the reactionary and fascist rebels in Spain,

and their instigators, the German and Italian fascist invaders.

1. *The victories at Guadalajara, on the Madrid front and on the Southern front, are incontestably due to the appearance on the scene of the great republican people's army. They are due to the formation of an army built up on modern lines of numerous "columns," and the entry into this army of new forces of volunteers and recruits.*

The Guadalajara victory was a very difficult one from all points of view, and was won because the forces of the central front had been under the united command of General Miaja and his General Staff since the early days of November. Guadalajara could only happen because General Miaja as the President of the Committee for the Defense of Madrid, which embraced all parties, unions and anti-fascist organizations of the Madrid area, effectively coordinated all the forces, political, economic and moral.

The secret of the effective resistance and then of the victory on the Madrid front lies in the *united army, united command, and the concentration of all political, economic and moral forces to help the war.*

Certainly everything is not perfect on the central front; that is understood. Enormous efforts have yet to be made there in all spheres: military, industrial production, transport (roads and rolling stock), supplies, and the mobilization of the whole of the population. But those who saw Madrid in November could no longer recognize it in March.

One felt everywhere a desire for organization, for order, for the elimination of all the talk about revolution, in favor of achieving positive results. Therein lies the secret of the effective defense and later of the victorious counter-attack by the central army. And this decisive experience clearly shows the ways and means to be put into operation in all countries in order to obtain decisive victories.

2. *The new Spanish people's republican army, to a considerable degree, already constitutes a united political bloc.* The republican army is the armed People's Front; it is an army animated by a clear understanding of the causes of the war and the aims to be achieved. It is not a "non-political" army, to use the notorious lying formula which serves to keep armies in the service of the interests of the capitalist class; on the contrary, it is an army with a high level of political understanding, definitely aimed against fascism. It is an army which knows what it is fighting for, the aims and objects it expects to achieve.

This political unification of the army is due above all to the enormous work accomplished by the political commissars under the direction of Commissar General Alvarez del Vayo and his leading committee composed of representatives of all parties and trade union centers. It is they who on all the Spanish fronts have hammered out the people's army; it is they who ever since the first days of the fascist rebellion, as agitators and organizers, have become at one and the same time the men most loved by the soldiers. It is they who have sacrificed their lives and given their blood to cement the former isolated and undisciplined militia units into squads, sections, companies, battalions, brigades and divisions. It is they who have built up discipline by explaining incessantly to each fighter the aims and reasons of the great liberation struggle of the Spanish people. It is they who have been able to discover the best commanders, sons of the people; it is they who have advanced them to their posts, helped them during every hour of the battle and assisted in making them what they are today, namely, popular leaders, beloved and obeyed.

The presence of political commissars, commissars of the People's Front, in all the army units has been the effective and indispensable guarantee against betrayals by officers of

the former army who were undermining the forces of the militia during the months of August, September and October. The political commissars transformed the "columns" and militia battalions which met defeat during the whole of the summer of 1936 into brigades, divisions and army corps of a victorious army, the army of Madrid, of Guadalupe and the Southern front.

3. *The months of March and April saw the first real turn in the development of an active campaign of enlightenment and propaganda among the enemy troops and the people still under the bloody dictatorship of the rebels.* This policy originated in particular in the great speech delivered by Alvarez del Vayo, Commissar for War and Minister of Foreign Affairs, entitled "To the Spaniards in the Rebel Zone" (Valencia, April 14). This appeal, addressed to that section of the Spanish people who are groaning under the heel of Franco and the German and Italian invaders, has already brought forth fruits.

March and April saw the spectacle on all the fronts, for the first time, of squads, sections and even a whole company deserting fully armed from the ranks of the rebels to those of the republican army.

If these efforts are continued and extended, if more details and better arguments are given showing what lies behind the rebellion—the aims of German and Italian fascist intervention—and emphasizing what the Spanish republic has already given to the people, then a more extensive movement will develop.

4. *The development of international solidarity action was of tremendous support to the Spanish fighters and all the people of Spain and increased their faith in victory.* In the face of the open, cynical entry of the two big fascist states into the war against the Spanish people, in the face of the "unique kind of neutrality" displayed by the Euro-

pean democracies, the working class and people of Spain have strongly appreciated the effective, powerful aid afforded to them by the international proletariat, by the peoples of all countries and above all by the proletariat and peoples of the Soviet Union.

The shouts of "Long live Russia," which greet the stranger, whoever he may be, in the most outlying villages of the republican zone, clearly and concisely indicate how great is the affection of the working people of Spain for the great Soviet Union, how much they appreciate the tremendous political and moral aid it has given them, and its supplies of food and medicines. The Spanish people have also been inexpressibly moved by the action of the thousands of volunteers who have come from all countries to fight by their side against fascism. More than ever before, the Spanish people are in need of this international aid which in all its many forms—political, moral and material—represents one of the most important conditions for victory.

How, then, can we fail to be indignant at the fact that many of the leaders of the Second International, who play a decisive role in determining its policy, take their stand against uniting the efforts of the working class of all countries in aid of the Spanish people, against such unity as would make this aid a thousand times more powerful? How, for example, can we fail to be indignant at Adler, Secretary of the Second International, who will not understand that

" . . . the achievement of united action by the international proletariat against the common enemy, fascism, the mortal enemy of all mankind, is the fundamental and urgent task of working class organizations throughout the world; it is the supreme demand of the present moment." (Dimitroff.)

II. THE EXISTING DIFFICULTIES

And yet, in spite of the lessons of the experience of ten months of warfare, the situation became difficult, at times even critical, at the end of April and in May. Why?

Because instead of creating, developing and strengthening the factors which would ensure victory, too little and, at times, nothing at all, was done in this direction by the Minister of War.

Here are some examples. The great battle of Jarama was a great setback for the fascists; not only did they fail to cut off the road to Valencia; not only was their offensive checked, but they suffered greater losses than any they had sustained since the beginning of the war. But this setback could have been made a complete disaster for them if there had been fresh republican troops in the vicinity ready to undertake a counter-attack. *But there were no such reserves.* They did not exist.

Guadalajara was a very heavy defeat for the Spanish and Italian fascists. It could have been made a disaster for them, had the republican divisions been relieved by bringing in fresh divisions. This was impossible; *there were no reserves.*

The Spanish people understand the need for building up reserves. But they are only being built up extremely slowly. Why? For one thing because over entire areas of the country, in Catalonia for example, the Trotskyites (including the P.O.U.M.), numerous Anarchist leaders and organizations, for five months refused to apply the decree for the general mobilization of the five classes, renewed in February, and because Largo Caballero, President of the Council and Minister of War, did nothing to enforce its application. In addition, regional military authorities made the absence of barracks for the recruits a pretext for sending them home,

and the Minister of War did not intervene at all. Finally, in entire regions like Catalonia, the republican army is not yet organized as it is in the rest of Spain; on the Aragon front the armed forces are still divided up according to parties and trade union organizations. This is what led to the disasters suffered in August, September and October in the valley of the Tagus.

In his speech in Albacete on February 14, 1937, Citizen Martinez Barrio, President of the Chamber of Deputies, declared that the republic must demand of its military leaders that they "*enter into marriage with victory.*" This was the formula of the Great French Revolution in 1792-93. In spite of this, one great military chief, referred to in the press, and rightly so, as "the organizer of all the defeats," was able to remain for months at his post in the high command, and was not removed, except to have conferred upon him an equally important post.

No enquiry, no penalty followed the loss of Malaga, although everyone in Spain knew that this very important town could and should have been victoriously defended.

