

Wolfe Declares Valencia Cabinet Provoked Uprising

Attempts Of Rightward Moving Gov't To Disarm The Workers Caused Spontaneous Revolt; Sees Defeat of Fascism Inevitable

NEW YORK CITY — After several months of intensive work in Spain, looking over the front, conversing with militia men in the trenches twenty meters from the fascist lines, interviewing government leaders in Valencia and Madrid, and Barcelona, discussing with communist, socialist, anarchist and POUM leaders, Bert Wolfe has finally returned to give his impressions of this great epic struggle.

"How does it look at close range in Spain," I asked, as soon as the gang plank was lowered from the Normandie and the gangling figure of Comrade Wolfe appeared. "The fascist can't possibly win the war even tho they may score a victory here or there. There is such deep and ingrained hatred of the fascists, such determination to win that victory is assured, altho it will not be easy and the fighting may last for a long time because of the tremendous resources made available to Franco by Hitler and Mussolini."

"How do you estimate the new cabinet?" "It is undoubtedly a move to the right," Wolfe declared, "and reflects the desires of both the French and British governments for a more right wing government in Spain. The Communist Party utilized the Catalonian events to precipitate a crisis and force out

of the government the anarchists and even the Caballero socialists whom the Communist Party accuses of having vacillated during the recent events in Catalonia."

"In view of Caballero's ouster," I continued my questioning, "how do you account for the conflicting stories about U.G.T.—the trade unions which Caballero leads?"

"The U.G.T.," Wolfe insisted, "does not support the present cabinet and has consistently refused to enter it. Only the regional

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BERTRAM D. WOLFE

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U.G.T.'s in Catalonia and Basque region back the present government. The latter bodies were organized since the civil war began and are completely dominated by the Communist Party."

"Is it possible," I asked further, "that the raising of Negrin to the premiership will cause a differentiation in Spanish socialism?" "That is not impossible," Wolfe stated, "since Negrin always did represent a tendency far to the right of Caballero. However, it is much too early to say yes with any degree of certainty."

"And now Comrade Wolfe, tell us something about the Barcelona events. The bourgeois press, the liberal papers and the Communist Party press united in a campaign of most slanderous denunciation of the anarchists and the POUM supporters. Tell me, what started the fighting?"

"There is not the slightest doubt that fighting broke out spontane-

ously," Wolfe said. "It was a reaction to the deliberate and provocative attempts to disarm the workers patrols in Barcelona—the very ones which defeated the fascists on July 19 and continued to guard Catalonia against fascist plots and manipulations. It is most enlightening to find that the special troops used against the workers' patrols belonged to Negrin, then head of the treasury, and now premier. These special guards had been set up to guard Spain's gold which, by the way, is not in Spain. These were armed with carabines, automatic revolvers, armored motorcycles equipped with machine guns—clearly troops for use against the workers. And that's precisely what they were used for."

"The attempt to disarm the workers," continued Wolfe warming to the topic, "is part of the people's front course of liquidating the proletarian features of the revolution in Catalonia."

"How do you judge that the fighting broke out spontaneously?"

"That the relations between the anarchists, the POUM and the government was sharpening, had become clear. But neither the POUM nor the anarchists called upon the workers or their own supporters to begin fighting. A full day elapsed before full support of the POUM and the anarchists was brought into play. Fighting stopped when the government agreed to halt the disarming of the workers."

"It has been said here," I continued, "that the fighting broke out on direct orders from Franco." Wolfe smiled and recalled that the Bolsheviks in 1917 were also accused by Kerensky of taking direct orders from the German General staff. "No, its not at all strange" he said, "that the government withdrew troops from the front to shoot down workers in Barcelona, but the anarchists and POUM did not—altho they have tens of thousands of members fighting loyally against Franco."

"The end is not yet," Wolfe concluded. "Remember in July of 1917 spontaneous armed workers' demonstrations, backed by the Bolsheviks, were defeated, the Communist Party declared illegal, and their leaders driven into jail or exile. But they won nevertheless."

And with this Wolfe would say no more. He insisted he must leave something for his meeting on Thursday night. (Center Hotel, 108 W. 43rd St., at 8 P. M.)

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