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VANGUARD

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THE SOCIALIST FUTURE

THE surrender of Madrid writes a temporary finis to a struggle whose deep tragedy has as yet stirred the proletarian world only by the brutality of fascist reprisals. That Spain represented a fountain-head of revolutionary conscience, a proletariat whose socialist convictions measured up to its historic responsibilities, who in the face of betrayals from within and crushing blows delivered to it by its Socialist brethren of France and Britain, maintained its will to fight, to build up and defend amid the sacrifices of war the germinal forms of a free society — these latter aspects are unfortunately lost upon a proletarian world of sordid preoccupation with sectarian dogmas. Like Noske in Germany, at whose bloody hands the cadres of a Socialist world met their fate, Blum delivered the newest martyrs of a truly revolutionary struggle to the hangmen of reaction.

The war in Spain, at first, to the sterile brains of our socialist vulgarians represented just a skirmish on the Marxist checkerboard of capitalist crises. From pontifical heights they viewed the revolutionary movement of Spain with raised eyebrows and scarcely pretended to understand the vitality and deep roots with which Spanish anarchism had implanted itself. Here breathed a libertarian movement from whose every worker surged a burning desire to rebuild the earth on free and equalitarian principles. Unlike its German and Italian counterparts which the practitioners of Marxism understood best because these movements could exceed the Spanish only in noise and empty pretensions, the CNT of Spain through a long chain of mass struggles, strikes, protests and revolts, had engendered a strong spirit of solidarity and revolutionary integrity. And though the proletarian defeats in Germany and Italy were serious setbacks to the Socialist advance, they startled the world only by the seemingly defenseless collapse of a Marxist colossus. They proved singularly barren of creative ideas and energies and had long ago had their vitality spent in the comparatively safe channels of peaceful democratic processes.

But the Spanish defeat casts a far more ominous shadow on proletarian struggles over the world than did the German and Italian. Spain faced a revolutionary crossroad; its burning cities lit up the Socialist horizon with

a renewed hope for a better order. Its libertarian fighters proved to be the only forces willing and capable of reversing the tide, of effecting deep political and economic changes in the relations of man to man. After sixty years of Marxist hegemony, Socialism because of Spain, took on a new meaning, and its historic mission was to impart that new energy to an apathetic mass of humanity.

But the fascist fist, aided by the bloody hands of Spain's supposed friends, crushed that flower in its first burst of glory. And what that disaster holds in store for future Socialist struggles, not alone in the sense of a fascist reaction overpowering another section of proletarian sons, but in snapping the last life line for the renaissance of Socialism, will be deeply felt by the coming generations of proletarian soldiers in the downward thrust given to Socialism by this last horrible defeat. For just as a victory in Spain would have not only imparted new strength to the fight against fascism in other countries, but more significantly, would have raised a new and freer October into the zenith of revolutionary struggle, broken the iron bands of a degenerate Marxism that had been stifling every healthy revolutionary instinct of the toilers, so the utter breakdown of Spanish resistance not merely strengthens the fascist advance, but intensifies a Socialist reaction, entrenching more firmly into the seat of leadership the craven Blums, Citrines and Stalins who at best could drive humanity only into the umbrage of a barbaric state Socialism.

These are the new prospects for the proletarian movement. And therein must we libertarians redeem the defeat of the Spanish revolution if the torch of Socialist reconstruction with which it emblazoned the sky, shall not be lost for generations.

AFTER MADRID FELL

THE events in Madrid and its subsequent surrender have been the occasion for many comments from those whose evaluation of the Spanish tragedy was based solely upon the degree the course of events deviated from their prepared thesis for use in all emergencies. We have little patience with many, and this category includes some anarchists, who "I told you so", and base this brilliant conclusion of the defeat to a step forward, one to the side, one backwards and one around which a Spanish revolutionary militant took in company with a representative of the bourgeoisie. But we reserve special loathing for the prize jesuits who in the columns of the "Socialist Appeal" must have shaken with glee to record the "servile pact offered Franco" or Miaja "invites Franco into Madrid." These vendors of a superior thesis, who faced the fascist guns of Franco behind the waves of the Atlantic two thousand miles away, gloat over the corpses of socialist heroes and parade a smug sectarianism to prove their peerless revolutionary virtue before their eager followers.

We do not hold that the CNT is above criticism. On the contrary we should and expect to offer our own. But only blustering fools, or hypocrites who had little or no responsibilities in Spain, would ascribe the defeat to a desertion of some particular revolutionary principle. They conveniently forget the Franco, Hitler and Mussolini triumvirate so diligently aided by the Chamberlain, Blum, Daladier and Stalin combination. The proletarian forces in Spain withstood the greatest array of aviation and artillery known. No one can deny the terrific superiority of fascist force with which our comrades had to contend, in actual life and not in Olympic sanctuaries, and we do not believe that anyone has the courage to speak up and fail to pay tribute to the Spanish anarchist movement for the heroic stand made against fascism, and the energy with which it took up in wartime the problems of reconstruction for a socialist world.

* * *

After a slanderous attack by the Trotskyites in *La Lutte Ouvriere* on March 24 last, on the POUM, the latter's Executive Committee was compelled to pass a resolution which warned "that either the Trotskyites cease these slanderous attacks or they will break off all relations with that party." "Evidently the Trotskyites," they add, "share the mentality and methods of the Stalinists."

