

SPANISH REVOLUTION

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LEFT FORCES IN SPAIN WILL NEVER CRACK

CRACKING OF LEFTISTS IN SPAIN FASCIST INVENTION

"LONDON HEARS LEFTISTS IN SPAIN ARE CRACKING"—is the title of an article which appeared on the front page of the "New York Times" of Feb. 16th, and signed by Frederick T. Birchall, London correspondent.

"London hears" sounds like a latrine rumour, and as such is confirmed by the subsequent indications of the reports coming from the British government consular agents in Barcelona, Valencia and other cities "held by the Leftist government," pointing to a possible break up of republican resistance. We know for a fact that the British consular agents in Spain hardly move from their offices, and their contacts with the government authorities are limited to taking care of British interests and subjects exclusively. They maintain, as well as other consulates representing the greater and lesser powers, a definite enmity against the "leftists" in Spain, and in measure of their official capacity, afford an excellent channel of the vilest Fascist propaganda in their respective countries.

Curiously enough, in the same issue Herbert L. Matthews reports directly from the scene of battle: "The government troops are fighting excellently, and according to official figures the government planes brought down seven rebel pursuit planes on Friday, three pursuit craft and one bomber Saturday, and two pursuit ships Sunday." This superiority in the air, as well as the successful resistance against the rebels' powerful attack on the Valencia road and finally the decision of the command to launch a great offensive against the Fascist hordes, demonstrate not only an ample supply of arms, but an unshakable morale of the fighting forces of the government. Matthews says in the same dispatch that "Madrid's populace shows no sign of disturbance or even worry. A people who could stand bombings and shellings for more than three months are not going to be frightened by future possibilities." **THE LOYAL FORCES HAVE THE MEN AND THE SPIRIT TO MEET THE NEW CHALLENGE OF THE NEW TACTICS OF FRANCO'S MERCENARIES AND WILL DEFEAT THEM AS IN THE PAST.**

Against these authentic affirmations from original sources, how can the "Times" countenance Birchall's statement that "the International Brigade, BACKBONE OF REPUBLICAN RESISTANCE is 'beginning to exhibit' signs of weakening." Not only is this downright calumny, but the most puerile of lies. The same applies to the captious invention about repatriation of volunteers.

The "leftists" in Spain will never crack. The cracking that will surely come will be that of the bones of the mercenary imperialist hordes which are trying to crush out the life of Spain. But a free people determined to resist to the last man in its own vital defence cannot be defeated on its own soil. And the vast majority of the people are workers inspired with the highest of causes, fighting for their own freedom and for a new destiny. Their heroism and capacity for a final victory over the invaders is without limit. There is no weakening of the forces of the legitimate government of Spain. The Spanish masses have shown proof of their courage and sacrifice, and when the danger is greatest, their power is transformed into an impregnable wall of resistance. The world bears eloquent testimony of the impregnable defence of Madrid. We are not expressing only our faith and confidence in the cause of the Spanish people. We are definitely convinced by the fact that the government now has at its disposal the resources of man power, war material and able leadership and with the ever increasing unity and the proletarian support from abroad, our comrades in Spain MUST WIN.

C.N.T. SPEAKER OUTLINES REVOLUTIONARY AIMS

The program of the C.N.T. and F.A.I. (anarcho-sindicalist Confederation of Labor and Anarchist Federation of Iberia) is now being outlined in a series of speeches delivered by the prominent figures of the movement at the large mass meetings held in Barcelona.

In the last issue we gave the summary of the first programmatic speech delivered by Federica Montseny. The second speech was given by Gaston Leval, one of the best economists of the movement and author of several books dealing with the economic problems of the Spanish revolution.

SUMMARY OF LEVAL'S SPEECH

While the Fascist hordes furiously attack Madrid and foreign troops keep on landing on Spanish territory, the political parties conduct against the C.N.T. and

the anarchist movement an open offensive. That is why it is necessary to give a clear and honest presentation of the basic aims of the C.N.T.

Revolutionary Achievements Only First Step in the Realization of Our Program

In Spain many factories and shops are now in the hands of the workers. In most of them management or control committees have been set up which make possible the continuous functioning of those enterprises. In the villages, lands have been partly collectivized.

While all those achievements are in harmony with the basic ideas of revolutionary reconstruction held by the anarchists, they are still far from realizing our basic demands. They are all of a transitional nature and will have to be corrected in order to bring it up to the level of our revolutionary expectations. They

represent to a considerable extent *improvised solutions* answering the need of a transitory situation aggravated by the tremendous difficulties imposed by a war against international Fascism.

Realization of Socialism Most Vital Need of Revolutionary Spain

The social and economic problems with which revolutionary Spain is faced, now make the realization of socialism even more of an elementary necessity than in the advanced countries. Spain is a very poor country. Its poverty is caused not only by social conditions but also by unfavorable conditions in which its population is placed in its struggle against nature. Its climate, soil and general topography impose additional difficulties upon the economic efforts of the population.