Yet it has been proven that this highly important strategic center was taken only thanks to the treachery of the Malaga General Staff and to the incapacity of the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Cabrera. An initial order for a "strategic retreat" of fifteen kilometers permitted the enemy to occupy excellent positions on the mountain slopes, from which they rained artillery fire on the new republican positions. The militia battalions were withdrawn without order or plan to their new positions, which were so placed that the republican battalions could not concentrate their forces for the defense of the city. No fortifications had actually been erected and, despite the magnificent heroism of the militiamen, the city was taken after a series of orders and counter-orders which in effect turned the city over to the fascists.

The great victory sung by Mussolini had its origin only in the treachery of the local army staff and the incapacity of the Chief of Staff, Cabrera. The very day after the fall of Malaga, he declared that "strategically the loss of Malaga is of no importance, since it reduces our front." (!)

One of the vital conditions for success is to purge the command of all those who nourish any sympathies in their hearts for the fascist enemies of the people, and who prove it by being incapable of fighting the enemy and defeating them. In spite of a big press campaign and of the acceptance in principle of this fact, no purging of the command was undertaken, because certain sectarian interests were put above the interests of the People's Front, above the interests of the victory over fascism.

Who can deny that an essential condition for speedy victory is the security of the rear, the clearing out of it of all suspicious elements, provocateurs and spies? Not only was this measure not adopted, but no sooner, for example, did Gasolla, member of the Madrid Defense Committee, arrest a gang of spies and provocateurs, and the governor of Murcia proceed to undertake a serious drive against the fascists infesting the region, then the Anarchist and Trotskyist press launched a most violent campaign against these two men because they happened to be Communists.

The Minister of the Interior tolerated in a way that could not be understood the violent deeds of certain organizations (Trotskyists, uncontrollables, and certain Anarchist groups). For these groups, the revolution meant to seize a village, make life in it impossible for the peasants and, under the pretext of "accomplishing things," to "abolish money" and thereby seize without payment the harvest and the land. When agents of the Fifth Column were arrested by functionaries of the secret police, they went into prison one day by one door and left it the next day by the other.

This was the work of the Minister of the Interior, Galarza.

It is absolutely clear that the extremely strict blockade of Spain that followed on the application of the decisions of the London Non-Intervention Committee demands that an exceptional effort be made by the republican government rapidly to develop and unite the whole of the war industry. However, the output of munitions is too low, because each union wishes to run a factory or enterprise itself, etc., etc.

Why is such a situation possible?

Because in certain of the trade union organizations and in the mind of the former Minister of War himself, the victory at Guadalajara, the victorious advance of the republican troops on the Southern front, created the false impression of the situation, according to which all obstacles and difficulties have been overcome and surmounted.

These organizations and these people who were influenced by the first important, though not decisive, victories of the republican army have forgotten *that it is necessary now more than ever before to concentrate all forces against the chief enemy, against fascism*; that it is necessary now more than ever before to concentrate all forces in order *to win the war*. In forgetting this, these organizations, or rather certain elements in these organizations, and certain members of the government, influenced by the enemies of the united front, have engaged in a most violent attack against the supporters of unity who have built up the People's Front in Spain and whose forces are growing every day; and above all have undertaken a violent attack against the Communist Party. Here are a few examples.

The commissars constitute the veritable backbone, the heart and soul of the republican army. But Caballero, Minister of War, issued an unexpected circular restricting the powers of the political commissars and subjecting their nomination to strict rules, leaving the final decision to the

Minister of War. The circular was an attempt to transform the appointment of the political commissars, these energetic, active and heroic men, into a simple bureaucratic business, to deprive them of all autonomy and initiative of their own and to place them entirely at the disposal of the Minister of War.

The Madrid Defense Committee, under the presidency of General Miaja, showed how it was possible to carry on successful defense and then to pass on to the counter-attack. Instead of being given assistance in correcting shortcomings, and, above all, instead of being imitated throughout the Spanish republic, it was suddenly dissolved on April 24 and replaced by the Municipal Council, which is far from expressing the strength of the different working class and democratic organizations of Madrid, and in particular the role and influence of the Communist Party. At a time when it is indispensable in all besieged towns like Madrid for the leadership to be thoroughly concentrated, the former President of the Council separated the two authorities, the military (General Miaja) and the civil (the Municipal Council) and thus very considerably weakened the defense of the town. In a word, for certain factions of the parties and organizations, for certain members of the former government, the enemy now is no longer fascism, but Communism. And it has to be admitted that the development of this violent offensive against unity coincided with the arrival in Spain of certain leaders of the Second International, and in particular of Citizen Fritz Adler, secretary of the Second International. This so-called working class leader not only remains a violent enemy of the united front, but is now striving to smash the united front, to smash the united organizations of the people and of the Spanish working class.

The delegation of the Socialist Workers' Party of Spain

and of the U.G.T. (trade union center of which Largo Caballero is the president) to the London Conference of the Second International and the Amsterdam International left the conference profoundly disappointed at not having succeeded in obtaining united action to aid Spain on an international scale. Citizen Fritz Adler responded to their appeals not only by not assisting the development of the united front, but by coming to Spain to justify and to try to apply the criminal anti-unity policy of Citrine and his like, agents of the British Conservatives. For it was Fritz Adler indeed who wrote the following on March 21, 1937, in the *Adelante*, the Socialist newspaper published in Valencia:

"Many among you Spanish comrades have a false idea of the situation in England. The Socialist and trade union organizations of England are completely on the side of the Spanish working class. Many think that these organizations can completely change the political situation in the country; this is not so, for this policy cannot be modified until there has been a complete change in the government."

As though by accident, the same number of the *Adelante* published three violent articles against the Communist Party! Fascism was forgotten!

By this abominable splitting work which Fritz Adler and his like are trying to achieve in Spain, they once more emphasize the justice of the words of Comrade Dimitroff that "as far as these leaders are concerned, the chief enemy is not fascism, but Communism. . . . The chief enemy is not Franco, but Dolores Ibarruri, heroine of the Spanish people."

III. THE BARCELONA PUTSCH

In Catalonia the working class, the whole of the people, are animated with a profound and irrepressible hatred of

capitalist oppression, against semi-feudal oppression in the countryside. These people who have been so oppressed, these workers who have been martyred during the course of sixty years, are imbued with a splendid heroism. Unfortunately, under the influence of Anarchist sectarianism, of which it has always been the center, Catalonia is now that part of Spain where the working class and the people are more divided than anywhere else. Three big organizations play a very important political role there: the Left Republican Party, which always obtains the vast majority of votes during elections and is closely connected with the Sharecroppers' Union, is the party of the republican bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie; the P.S.U.C. (United Socialist Party of Catalonia), which includes four small proletarian or popular parties, is affiliated to the Communist International and has influence over the U.G.T. of Catalonia, was formed after the fascist rebellion; and lastly the C.N.T. (anarcho-syndicalist trade union center), which is closely connected with the F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation).

Besides these three chief organizations, there are other organizations in Catalonia which are and remain violently hostile to the People's Front and unity. Since the fascist rebellion at the end of July, 1936, all the suspicious elements in Barcelona have naturally declared themselves members of some organization or another so as to protect themselves, to procure arms and to maintain them. Barcelona swarms with fascist spies. During the imperialist war one of the main centers of the Intelligence Service of the German General Staff was installed there. It is quite natural that Barcelona is therefore one of the chief operating centers of the Gestapo in the Mediterranean, and of the Italian fascist secret police as well. That is one of the reasons why Barcelona is the strongest hotbed of demoralization existing in Spain, is one of the rallying centers of hostile elements.

