MSS 15/3/8/252/2

ENGLISH EDITION

INFORMATION BULLETIN OF THE P. O. U. M.

(Workers Party of Marxist Unification)

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THE P.O.U.M. AND THE POPULAR FRONT.

FOR AN INDEPENDENT POLICY OF THE WORKING CLASS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING CLASS.

Scarcely two months ago our Party encountered great difficulties in holding a meeting in Valencia. Our political position as regards the Popular Front had put the republican parties against us, and with them the workers who belong to them. They showed us great hostility and worked to isolate us. Every circumstance offered scope for injuring and calumniating the P.O.U.M. and its militants. They did not allow us to use the public platforms. They attempted to surround our party with the same atmosphere as that which was formed round the Bolshevik party during the Russian revolution. Why did they combat us in this way? Why were we called provocateurs?

Because, in the face of the feeble manoeuvre of the official communists and the socialists and republicans we alone maintained our class morale, the revolutionary spirit of October. We kept on saying that the choice for Spain and for the world was not between bourgeois democracy and fascism, as the Communist International claimed in its opportunist degeneration, but between revolution and counter-revolution, socialism and fascism. We advocated an independent, revolutionary policy of the working class and its unity of action within the revolutionary Workers' Alliance, with the crushing of fascism and the triumph of the proletarian revolution as our goal.

We were not listened to, and a contrary policy was pursued. Instead of accelerating the experience of the bourgeois republicans, powerless to destroy the enemy - fascist reaction - and incapable of carrying through the democratic revolution in Spain, both socialists and official communists sacrifice to the policy of the Popular Front the interests of the working class and its clear revolutionary action.

Their opportunist policy could have had tragic consequences for the working class.

CONTENTS

1. The POUM and the Popular Front.
2. Meetings at Valencia and Castellon.
   Julian Gorkin's speech.
   Andres Nin's speech.
3. The POUM in defence of Leon Trotsky.
4. The question of a unified Command.
5. The "Lenin" International Column.
6. News from the Front.

MSS 15/5/2/232/22

MEETINGS AT VALENCIA AND CASTELLON.

IMPORTANT SPEECHES BY COMRADES GORKIN AND NIN.

THE POLICY OF THE P.O.U.M. GREETED WITH ENTHUSIASM BY THOUSANDS OF WORKERS.

JULIAN GORKIN'S SPEECH. "The Generals of Spain have proved their folly by taking up arms against a people which has lost its inertia and is highly class conscious. During the five years and more of the Republic many serious mistakes have been made. We are not bloodthirsty either by temperament or on principle, but we said already at that time that if we did not get rid of the king and his hangers-on it would cost oceans of blood later on. So it has happened. Through the fault of the Republicans the whole of Spain is to-day drenched in blood. (Applause.)

Sanjurjo, Batet and Franco have been placed by the Republicans in charge of the strategic positions of the army to take up arms against the workers and the Republic itself. On the eve of the rebellion the authorities refused to arm us, and on the day of the clash the working class came onto the streets insufficiently armed. We are, comrades, in the presence of a revolution, a real revolution. He who does not understand that, who believes that we can return peacefully to the situation before July 19th., is completely misled and cannot be our ally. Many things are dead. We must bury them that they no longer poison the air. There are some, besides, which are finished with forever: we shall have to put them in a history museum. We are living a profound revolution, a social revolution, and we want to carry it through to the end, until the final victory. We shall not retreat one single inch. Rather are we determined to advance to the final victory of the working class. The first condition of victory is that we must not allow ourselves to be disarmed by anything or anyone. We must keep our arms. We conquered them in the open struggle against fascism, and they are ours, wholly ours. Defend them as you would defend your bread, for if you allow the bourgeoisie to take away your arms to-day, they will take away your bread to-morrow. (Prolonged cheering.)

The second condition of victory is never to destroy your unity of action, that magnificent unity of action with which you have already won the first battles, with which we will win the final struggle. No fratricidal strife among workers; turn all your weapons in one direction - towards the heart of Capitalism, to build upon its corpse the new workers' society, the Socialist society."

(Loud and prolonged applause. The workers salute with the clenched fist and break into cheers.)

ANDRES NIN'S SPEECH. "We are taking part in Spain in a profound social revolution. I, who have every reason to know the Russian revolution, can tell you so. Our revolution goes even deeper than that which shook Russia in 1917. The monarchy and feudal regimes have failed, but the republicans need have no illusions: another thing which has failed is bourgeois economy, and the whole capitalist system is inevitably crumbling. (Applause.)

More than five years of the Republic have showed us what we knew already: that the republicans inspite of their determination would not be able to solve the problems of the democratic revolution in Spain, but would fail disastrously. And so it has come about. The revolu-

MSS. 1573/8/252/2

tionary working class alone can solve these problems. But none must believe that we are simple in the presence of a democratic revolution. No. The revolution goes much deeper. We are heading directly for a social revolution. The republicans have been incapable of solving the problems of the democratic revolution: the problems of the army, the church, the land...The working class solved them in a few days, their weapons in their hands. (Great applause.)