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REVOLUTIONARY PEASANTS STRUGGLE FOR COLLECTIVIZATION

We very often hear about premature experiments in the field of agricultural collectivizations undertaken by the anarchists of Spain. The impression created by those allegations, frequently appearing in the communist and socialist press, is that the anarcho-sindicalist Confederation of Labor (C.N.T.) pursues an entirely utopian policy in regard to the peasants, which by its extreme emphasis upon the building up of agricultural communes, is liable to alienate the great mass of peasants who are attached to their individual holdings and methods of cultivation.

Voluntary Collectivization Cornerstone of C.N.T. Policies

The truth is that the C.N.T. never tried to enforce its policies upon the peasants. The basic principle of its agricultural program is the free choice by the peasants themselves of the type

of economy they want to establish.

But that does not mean just a hands-off policy in regards to this question. Years of anarchist propaganda among the peasants of many a province in Spain have already prepared the ground for a *voluntary* acceptance of agricultural collectives by a considerable number of peasants. There is a mass movement of considerable proportions in favor of such collectives.

This movement has to be encouraged and helped by the workers' organization. And it also needs for its development, certain basic arrangements in regard to the use of lands, relations with the individual cultivators of land, the basic principles of which have to be laid down by the organizations representing the peasants and workers of the country.

Politicians Oppose Peasant Movement Toward Collectivization

It is the struggle around those general arrangements which are of tremendous importance for the future of the Spanish revolution. An influential sector of the United Front—middle class politicians, communists and right wing socialists—favor a policy which would discourage this spontaneous movement toward collectivization. They are ready to throw all the weight of the governmental apparatus behind a policy which favors the individual cultivator of the land at the expense of the collectives. The latter, though formed entirely on a voluntary basis, are still branded as "premature experiments."

And it stands to reason that

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During the last two weeks we received only 80 dollars for Spain.

It is far below our average collections, and it is certainly not warranted by the situation in Spain.

We are relaxing our efforts on behalf of the heroic workers just at a time when they are most in need of it.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONS CONTROL LIFE IN CATALONIA

In the last issue of the "Spanish Revolution," we presented the main points of the interesting communication sent by one of the comrades who is now visiting Spain. We are continuing the same in the present issue, presenting his views on the last political crisis in Catalonia (leading to the elimination of the P.O.U.M.—the semi-Trotskyite party—from the government) and the role of the syndicates in the revolution.

The Political Crisis Was of Little Importance

The importance of that crisis, according to this comrade, was greatly exaggerated by the foreign press. It was brought about by the basic disagreement between the two political parties—the United Socialist-Communist Party and the P.O.U.M.—neither of whom has any real influence with the working masses of Catalonia. The rather curious aspect of this crisis was that the C.N.T. had to act in the capacity of a conciliator between these two political outfits, whose struggles reduce themselves, according to our author, to an attempt on the part of the petty-bourgeois element to control that section of the proletariat which is now organized in the U.G.T.

And it is generally known in Barcelona, although no official mention of it is made by our comrades, that the aggravating factor of this crisis was the intervention of the Soviet Government representative acting through the United Socialist-Communist Party.

Workers' Unions Firmly in Control of the Situation

Those political crises can hardly affect the course of the revolution, for in the long run it is the syndicates that control the revolution. The syndicates (industrial unions) now play the leading role, since it is they who carry on production, organize distribution, feed and supply the front. And the Catalonian unions do it, not only within the limits of their own province; Catalonia now carries on a war in Aragon and keeps on supplying the other provinces of Spain

with products of its industries.

The syndicates of Catalonia are not the subordinates of the government or any political party. Just the opposite: it is they who are in control of the life of the country. Their representatives in the Councils of the Generalidad do not undertake anything on their own initiative. On all important matters they have to consult the union committees.

This powerful and independent role of the syndicates is, according to our comrade, entirely due to the work of the anarchists in the unions. The anarchists, who built and fought within those unions, developed the spirit of independence, the lofty conception of the role and mission of the unions which now made them the chief power in the revolution. Without this anarchist influence the unions would have fallen a prey to the political parties who try to turn them into tools of their specific aims of conquest of State power.

Too Much Tolerance Shown Toward Political Parties

It is the opinion of this comrade that this enormous power of the syndicates in the revolution is not given full expression in the present political and social arrangement which came to prevail in Catalonia. The realistic attitude of the leading comrades who compromise now with the political parties and the petty-bourgeois elements in order to assure the winning of the civil war is, according to our writer, fraught with considerable danger. The politicians and the petty bourgeois elements now sabotage right and left, causing, at times, almost insuperable obstacles to the work of revolutionary reconstruction.

In the long run, however, the situation is far from discouraging. Whatever the bourgeois press may say about it, the Spanish people will never go back to pre-revolutionary conditions. It is necessary, the rank and file of the syndicates, perhaps with the aid of the comrades fighting at the front, may take matters into their own hands and put the house in order.