The Trotskyist P.O.U.M., led by Nin and his collaborators, was the organization which grouped around itself all the criminal elements and provocateurs, and at the same time brought influence to bear upon what are known as the uncontrollables, upon a number of Anarchist organizations and above all upon the organization of the Anarchist youth.

The decree requisitioning all arms and unifying all the forces of the republican army was made on October 12. It was renewed on March 27, and immediately brought about the resignation of the Catalonian defense delegate (Anarchist), who had refused to apply the mobilization decree issued in Valencia, and caused one of the crises of the Catalonian government. Unfortunately, Largo Caballero, Minister of War, accepted the fact that his decree had not been applied in practice.

At the end of April, at the time of the very powerful fascist attack on Bilbao, effective aid could have been extended to Biscay by the action of the Catalonian forces at Teruel and on the Aragon front. To this end, what was then required was the application of the decree for the requisition of arms and the establishment of a united regular army. Immediately it began to be applied, the anarchy-loving youth, uncontrollable elements, and overt and covert Trotskyists, in obedience to the Trotskyist slogans which had been advocated, propagated and discussed for several months by the P.O.U.M., replied by undertaking an armed putsch.

The launching of this putsch was facilitated by the attitude adopted by certain members of the late government whose heads had been turned by the first military successes; they permitted a violent discussion to be started in the newspapers and inside the organizations of the People's Front, with the result that anti-fascist unity was weakened. The Trotskyists then immediately began their attack. The

following is what the P.O.U.M. wrote in its appeal for May Day, published in the *Bataille*:

"It is two years already since the working masses awoke. Day and night the workers in the factories and mills are in anxiety about the outcome of the revolution which is endangered by the reformist policy. We will continue to be vigilant for we cannot tolerate the policy of the central government and the government of Catalonia, a policy directed against the working class, against the revolution, and towards the return to power of the bourgeoisie, a policy which has brought July 19 to ruin. . . . The government of Valencia, like the government of Catalonia, has created conditions which are weakening the working class movement and aim at crushing the proletariat."

The situation is clear. What order could Franco, or more exactly Hitler, have given his agents in republican Spain with a view to paralyzing the republican troops, the war industry and the whole life of the country? It could have been no other than this:

"Do everything possible to introduce schisms, to reduce confidence in the government, to effect acts of sabotage, to engage in assassination, and if possible in putsches, try all possible means to weaken the armed forces of the republic and the war industry."

"Do everything possible to divide the united forces of the republic, of the People's Front." The whole of the campaign conducted by the Trotskyists in Spain since July, 1936, aimed at dividing, disintegrating the rear, at weakening the whole of the anti-fascist struggle. The flight abroad of a number of Trotskyist "leaders" is yet another sign of their guilt.

To refuse to provide the front with rifles, to steal and hide machine guns and armored cars in Barcelona, are tantamount to disarming the men fighting at the front, to stabbing them in the back, to murdering them. To start an armed rebellion in the biggest proletarian and industrial

town of Spain, in the biggest port of Spain, is, quite obviously, to sabotage the arrival of foodstuffs and provisions, to sabotage the making of arms and munitions; it is the very best service they could possibly render to Franco.

It is for this reason that our Party has demanded over and over again that the most energetic and implacable measures be adopted against the Trotskyists, agents of Franco in Spain, and above all in Catalonia.

What has been their attitude during the last three years?

During the events in Asturias (October, 1934) the Communist International invited the Second International to conduct joint action in aid of the Spanish people in their struggle against reaction. Immediately the P.O.U.M. conducted a campaign of unprecedented violence, declaring that instead of united action, a Fourth International ought to be established in place of the Third and Second Internationals; in a word, it replied to the appeal for unity by engineering a split at a time when the guns of the legionnaires were shooting down the workers!

After October, 1934, thanks to the campaign for unity waged particularly by the Communist Party, the big unity campaign of the two trade union centers, the U.G.T. (General Workers' Union) and the C.N.T. (National Confederation of Labor), began to develop. The Communist Party, which was the ideological leader of a trade union organization, the C.G.T.U., immediately dissolved it; its members were invited to join the U.G.T. The P.O.U.M. responded by creating the Trade Union Federation of Working Class Unity in Catalonia "to prevent the trade unions from falling into reformist hands," in other words, another maneuver to divide the movement in reply to the appeal for all the workers to join a united U.G.T., capable of barring the way against fascism and acting as a powerful working class force in the struggle for bread and liberty.

Immediately following the events in Asturias, a great unity campaign developed among the youth, especially the Communist and Socialist youth. Immediately the Trotskyists violently attacked this campaign. They hurled insults at the leaders of the Communist and Socialist youth; at the same time they set about the establishment of a new organization, the so-called Iberian Communist Youth. Once again attempts at splitting in opposition to the drive for unity, and this in a period of reaction.

When a big campaign for the People's Front was launched at the end of 1935 and the beginning of 1936, the Trotskyists violently protested against it, asserting that the workers would lose their revolutionary outlook in such a bloc and would find themselves under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. At a time when all the democratic and progressive forces of Spain were entering the People's Front and preparing for the election victory of February 16, 1936, at a time when the Anarchists themselves were asking their adherents to vote for the People's Front, in view of the struggle to be conducted against fascism, the Trotskyists were conducting the most violent splitting campaign to divide the ranks of the People's Front.

The fascist rebellion of July, 1936, came. At that time the slogan of the day was defense of the democratic republic, the only slogan capable of rallying all the anti-fascist forces, the only one capable of creating the conditions necessary for a struggle for the real liberation of the proletariat and all the people of Spain. The reply of the Trotskyists to this was to demand the immediate establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a slogan calculated to smash the People's Front by separating the middle classes from the proletariat and depriving the latter of their allies, thereby facilitating German and Italian fascist intervention.

On the international field the slogan of the Trotskyists

for the immediate establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Spain could only serve to aggravate the lack of confidence of the European democracies in the Spanish republic, and consequently could only result in a further restriction of the already limited aid being rendered to Spain. Thus the slogans of the Trotskyists aimed at smashing the People's Front in Spain and restricting or altogether putting a stop to international solidarity.

Against the international brigades made up of Communists, Socialists and anti-fascists of all countries, who have come to defend the people of Spain, the Spanish Trotskyists make the following slanderous statement: "Anarchist comrades, do not trust the brigades of the Communist International fighting beside us to crush fascism. They are the army corps which the Communists of Catalonia and Spain will send against you, as they did during the Russian revolution against the Anarchists."

It was a criminal act of provocation designed to arouse the hatred of honest Anarchist workers against the international brigades engaged in rendering such great aid to the Spanish people. Only an agent of Franco could express himself in these terms.

To sum up, Trotskyism in Spain has been fighting against everything that signifies unity and the strengthening of the People's Front. It has fought and is still fighting against the formation of the regular army, the powerful armed expression of the Spanish people. The Trotskyists oppose it in the following terms: "We do not want a regular army because it would mean that we recognize militarism, it would mean imposing the same methods and forms as those of the previous army; we want only the revolutionary militia."

The Trotskyists thus give exact expression to the thoughts of the agents of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. They rally together and organize all the "uncontrollable" elements and

fascist provocateurs, and due to their "revolutionary" talk, they succeed in influencing the less conscious Anarchist workers.