There is no longer a permanent army, but popular militias. The working class has solved the religious problem by destroying the churches and crushing the clergy. (Applause.)

As for the problem of the land, the working class is solving it now, by expropriating the large estates and driving out the owners. Do you believe that the working class has shed so much blood and shown so much heroism in order to return to one of the republics of Mr. Azana? (The public replies collectively to this by a thunderous "no" and bursts into tumultuous applause.)

Comrades, there are those who say that in the present circumstances we should all remain united in this struggle against fascism. Certainly the masses must remain united. Gorkin told you a moment ago that there are some who are willing to make a pact with the enemy. It is understandable. There are people who are much more afraid of the triumph of the revolution than of the triumph of fascism, but a compromise of this kind will not be possible because the working class will not allow it. There is only one way of destroying fascism, a single way, and that is the proletarian revolution. (Applause.)

The Parliament of 16th. Febuary is outworn and cannot resume its functions. We want to convoke in its place a Constituent Assembly based on committees of workers, peasants and soldiers. In this parliament, reactionary elements such as Gil Robles and others who are responsible for the revolt will have no place. But only a workers government composed by all parties and all trades-union organisations of the working class could call such a parliament. The present government is useless to us and has not the confidence of the masses. These are the immediate slogans which our party is giving out at the present moment.

Comrades, I wish to end by saying to you(calls from the public that he should not end yet) . I shall say in conclusion that at the present juncture we must dare, dare and dare again. Our party has given out a slogan: we must fight till victory or death." (Tremendous applause.)

(From "La Batalla", Ist. September 1936.)

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THE P.O.U.M. IN DEFENCE OF LEON TROTSKY.

THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKING CLASS OF CATALONIA MUST AFFORD HIM A REFUGE FROM PERSECUTION.

In the disgraceful circumstances known to all, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Smirnov and 13 other militant Bolsheviks have been shot in Moscow. Our Executive Committee has already pronounced itself clearly and with revolutionary honesty on this subject, not wishing to become a party to such crimes by keeping silent as other working class circles and newspapers have done.

Trotsky, Lenin's comrade and the great organiser of the Red Army, has not been shot for the simple reason that he is not in Russia under Stalin's iron hand. But he is systematically and violently persecuted. For several years now his life has been very difficult, and to-day he is running a real danger. They are demanding his expulsion or imprisonment. They treat him like a criminal. People are even incited to assassinate him.

MSS 15/3/8/252/2W

There are differences between ourselves and Trotsky, yet we consider that a crime is being committed against him and we demand the cessation of this international scandal. The Spanish working class would be ashamed to allow such a scandal. Certain of interpreting their feelings, we demand that Trotsky be offered a refuge in Catalonia under the revolutionary protection of the working class.

We know where opposition to the realisation of this fine proposition lies. We will fight against it with all our energy, thereby fulfilling a high duty of revolutionary solidarity.

The Executive Committee of the P.O.U.M.

THE P.O.U.M.'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY ON THE MOSCOW TRIAL.

The Executive Committee of the P.O.U.M. believes that a matter of such wide scope cannot be left to the goodwill and discretion of organisations under the control of the Soviet Government, but that it concerns the whole of the international working class movement. For that reason it considers, in accordance with the resolution published above, that while the investigation is being pursued, Trotsky must be placed in the conditions of safety which he does not enjoy to-day. Therefore it demands that he be allowed to come to Catalonia and place himself beneath the protection of the revolutionary proletariat.

The Executive Committee of the P.O.U.M. invites all parties and organisations of the Spanish working class to state their attitude to these proposals and to our demands with regard to Trotsky.

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THE QUESTION OF A UNIFIED COMMAND.

This question must be submitted to the Central Committee of Antifascist Militias, with the help of the necessary technicians.

This demand appears to us to be absolutely right, not only from a military point of view, but also from the economic and political point of view, which at the present moment are closely allied.

In all revolutions the military control has always been centralised. In the French revolution it was in the hands of the Committee of Public Safety. In the English revolution it was in the hands of Cromwell. In the Russian revolution it was in the hands of the Military Committee directed by Trotsky. In the Spanish revolution it cannot and must not occur otherwise.