Peasants Struggle for Collectivization

(Continued from page one) under conditions of civil war, general economic difficulties caused by the revolution, scarcity of credits and capital necessary for the peasant economy, the discouragement of a spontaneous movement started by the poorer peasants to pool their resources for a common effort cannot lead but to the strengthening of the upper layer of the peasantry at the expense of the rest of the village population.

Collectives the Hope of the Poorer Peasants

The C.N.T. is setting itself resolutely against this policy of deliberate sabotage of a move-

ment emanating from the peasants themselves and representing the best hopes of the revolution. The congress of its peasant unions worked out a general program embodying the principles of fair play in regard to both—collectives and individual cultivators of land.

C.N.T. Suggests Mutual Pact

It is very characteristic that this program was also approved by the purely economic organization of Catalonian peasants—the Union of Tenant Farmers. Acting in harmony with its basic method of proceeding on the basis of mutual pacts, the C.N.T. sent its program to the Union of Ten-

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C.N.T. Speaker On Revolutionary Aims

(continued from page one)

Those efforts can be organized productively only by a higher social order. Capitalism fails in this respect; it does not leave a sufficiently large surplus. The existence of the bourgeoisie is a simple luxury for the Spanish people which cannot afford it as other, more favorably situated, countries may do.

Collectivization of Agriculture Is An Economic Necessity

The revolution can win on the economic front only when it follows a program of socialization of agriculture aiming at the gradual disappearance of small property owner. It will have to work out such a program for more than any country Spain needs a scientific agriculture in order to raise the economic level of its peasantry. Three quarters of the peasants earn less than a peseta a day and many of them live under conditions which may lead to the degeneration of the race.

The agrarian reform of the kind which some of the political parties demand (the distribution of big estates to individual owners and encouragement of the individual type of peasant economy) was already tried out in several countries—Rumania, Poland,

Bulgaria—and their results as far as improving the lot of the peasantry were negligible. Spain cannot afford this experiment, for its agriculture demands first of all large scale irrigation projects, scientific methods of soil improvements and an intensified application of capital which are utterly beyond the means of individual peasant economy.

Political Federalism Is Not Enough

The political autonomy of the provinces of revolutionary Spain should not lead to economic competition and attempts to break up the economic unity of the country. This is the tendency of the bourgeois federalism which is an altogether different thing from socialist federalism demanded by the workers.

Socialist federalism presupposes the economic unity of the country, a planned economy embracing all the regions and provinces, based upon the needs of the entire population of the country. It means equality in the consumption of goods among the various provinces, for it is from such basic equality that the building up of a planned socialized economy must start.

BIRTH CONTROL ADVANCED IN CATALONIA

For years Soviet Russia was the promised land of all those who occupied themselves with the problem of birth control. Its advanced legislation in that field, the legalization of abortion, the wide dissemination of information on the scientific use of contraceptives, the work of the hospitals and clinics in freeing the women from the curse of involuntary motherhood—all that placed Soviet Russia in the forefront of progressive countries fighting for the full emancipation of women.

This place, of course, is no more held by a country which has almost prohibited abortions and gone back on all its revolutionary accomplishments in the field of scientific birth control.

But in measure that Soviet

Russia is shedding all the revolutionary conquests in this field, Catalonia is forging ahead to the leading place formerly held by Soviet Russia. The latest information is that a comprehensive reform of the most radical kind is now being worked out in a series of decrees to be issued by the Council of Health and Social Aid of the Generalidad. We can get some idea of the reform from an article printed in the *Solidaridad Obrera* (Jan. 12) by one of the leading figures of this Council, Dr. Felix Marti Ibanez (an anarchist and member of the C.N.T.)

Voluntary Motherhood Aimed By the Reform

"We first began by issuing a decree granting the liberty to practice abortions. This will do away with clandestine abortions performed by incompetent peo-

Industrial Unions Basis of New Economic Order

The economy of the country has to be organized on the basis of full control by industrial unions united into provincial and national Federations. Economic Councils built by those federations are responsible before society for the organization of production. Problems of consumption must be solved by consumers themselves, organized into specific organizations of that kind.

Domination of Political Parties Suicidal to the Interests of The Revolution

The struggle of political faction spelled the doom of the French revolution. The same holds true of the Russian revolution.

The internecine struggles of the political parties are also a source of great danger to the Spanish revolution. That is why the direction of affairs, and especially the control of the economy, must be in the hands of the workers themselves.

Those are the basic aims of the C.N.T. in the present revolution. And the numerous anarchist fighters at the front will battle for those aims with as much tenacity as they are showing now against Fascist hordes.

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ple, which gives so high a percentage of fatal cases.

"In Catalonia abortions become a social and biological right, a means of eugenic control placed at the service of the proletariat.

"It will be practiced in special institutions and only by specialists in that field. And it will be granted only after a preliminary medico-psychological examination.

"Alongside of such institutions there will be created centers for dissemination of information on birth control, of elementary knowledge of sex hygiene, which will lead to the gradual falling off of the rate of abortions.

"Voluntary motherhood means a motherhood that is becoming conscious of its responsibilities. The time is gone when women were forced to become mere procreating machines. Motherhood should not be any more a biblical curse.

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