Since the putsch—that is to say, the crime—has been accomplished, energetic measures must be adopted; the republicans, the rank-and-file Socialists, the Anarchists, the Communists insist upon this. It is demanded above all by those who have not had a single day's leave since the beginning of the battle for Madrid, who demand to be defended in the rear.

Thus, the Barcelona putsch has once more demonstrated the truth of Dimitroff's words that:

"What is needed is, while carrying on the struggle against fascism, to be absolutely merciless in dealing blows at its Trotskyist agents, who are a gang of spies, diversionists, terrorists and police provocateurs, in the service of German fascism and the Japanese militarists. The Trotskyist degenciates, on instructions from the fascist intelligence services, are carrying on subversive work against the Land of Socialism, are doing everything possible to deepen the split in the working class movement and to prevent its unity, and are striving to disintegrate the People's Front movement from within. Everywhere their actions are those of wreckers of the working class movement and disorganizers of the struggle of the masses of the people against fascism, International proletarian unity against fascism and war is unthinkable and impossible unless a struggle is carried on against the Trotskyist agents of fascism."

And the Barcelona events once more confirm the words of Comrade Stalin at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., held in March this year:

"Present-day Trotskyism is not a political trend in the working class, but a gang without principle, without ideals, of wreckers, diversionists, intelligence service agents, spies, murderers, a gang of sworn enemies of the working class, working in the pay of the intelligence services of foreign states." *

* Stalin, *Mastering Bolshevism*, p. 17, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 5 cents.

In order to understand how great are the services rendered by the Trotskyist bandits to the fascist interventionists, it will be enough to quote the *Temps*, organ of the big French bourgeoisie, of the Comite des Forges, dated May 9, 1937:

"It seems, on the other hand, that the appearance of the black banner in Catalonia has only served to facilitate the final alliance between Italy and Germany on the line to be followed in Spanish affairs, and on their common desire to continue in their efforts."

IV. THE CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT

The changes which have taken place in the government began with the resignation of Largo Caballero, the President of the Council, and Minister for War.

The Caballero government, formed at the end of August, 1936, had to play and did play an important and necessary role. It was the first government to unite all the forces of the People's Front, from the Communists to the moderate Republicans and Basque Catholic Nationalists. It was enlarged at the end of October by including the C.N.T. (the Anarcho-Syndicalist Trade Unions), thus uniting in its ranks all the anti-fascist forces. Its leader, Largo Caballero, played an important role in the work accomplished, but he failed to understand that new tactics and efforts were required for the new situation.

The month of March brought about an intensification of the blockade of Spain at the same time as the victory at Guadalajara. At this moment it needed the exertion of every effort in all spheres, military, industrial, economic and political, in order to deliver a decisive blow against fascism. All the parties and the majority of the members of the trade unions of the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. insisted upon the adoption of resolute, energetic and immediate measures.

Our Communist Party, which had grown considerably in prestige, influence and membership, also insisted upon this. Our Communist Party, all the slogans of which, issued since July, have been proved by experience to be correct, our Communist Party, thousands of members of which have fallen in the front line of battle under fascist machine-gun fire, and whose members working in the political, military and economic spheres are the pride of all the people, demanded this.

But the President of the Council and Minister for War did not understand that the relation of social forces inside the People's Front had completely changed. He paid heed rather to certain members of the Executive Committee of the U.G.T. who no longer represent the outlook of the trade unions and their members, for example, those in the Madrid region, in Catalonia, Asturias and Biscay. He would not pay heed to the voice of the workers, the soldiers and peasants. He did not adhere to the slogans of the February 14 demonstration which almost half a million demonstrators carried under the windows of his apartment. He did not see the new polarization of forces. And this breach between the demands of the workers and the people, on the one hand, and the leader of the government, on the other, forced him to resign.

There are several examples to show clearly that after having rendered good service to the anti-fascist cause, Largo Caballero was unable to understand the profound changes which have taken place among the people of Spain. For two months Catalonia refused to establish a regular army, which, had it been formed, would have immediately hindered and perhaps checked the formidable attack against Biscay.

For two months the Trotskyists and "uncontrollable" elements accumulated arms, including machine-guns and

tanks, in Barcelona, instead of sending them to the Aragon front, where they were so much needed. A head of the government, who is at the same time Minister for War, and permits of such practices without adopting any measures, thereby cuts himself off from the masses. A head of the government who, when the situation especially demands it, fails to raise the productivity of the factories to the maximum, while there is a working class ready to increase production threefold and fourfold, as shown by the Stakhanov shifts in Madrid, thereby cuts himself off from the masses. A head of the government and Minister of the Interior, who fail or do not want to perceive the open preparations for a counter-revolutionary putsch, thereby cut themselves off from the militant anti-fascist masses at the front and in the rear.

It is to be regretted that the government was forced to reorganize itself at such a decisive moment of the war. It is still more to be regretted that certain members of the government allowed themselves to be influenced by the "pilgrims" who were not to be seen in Spain at a time when it appeared that everything was lost. I am referring, primarily, to Fritz Adler, Secretary of the Second International.

The visit of Fritz Adler and some of his friends immediately let loose a violent polemic in the Spanish press against the united forces of the People's Front and first and foremost against our Communist Party of whose 240,000 members, 135,000 or more than half, are fighting at the front; these discussions favored the Barcelona putsch. Fritz Adler took the liberty of defending Sir Walter Citrine before the Spanish workers, by identifying him with the trade union organizations in Great Britain, just as though Sir Walter has anything in common with the miners, dockers, metal workers and sailors of Great Britain. The truth is that by coming to defend Sir Walter before the Spanish

workers, Fritz Adler came to defend the policy of the British Conservatives, which has the support of Sir Walter. It is a policy of strangling the Spanish republic, and has been in force ever since the first day of the rebellion, when the British government refused coal and oil to Spanish warships at Gibraltar, when it drove the republican fleet from Tangiers in order to permit Franco's troops to cross the straits. This policy has continued right up to the present day when it demands mediation each time the fascist rebels and the interventionist troops are defeated by the republican army.

This is the policy that Fritz Adler, who never allows an occasion to pass wherein to declare himself violently opposed to the People's Front, came to defend and operate in Spain. It is infinitely regrettable that certain leaders of the Spanish Socialist Party allowed themselves to be influenced by this man whose arrival in Spain coincided with the frantic attacks of the Trotskyists, aimed at dividing the People's Front and arousing a violent campaign against our Communist Party.

Especially at the present moment, the men fighting in Spain have no time for these "tourists at the front." There is room for everybody in the Spanish republican army, but only for the purpose of fighting against fascism, and not for sowing germs of dissension.

One can only regret the tenacity and obstinacy of a number of the leaders of the Second International who oppose the creation of an extensive united front, of unity of action which in Europe would result in a tremendous wave of aid for the Spanish republic and would overcome all resistance.

All working people understand that the victory of the people of Spain must be hastened on by every possible means, by breaking down the abominable policy of what amounts to sanctions against the legally constituted government (not a quarter of these sanctions have been applied

to Italy and Germany). They understand that all the forces of the working class need to be rallied to blockade the supplies and assistance arriving from all parts for the Spanish fascists, and to ensure aid to the great Spanish people in the shape of provisions, clothing, milk and medicaments of which they stand in such dire need, and to evacuate women and children en masse to places of safety away from the bombardments.

It is not behind the scenes in the government offices of Valencia, or in the ante-chambers of fictitious general staffs that service can be rendered to the Spanish republic.

The place for those who are not fighting in Spain is in their own country. There it is that they should bring about the united front, and arouse the masses.