Up till this point we are in agreement with Prieto. But who is to direct and control this organisation of unified command? Here we are in complete disagreement with the socialist leader. He demands that the Ministry of War should nominate and control the organisation - in other words, that it should be controlled by the republican government in Madrid. We are in the most violent opposition to any such demand. Every intelligent worker, every soldier and militian will easily understand the reason for this refusal. From the very first we pronounced ourselves against the maintenance of the permanent army such as it was before the revolt. We are living a civil war, a revolutionary war whether one likes it or not, which demands an organisation of revolutionary direction too. It is the people in arms who are fighting against fascist militarism. The militians and soldiers who have devoted themselves to the people's cause compose the mass of our combattant forces. They can only

MSS 193/8/25 212v

place their confidence in an organisation which springs from themselves, that is to say an organisation composed by the parties and organisations who are keeping up the struggle against fascism and to whose discipline the militians are submitted. The soldiers must also have direct representation in this organisation.

In Catalonia, the command is centralised in the hands of the Central Committee of Antifascist Militias. We must try for the formation of an organisation of the same form, but on a national scale, a committee of the same kind with representation for all political and trades-union forces, which are struggling against fascism. It is obvious that the committee must call in the collaboration of all the technical advisors whom it may consider necessary. On this subject we are happy to state that we are in agreement with our comrades of the C.N.T.

(From "La Batalla", 30th. August 1936.)

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THE COLUMN OF P.O.U.M. MILITIANS AND THE "LENIN" INTERNATIONAL COLUMN HAVE LEFT FOR THE FRONT.

(From "La Batalla", 30th. August 1936)

Yesterday afternoon, the "Lenin" column of the P.O.U.M., a column composed of a thousand infantry, two squadrons of cavalry and a medical unit of seven doctors; marched through the streets of Barcelona on their way to the front.

The march was opened by two cars containing the Military Committee. Next a picket of cavalry with the party flag, which was in turn followed by the band and then, in impeccable formation and preceeded by their flag, the international group "Lenin" composed of foreign comrades come to fight side by side with us against fascism. This group is commanded by the Italian captain Russo.

The column started from our barracks in Tarragona street and marched through Cortes street, University square, Pelayo and the Ramblas. A compact mass of workers unceasingly applauded our brave comrades who are going out to reinforce our men already operating in Aragon.

The column was commanded by Lieutenant Gregorio Munoz and Lieutenant Lorenzo, affiliated to our party, and by comrades Iborra, Mano de Montblanch and Sabadell as political delegates. The parade was headed by Sebastian, the captain of the "Lenin" barracks of the POUM, by Mongol, the political delegate, and by comrade Fosco, general secretary to the anti-fascist refugees.

Of the two squadrons of cavalry, one was formed by militians of the P.O.U.M., the other by the reserve, and they were respectively commanded by Lieutenant Manuel de la Plaza and Lieutenant Fernandez. The squadron of militians alone left for the front.

The column halted in front of Party headquarters while the band played our anthem in the midst of applause from the crowd which had overrun the squre before our headquarters.

Many cheers were raised for the social revolution, the Party, and the future red army.

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MSS 15/3/8/852/2v

N E W S F R O M T H E F R O N T .

OUR ITALIAN MILITIANS PUT TO FLIGHT A COLUMN OF 500 FASCISTS.

(from "La Batalla" 30th. August 1936.)

Serinena, 29th. August. In yesterday's combat at Vicien, the column of Italian comrades composed of 130 militia men, took a brilliant part. After a hard fight, this column put to flight an enemy column composed of more than 500 fascists, making them abandon between 200 dead and wounded on the field.

During the above action, we have to lament the deaths of the following:

Mario Angeloni, commanding the machine-guns - republican.
Michele Centroni - anarchist.
Vincenzo Perrone - anarchist.
Fosco Falaschi - anarchist.
Guiseppe Zuddas - of the group "Guistizie e Liberte."
Paparetto - communist.
Celliva - communist.
Eight other comrades were wounded.

ADVANCE OF 16 KILOMETRES ON THE SIGUENZA FRONT.

THE MOTORISED COLUMN OF THE P.O.U.M. OF MADRID COVERS ITSELF WITH GLORY.

(from "La Batalla" 1st. Sept.)

Madrid 31st. August. As a preliminary action in the sector of Siguenza, an' advance on Barbatona has been made. The advance, which presented great difficulties, was a victory for our men, and the motorised column of the P.O.U.M. from Madrid played a leading part in it and fought continuously in the front line. The forces of the C.N.T. also took part in the action with a column of railwaymen and the batallion "La Pasionaria."

About 30 rebels were killed and more than 70 wounded, and 30 machine-guns were abandoned on the field. Among the fascist troops were some 70 police and many frocked priests who threw hand grenades. There were also numbers of Carlists with their red caps and they were the first to take flight.

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The Struggle which is being carried on in Spain is a struggle against international fascism. It is the cause of the workers of the whole world. Workers from many lands have already come forward to offer their lives, but money and supplies are also urgently needed. All partizans of the proletarian struggle must hold meetings, collect money and forward it to this office, from which may also be obtained copies of this bulletin in English, French, German Dutch and Italian. The reproduction of any article appearing in this bulletin is encouraged whenevr it may be of use in support of the cause of the social revolution.

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