Dimitroff, quite rightly, reminded us recently that the Seventh Congress of the Communist International declared:

"Joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations not only does not preclude, but on the contrary renders still more necessary, the serious and well-founded criticism of reformism, of Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and the patient exposition of the principles and program of Communism to the Social-Democratic workers."

Our Spanish brother Party was right, then, in criticizing the mistakes and shortcomings of the Largo Caballero government.

It is to be regretted that the attitude adopted by the former President of the Council and Minister for War and the former Minister of the Interior—an attitude contrary to the spirit of collective work—provoked the recent ministerial crisis because it refused to allow of any criticism whatsoever, criticism indispensable to the progress of the war, and leveled not only by the Communist ministers, but also by the Socialist and Republican ministers. But the criticism

will have a salutary effect if it leads to more collective work, more real achievement, more energy and activity.

V. FOR VICTORY OVER FASCISM

The Spanish people will be victorious. They will crush the rebels and traitors to the country, they will liberate themselves from the German and Italian fascist invaders.

1. The Spanish people will be victorious because our Communist Party has grown considerably in strength and prestige in the fire of the *struggle*, has actually become the most important factor in the victory of the revolution and of the war of national independence.

Our glorious brother Party has increased from 35,000 members in February, 1936, to 249,000 members today, of whom more than half (135,000) are at the front, supported by 50,000 members of the United Socialist Party of Catalonia and 12,000 members of the Communist Party of Biscay, and has proved the correctness of all its proposals and directions. The "eight conditions for victory" in particular, which have been posted on all the walls of Spain since December, form a remarkable charter which, if applied, would mean a decisive step forward in the direction of success.

The prestige and influence of the Communist Party are high in the U.G.T. and are growing strong in the C.N.T.; its influence is considerable in the countryside, and is tremendous in the army.

Its political leaders, ministers, commanders of army corps, divisions, brigades, and battalions; its commissars, its men fighting at the front, its administrators, all are modest, serious-minded working people whose loyalty is unshakable. They serve as examples in the training and molding of new fighters.

There is Jose Diaz, General Secretary, a Seville port

worker, today a deputy from Madrid. This veteran proletarian fighter, who scarcely received attention three years ago, but who is today consulted by the President of the Republic when a new Cabinet has to be formed, shows how great is the power represented by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain. This little worker, calm, reflective, collected in the moment of greatest danger, in those most tragic hours of September, October and November, 1936, is the real type of the Spanish Bolshevik.

There is our great Comrade La Pasionaria, the most popular person in all Spain, an almost legendary figure: "When she goes into the countryside, into a village or house, the people touch her to see if she is really made of flesh, or if she is imaginary," says Diaz. The flaming words of Pasionaria have become historic—her cry which brought 50,000 Paris workers to their feet with enthusiasm in September, 1936: "The Spanish people would rather die on their feet than live on their knees," or that phrase to the soldiers defending Madrid: "The Spanish women prefer to be widows of heroes than companions of slaves."

There is the mechanic Uribe, a veteran leader of the Party, today Minister of Agriculture, whose name is cherished in the countryside because his decree of October 7, 1936, has given the land to those who till it.

There is Hernandez, a worker, a house-painter, young, yet a veteran militant of the Party, today Minister of Public Education. He is one of the most brilliant orators of Spain and has given invaluable service to the anti-fascist cause.

There is Carton, the little worker, one of the most popular figures among the peasant masses of Estramadura. This deputy from Badajoz has never left them once since July 18, 1936. Carton, the commander of the 16th Brigade, on the

First of May, carrying out the directives of the Party, stormed the Cabeza Monastery, which was reputedly impregnable. Carton has become one of the best officers in the new Spanish people's army.

There is Comrade Checa, "the Party man," its organizational secretary, whose silent, vigilant, active work made possible the great growth of the powerful Communist Party. Checa—who causes people to wonder when he sleeps.

There is Comrade Mije, tireless fighter for trade union unity, who today is one of the five Commissar Generals of the entire Spanish army. Mije—is there a single front in Spain where the soldiers in the front lines do not know him?

There is Anton, secretary of the Madrid Provincial Committee of the Party, Commissar General of the armies of the Center, alongside the glorious General Miaja, and who, with the Provincial Committee of Madrid, has been one of the most powerful forces in the defense of the capital.

There is the entire bright constellation of military commanders, only yesterday workers, never having been soldiers, and who today, like the novice generals of the French Revolution, are holding in check the veterans of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini.

There is El Campesino, victorious defender of the Sierra de Guadalajara; Francisco Gallan, who comes from a glorious family of anti-fascist martyrs and fighters; Lister, a building worker, who commands a division on the Madrid front; Modesto, a quiet-mannered worker, who commands an army corps before Madrid. There are all these men who since July have not known a single day of rest; these men, models of firmness, of confidence, of boundless devotion to the cause of the people and the cause of the proletariat; there are all these heroic men and women, who, by their example, have won to our Party its hundreds of thousands of new members and new sympathizers.

Thanks to its activity and influence, the anti-fascist movement is growing broader and deeper with every day that passes. Our Communist Party is witnessing its first successes in the campaign to unite the two parties, Socialist and Communist. It continues to work incessantly for the fusion of the two great trade union centers, the U.G.T. and C.N.T. Finally it is the essential element in the rallying together of all the forces of the working class and all working people, of all democratic and progressive forces in the People's Front. We are proud that thanks to the activity of the Communist Party such important results have attended the Spanish people in their struggle against fascism.

2. The Spanish people will be victorious because a year of warfare has created a *new Spain*. In blood and suffering there has been born a democratic, parliamentary republic of a *new type*, quite different from the French, Belgian and British democracies.

In Spain, the material basis of reaction and fascism has already been severely undermined and partially *destroyed*. And it is on these ruins that true democracy will grow up. The Communist Party of Spain constantly reminds all those who accuse it of forgetting the revolution, of just this point. What forms the basis of this new type of democracy which ensures victory?

A. The land is in the hands of the poor peasants and agricultural workers. The decree of October 7, 1936, "*expropriated* without compensation and in favor of the state all lands and agricultural enterprises which on July 18, 1936, belonged to persons who directly or indirectly participated in the insurrectionary movement against the republic." Thus there are no longer any big landed proprietors in the Spanish republic! Therefore, hundreds of thousands of people, exploited down the ages by the feudal lords and big landowners, are today the masters of the soil they cultivate!

B. The enterprises abandoned by the reactionaries and fascists, are, in the majority of cases, in the hands of the state and all are under the control of the workers. The proletarians are masters of production and are responsible for it.

C. The banks, the financial wealth of the country, are controlled by the state and the workers' organizations.

D. *Arms are in the hands of the people.* In republican Spain, there is no longer a caste army. The working people have seized arms and are using them to defend their rights, liberties and well-being. The people's army, with its commanders who have arisen from the people and have proved their loyalty to the people with their blood, with its heroic commissars, is firmly anti-fascist; it is also a politically united new type of army.

E. The economic and political power of the church has disappeared. The priests and bishops, who took up arms against the people and are in the ranks of the rebels, have been dispossessed of the enormous wealth they had accumulated.

F. The republican government is the expression of the people's will. It is formed of all the parties in the People's Front, from the Communists to the Basque Catholics. The recent ministerial crisis partly originated in the healthy reaction of the vast majority of the members of the government against certain elements who tried to operate individually, above any control, and in an impermissibly dictatorial manner. In a short time, the Cortes will be called upon to sanction the alteration in the composition, that is to say, the policy, of the government.

Is there not the basis here for a revolution which will rid Spain of its semi-feudalism and its age-old obscurantism? Comrade Jose Diaz was quite right in reminding us on May 9 at Valencia: "*It is impossible to separate the revolution*

from the war. It is by making war against the fascists that this deep social transformation can develop and deepen."

G. *The Spanish people will be victorious because on this solid basis the anti-fascist movement brings about the concentration and unification of all the forces of the people.*

When the Communist Party during the first days of the rebellion declared that the prime need was the defense of the democratic republic, many important Socialist leaders demanded, on the contrary, that a Socialist republic be immediately established, failing to understand that this would immediately smash the People's Front and lead to the victory of fascism. Today, thanks to the activities of the Communist Party, many of the leaders of the Socialist Party have changed their attitude and adopted the point of view of the Communist Party, which alone will make it possible, with victory and after it, to prepare the real march toward socialism.

The C.N.T. and the F.A.I. have recently declared that we must wait for the end of the war before trying to set up "*libertarian*" communism. In October they raised the question of an insurrection to set up a dictatorial Council of Defense. Then they demanded a "revolutionary alliance" between the C.N.T. and U.G.T., with a view to setting up a "government on trade union lines," charged with the immediate accomplishment of the social revolution. What a tremendous change has taken place in these organizations!

At the beginning of the fascist rebellion, the republicans, while declaring it impossible to return to a republic of the April 14 type, nevertheless in the majority of cases were against the acceptance of a social program which could provide the republic with a new type of economic and political content. Today they are loyally supporting the viewpoint of the Communist Party and are helping to put it into practice.

To have successfully united these different trends, including the Basque Catholics, on the basis of the anti-fascist People's Front, to have succeeded in securing the acceptance of the principle of the creation of a united people's army, and the operation in Spain of a united army command, nationalization of the factories, and at the same time respect for the small and middle property-holders in town and country, are no small success. A year ago nobody would have believed that such a large anti-fascist and national force could be possible.

True, the difficulties facing the new government are tremendous. The most serious lies in a certain lack of trust on the part of the majority of the Executive Committee of the U.G.T. and of organizations of the C.N.T. towards the new government. It seems, however, that this resistance will not persist for long.

For example, the U.G.T. cannot forget that it has considerably increased in membership since July, 1936, and that three-quarters at least of the unions affiliated to it are strong supporters of unity and the People's Front. But the central councils of the trade unions and the Executive Committee of the U.G.T. have not been re-elected since October, 1934. They do not, thus, represent the real feelings of the members which, moreover, vary in the different regions. For example, there is not a single Communist on the Executive Committee of the U.G.T., although the U.G.T. trade unions in Madrid and Catalonia are Communist in the majority of cases.

Moreover, the resolutions congratulating the new government adopted by the U.G.T. organizations in Madrid, Catalonia, Biscay and Asturias, are sufficient proof that the Executive Committee in Valencia does not reflect the opinion of the members.

On the other hand, faced with the actual realities of the

war, the mass of the C.N.T. members have also evolved very considerably in the sense of unity and anti-fascism. For this reason many of the leaders, of whom Vasquez is the secretary of the National Committee, exerted all their efforts to put a stop to the Trotskyist-fascist putsch in Barcelona which has done so much harm to the Spanish people. All this leads us to hope that in a short time the two trade union centers will be, if not directly represented in the government, once more vigorous supporters of it in the anti-fascist struggle.

The Spanish Communist Party demands of the new government that the serious mistakes committed in the past be repaired as quickly as possible. It demands:

The final entry of the Catalonian armed forces into the Spanish people's army under a united command;

The purging of the army command of all those who have shown themselves to be inefficient;

The elimination of the chaos which reigns in industry, now entirely nationalized;

The purging of the rear of people belonging to the "Fifth Column," of spies, provocateurs, defeatists, *i.e.*, primarily the open and masked Trotskyist groups of the P.O.U.M. type. This requires that an unhesitating and energetic policy be pursued as is demanded by the people. All this must be done in order to win the war as quickly as possible.

It is true that the situation in Spain is still grave. The fascist enemy is strongly armed; in spite of the control, they have the support of two big fascist states, while the European democracies, and primarily England and France, against the will of the people of these countries, are helping to stifle the Spanish people.

The prohibition against the purchase of arms and ammunition by the legally constituted government of Spain, the

prohibition against the entry of international volunteers into Spain, the "control" which is really a blockade of the Spanish republic, while the warships and airplanes of the German and Italian fascists continue to supply Franco with all the aid he requires—all these "neutrality" measures are, in reality, only of advantage to the fascists.

International aid should not only be continued, but be considerably increased. It is necessary for foodstuffs, medicaments, ambulances, medical accessories, doctors and surgeons to go in a constant stream to Spain. The women and children must be saved by withdrawing them from the burning soil of Spain, bombarded as it is on all sides. The republican government must have the same rights as the other legal governments. Further, the action taken by the working people of the great Soviet Union must without delay be complemented by action on the part of the united front of the workers of all countries, of all those who love liberty. Thus, the sooner this is achieved and amplified, the sooner will the barriers erected by the reactionary leaders of the Second International be broken down; the stronger will this international aid be, the more will it consolidate and weld together the People's Front in Spain, the anti-fascist unity of the workers and peoples of the peninsula, and the sooner will it lead to victory.

THE CHARACTER OF THE NEGRIN GOVERNMENT

"A government is judged by its deeds, not by its words." Jesus Hernandez, Minister of Public Education, made this his starting point when on May 28 he asked the working people of Spain to express their opinion as regards the Negrin government as well as the policy of our Communist Party. This government has been in existence only a few days, but it has already reorganized and concentrated the army high command. It has begun to incorporate the Catalanian forces in this army; in the heat of the struggle it is carrying out similar work in Biscay and Asturias, where the militia and armed units of parties and trade unions still exist. It has taken the first steps towards purging the country of spies, agent provocateurs, "uncontrollable elements," and has already suppressed the Trotskyist newspaper, *La Bataille*, which led the counter-revolutionary putsch in Barcelona. The generals who were responsible for the loss of Malaga, whether through treachery or inefficiency, are to be tried.

This is a good beginning. The enthusiastic approval of tremendous masses of working people and soldiers is a good indication that the Negrin government represents the will of the people, the will so clearly expressed in the great demonstrations in Valencia on February 14, and which the Caballero-Galarza group refused to satisfy.

The vote of the National Committee of the U.G.T., expressing its confidence in the new government in opposition to the contrary gesture of its Executive Committee, throws light upon the recent ministerial crisis. It should not be forgotten that the origin of this crisis was the opposition

toward the Cabellero-Galarza group of all the Communist, Socialist and republican ministers, following on as the *Temps* declared, the interference of Del Vayo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, who on his return from Paris insisted on the need for the adoption of measures to prevent a repetition of acts like the Barcelona putsch, the repercussions of which were so grave abroad.

This group, as above explained, did not understand, nor wanted to understand, the profound changes effected during the last ten months among the masses of the workers and the people in general. This was because the main base of the Caballero group is a narrow section of trade union functionaries in the U.G.T., who being thoroughly bureaucratic did not and do not want to see the changes taking place among the workers and the masses of the people who are ardently desirous of doing everything possible to win the war.

Caballero and Galarza are adding to this "association of interests" of certain trade union functionaries, the revolutionary talk of the Trotskyists and certain Anarchist elements who have not been capable of anything better than terrorizing the small peasants and launching the Barcelona putsch instead of acting energetically at the front and helping the production of munitions in the rear.

Unprecedented passivity and inertia hidden behind revolutionary talk were the policy of this group which stood so aloof from the sentiments of the workers and toilers of Spain and Catalonia. To those who pretend that the Negrin government is "less revolutionary than the one which preceded it," our Party has already replied by pointing out what can be the only revolutionary way out in the conditions prevailing in Spain today. The way out is to form a strong people's army, well armed and skilled in military technique, a single general staff purged of traitors and in-

competents; it is to build up a big war industry and increase agricultural and industrial production; it is to ensure the security of the rear and the front against provocateurs and spies.

In short, the only revolutionary policy is to carry on the war, to win the war against the Spanish fascists and the German and Italian invaders. *Because to win the war is to win the revolution.* This revolutionary policy is that which the new Negrin government has begun to carry out, composed as it is of Socialists and Communists (the proletarian conscience of the government), together with the republicans, representing the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, and the delegates of the peoples of Catalonia and Biscay, who are also striving to liberate themselves from imperialist and fascist slavery.

Berlin and Rome are under no illusions. Hardly had the Negrin government been formed when all the brutality of the fascists broke over it with unprecedented violence. The air raids over Barcelona and Valencia were begun again. Madrid is being systematically and savagely bombarded while Almeria has been devastated by Hitler's warships. And Italian and German pirate submarines are sinking Spanish merchant ships, without either British democracy or French democracy raising a finger in protest.

Hitler and Mussolini are aware that Franco is going to lose; he has met with a setback in Biscay. He is again retreating on the Sierra de Guadarrama front. And so they are also doubling their violent efforts.

And it is for this reason that there should be still greater, still more persistent united action of all the working people. It is for this reason that each Communist Party must double its efforts to obtain united action on an international scale, the strongest trump-card which guarantees the rapid success of the Spanish people against fascism.

AFTER ALMERIA—THERE IS STILL TIME!

Guernica! A frightful massacre prepared in cold blood, with the machine-guns finishing off those who escape from the bombs. Guernica, a symbol of all the martyred cities and villages of Spain. Guernica, compared with which there can be no question that Nero, Attila and Genghis Khan were mere tyros. Guernica, which throughout the world has given rise to a cry of horror from all who work and all who think. Guernica, so horrible that even the criminals of the swastika themselves dare not justify it and can only claim: "It wasn't we, it was they!" Guernica, which came atrociously to remind those who had forgotten already the torrents of blood, the broken limbs, the gouged-out eyes, the minds driven to madness by the Black-Shirt and Nazi monsters.

Almeria! Another massacre? Yes, but even more yet. For Almeria is no longer war by German and Italian fascists concealed under the banner of Franco. Almeria—there a German fascist war fleet, flying the bloody swastika flag, rained its destructive shells upon a sleeping population.

The thunder of the big guns at Almeria is the sinister prelude to another avalanche like the one that never stopped and for more than four years drowned out the groans of twenty million wounded and dying.

Almeria is war!

There is not a worker, a toiling person, a single free spirit in all Europe who has not uttered that cry!

* * *

It has almost become a commonplace to repeat that the fate of the people of Europe and of the entire world is being decided in Spain. Who can deny today that if the attempted fascist putsch in Paris on February 6, 1934, had succeeded,

it would have changed the face of Europe? Who can maintain that the year of warfare in Spain is anything but an immense February 6, and that a victory of the savage and criminal rebel generals over the great and noble people of Spain would act as a marvelous springboard for a fierce offensive of all the forces of reaction in every European democracy?

But Franco is losing, in spite of all the aid in material and troops, in gold, in a violent campaign of lies. The conflicts among the fascists are growing more numerous. At the same time the popular, republican forces are being welded together, are developing in unified formations.

The Negrin government has already won its first victories. The Spanish people must win and will win. That is why Hitler and Mussolini are doing their utmost to intervene directly. That is why, after having brought down a French airplane, after having bombarded, seized or sunk French, British, Dutch, Swedish and Soviet merchant ships, the German battleships have bombarded Almeria, while the German and Italian submarines are sinking Spanish vessels.

Almeria is open and public intervention in Spain, cynically proclaimed by Mussolini, who continuously published in his newspapers the list of soldiers, commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the Italian army or the fascist militia (including General Alberto Luiz) killed in the battles on the Southern front and at Guadalajara. May the ostriches, even those who carry ministerial portfolios, bury their heads in the sand—that will not avert the disaster. Is not the vibrant appeal with which Jaures opened his speech at Lyon-Vaise on July 25, 1914, truer than ever today:

“Never have we been, never in the past forty years has Europe been in a more threatening and more tragic situation than this in which we find ourselves in this hour in which I have the responsibility of addressing you.”

How then, when the echo of the cannon of Almeria has hardly died down, can one fail to see the closeness of that stirring appeal of Jean Jaures to the appeal issued by Georgi Dimitroff:

"The fate of the Spanish people and the cause of world peace demand instantly the united action of all international working class organizations. The bombardment of Almeria is a serious lesson to all laboring people, whatever their political views and their organization. It is a serious warning against the continued disunity of the forces of the working class movement.

"Unity of action of the international proletariat must be realized, and will be realized!"

This appeal brought against the Communists, in France in particular, the same slander chorus in the same phrases which armed the hand of Jaures' assassin. The entire fascist and reactionary press is howling about "*the Comintern's call to war.*" That entire press of the "*thought—and paper-trusts,*" so independent—of Hitler—and so pure in its opinions, shouts about "*interference by a foreign party!*" Wretches! No, gentlemen valets of the Rothschilds and the Montagu Normans, the Morgans and the Krupps, the "foreign party" has never been any but that of the emigres of Coblentz and of Franco, of Wendel, Krupp, Putilov, and March.

Neither Dimitroff nor any other Communist has demanded of any democratic state that it give military aid to the people of Spain. What we proletarians and Communists demand is not war, but that the republican government of Spain shall not be treated by the democratic states worse—let us be modest—than the governments of assassins in Berlin and in Rome. What we do demand is that these states—in their own interest—stop applying to the noble and generous people of Spain and to the government it has freely chosen, the sanctions which they were not able to apply

to the jailers of the Italian people when they ravaged Ethiopia and blinded the populations of whole villages with their yperite gas sprayed from airplanes.

What we demand is that a halt be made to this horrible war waged by detachments of the German and Italian army, navy and air force, against all laws of mankind, which, each time the scale turns towards the republicans, rush new shipments of war materials and military specialists to the rebel camp. *If there had been no "control," there would have been no Almeria, as we Communists—and we alone—predicted. If the assassins continue to "control," their victims will include Barcelona and Valencia, before the turn comes of Marseilles, Brussels, Prague and Paris.*

Every new measure decided upon by the London "Non-Intervention" Committee is a new encouragement to the fascists to start the war in Europe. A simple summation of the most important facts of the past months will make this startlingly clear.

That is why Georgi Dimitroff, in the name of the Communist International, gave the support of his mighty voice to the appeal, on the morrow after Almeria, on the part of the Socialist and Communist Parties of Spain and the U.G.T., for united action of the toiling people of all countries. He took up the cry of anguish of Jean Jaures at Lyon-Vaise five days before his assassination:

"Be that as it may, citizens, and I say this with a kind of despair, there is only one chance for the maintenance of peace and the salvation of mankind in this moment when we are threatened by murder and savagery, and that is that the proletariat will assemble all its forces, its vast fraternity, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans, Italians, Russians, and that we call upon these thousands of men to unite so that the single beating of their hearts may drive away the horrible nightmare."

Certainly the international proletariat is stronger today and in a different way than it was in 1914. It already has

its own state, the great Soviet Union. To this state the world has frequently been indebted for the maintenance of peace. For almost a year its authoritative steps, which were designed to restrain the hand of the bandits of Berlin and Rome, have not received the support of the countries of bourgeois democracy. But today it is not enough to restrain; if Europe is to be saved from the catastrophe which threatens to overwhelm it, a halt must be called *at any cost* to the despicable treatment accorded to the people of Spain, of Catalonia, and of Euzkadi by the democratic states. *No intervention in Spain! International law!*—that is what we demand. For international law means the stopping of the blockade of republican Spain, it means the immediate withdrawal of the foreign fascist armies that have invaded Spain; it means the crushing of Franco in a few weeks by the new people's army of the republic, commanded by leaders and commissars who are sons of the people and unshakably loyal to their cause. It means that the war blaze will be stamped out by the heel of the victors of Guadalupe, Pozoblanco, the Sierra, by the invincible defenders of Madrid. *It means the re-establishment of peace in Spain and the guarantee of peace in Europe and throughout the world.* For, after this knockout blow, Hitler and Mussolini, forewarned, will have enough trouble with their workers and their oppressed people at home, and will be compelled to hold their peace.

The dockers of Bordeaux and Oran who refused to load the Nazi steamers understood this very well!



The working class of the entire world can force action such as this. It has the strength to do so, *provided that it is united.* "Parallel" action and "concordant" action are not united action. Let those who preach these forms speak about

them to the Spanish Socialist, Communist, Anarchist and republican fighters, to those French and Belgian Socialists and Communists, volunteers in the republican army who have just crossed the Sierra and are coming down upon the fortress of Avila. The fascist machine-gunners did not choose between them.

When they went into battle in "parallel" groups in August, September, and October, 1936, "everyone for himself," they were beaten. Today *they are united in joint action*; all retain their own ideas, but all fight as brothers against fascism. The result: victory is turning our way. Why is not what is being done by Socialists and Communists in Spain possible for Socialists and Communists of London, Prague and Stockholm? One of the great achievements of General Miaja, the victorious defender of Madrid, was to have understood in the dark days of November, 1936, that he could never stop the foe as he was stopped in Paris on February 9 and 12, 1934, except by the unity of all the parties and unions into a single anti-fascist force—the *Madrid Defense Committee*. And it is to the glory of our brother Party of Spain that it was the smith who forged that unity.

Has not the French General Confederation of Labor (C.G.T.) grown to enormous strength because of its unity? Are not Syndicalists, Socialists, Communists, republicans, non-party people, even Catholics—each retaining his own opinions—working in a fraternal manner and with success? Monsieur Renault—the lord of Billancourt motor works—knows something about this!

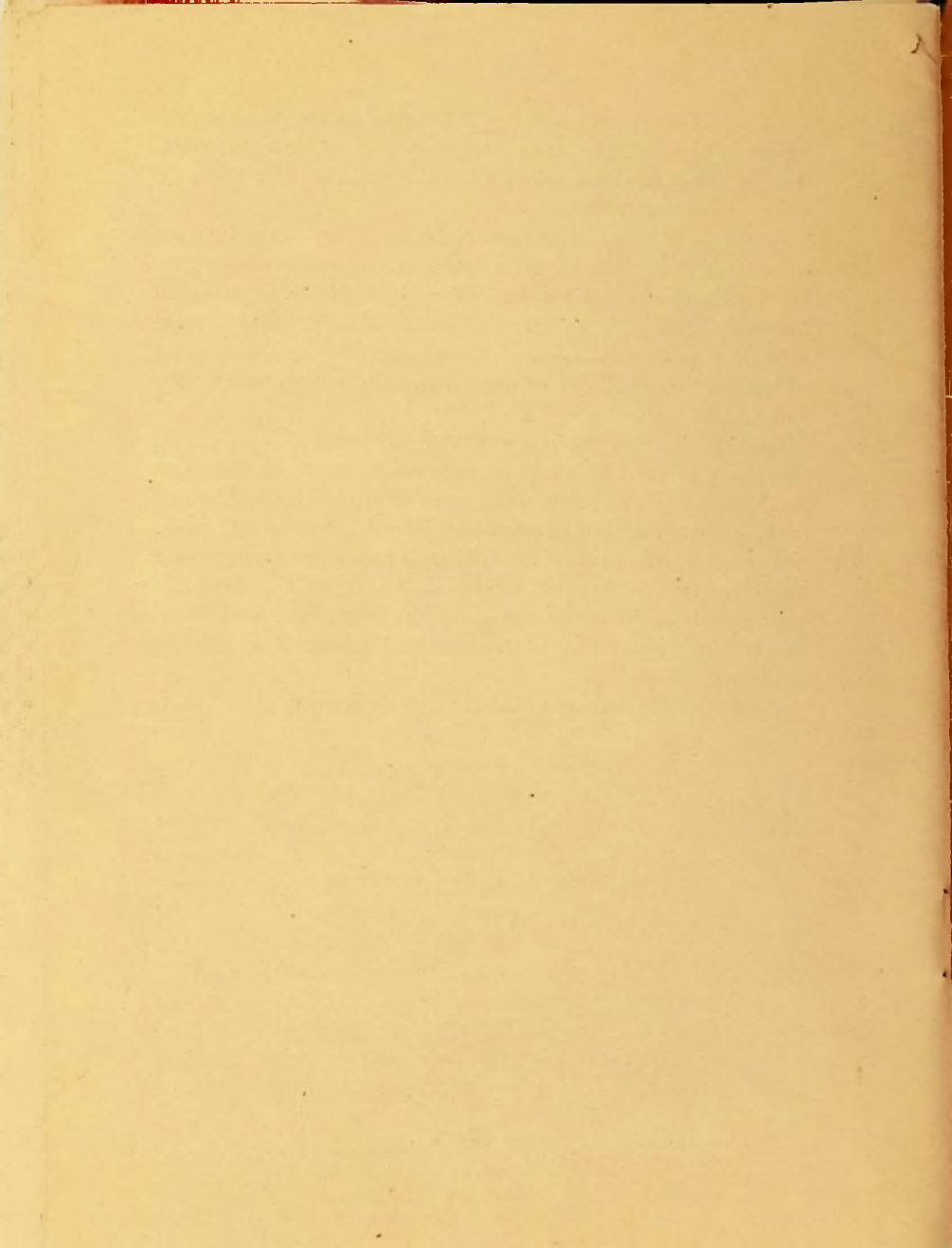
The working class of the entire world in its great majority is waiting for the leaders of the Second International to reply *with deeds* to the appeal of the workers' organizations of Spain. The world working class does not want the leaders of the Second International to reply to the proposal of

Comrade Dimitroff made in the name of the Communist International, in the same way they did in October, 1934, during the Asturias uprising: "We'll see later" (in order to refuse two months after).

Immediate unity of action. No bureaucratic obstacle can or should cause anyone to forget that too much of the generous popular blood has been shed in Spain! The moment has come, not only to halt this bloodshed, but also to prevent Europe and the world from experiencing the horrors of the war by fire, and of the war by gas, which will be the war of tomorrow.

Let Mr. Citrine be discontented and annoyed at seeing the plans of the British Conservatives go to smash. Let him be irritated at not being able, with several of his friends, to carry through to completion the job of splitting which he wanted to accomplish in Spain, thereby rendering such effective aid to Franco, Hitler and Mussolini. His disappointment will not worry us in the least. The workers of the world want to save freedom and peace. And that is sufficient!

Without delay! International unity of action!



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