REACTION SPREADS

AS WE look with amazement upon the unfolding war crisis in Europe, we are given a striking picture of how rapidly the unguarded civil liberties and workers rights can be decimated in the democratic countries. In France, where a fascist movement feels itself as yet unwilling to risk an open battle as they did in Spain, the financial oligarchy is using the club of a fearful international situation to impose its totalitarian program upon the unprepared masses. Not war itself, but the threat of a "democratic" war, is providing the vehicle for a peaceful fascist revision of French internal life. In Britain, where labor is proving more alert to these dangers, the government of appeasement is pursuing a cautious and less open policy in the same direction.

And that we in America are not going to escape this totalitarian trend, given such impetus by the defeat of the Spanish revolution, can be judged by the terrific fight for control now being waged in the nation's and state capitals by bi-partisan adherents of an anti-labor movement. Despite the assurances of President Roosevelt that civil liberties will receive the utmost protection of the national administration, the list of state governments fulfilling the program of a native fascism continues to add up. And in Washington itself, under the impact of international events, the undercurrent of reaction is summoning up its growing strength for a national attack against civil liberties.

The Dies Committee investigation into the "un-American" activities of all "isms," but apparently not the fascist, is beginning to bear fruit. Several bills against aliens, some of even a barbaric nature providing for concentration camps, have been presented before congress. The Dempsey Bill, already passed by the House without a rollcall and without debate, makes any alien liable to deportation who advocates "any change" or is a member of an organization which supports a measure which may be interpreted as "changing the American form of government." The Hobbs Bill provides for the establishment of detention camps for aliens ordered deported for whom passports cannot be obtained to carry out their deportation. And a measure incorporating the provisions of both the above bills, as well as providing for registration and fingerprinting of all non-citizens, is being urged upon the House by a host of reactionary congressmen.

The attack against aliens is the opening wedge for an attack against the rights and liberties of all regardless of citizenship. These alien bills, always so near to the hearts of our one hundred percenters, if passed and signed by the President, are a mere disguise for weapons of a far reaching character toward a fascist transition of American government. Any organization will be prevented from expressing an unorthodox opinion for fear of jeopardizing its non-citizen members, or as an alternative, be forced to expel them. The registration and fingerprinting of aliens means finally the registration of everyone for even a native will be forced to prove his citizenship when questioned. Fingerprinting of some WPA employees has already become a reality. The legislature of the state of Pennsylvania is now also considering a bill requiring all aliens to register at the Department of Labor and Industry and carry on their person the necessary identification cards. Thus the nature of these attempts to strangle the voice of resentment and human progress is revealed in its true light. As yet these attempts must still be camouflaged, lest too strong a wave of protest be stirred. But their gradual undermining influence on American liberal forces is being counted upon to open the road for more bold-faced suppression of human freedom.

The problem of refugees from the countries of Europe has provided a forum for many of our humanitarians to express their sympathy and deep regret that one or two little laws on the country's books prevent us from extending our traditional hospitality toward them. Recently, the Commissioner of Immigration, Houghteling, expressed these same nice sentiments before a group of welfare workers and to the surprise of many a number of well known labor leaders who attended the gathering did not dissent, but applauded the Commissioner heartily. It is the distasteful truth that the labor movement of America has placed itself at the vanguard of the move to prevent any wholesale admission of refugees into the U. S. Their charity permits them only to donate a day's pay to put a crust of bread in the mouths of these unfortunates, but in some other country. These labor statesmen lack

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Louis Ander of "Le Libertaire," anarchist weekly in Paris, is the author of the following article which he wrote specially for Vanguard readers. Written just before the final surrender of Madrid, he meant it as an explanation of the nature and causes of the Communist revolt and the reasons for the CNT-FAI's adherence to the Defense Junta. That the Communists engineered this uprising, not to win, but to lose, and thereby walk out gracefully from the picture, can be judged by the rapid departure of the Stalinist bigwigs even before the curtain rose on this last sorry drama. And we regret that the Communists, long a potent factor in the defeat, should have been permitted to successfully elude the direct historic responsibility of surrendering.

THE RECENT events in Central Spain have surprised and deeply disturbed many friends of Proletarian Spain. Even in France, Spain's next door neighbor, there is a difference of opinion on the exact interpretation to be given to these events. Ever since it was alleged that the action of the Defense Junta was aimed at the complete elimination of Stalinist elements from leading positions where they were placed by the partisan policies of Negrin, there was a chorus of slanders and insults in the French Popular Front press, and especially in the Communist Party press, hurled at those who had taken the initiative in the uprising.

The Socialists, cowards as usual, either followed in the footsteps of the Stalinists, or were silent on the real reasons of the outbreak. But, in the better informed circles of the working class, there was no difficulty in understanding that the Anti-Stalinist reaction of the working masses of Spain surged from deep roots and that it was the inevitable outcome of twenty-one months of dictatorial politics which led to successive catastrophes.

Negrin's Stalinist Policies

The entire policy of the Negrin Government since the putsch of May, 1937, which brought it to power, has been blotted with the stigma of defeat and betrayal. The two great military victories of the popular army over the hordes of Franco, at Guadalajara and Teruel, were made possible by the Anarchist elements. These were men like Cipriano Mera, who, it should be remembered, inflicted a crushing defeat on the Italian legions at Guadalajara, and if Teruel was taken in December, 1937, it was because under the leadership of men like Vivancos, Benedicto Torres, Ricardo Sanz, Juanel, etc., seventy percent of the forces were Anarchist. But if Teruel was retaken by the Fascists, it was because Negrin, under Russian domination, was either unable or unwilling to fortify the new positions. The Aragon sector, systematic-

ally and deliberately underarmed, in March, 1938, quickly fell to the Franco forces. The terrible battle of the Ebro, which held back Fascists for more than six months, should have taught the Negrin Government that a country trying to defend itself against an international coalition as formidable as that which assailed proletarian Spain, had need of all its active strength and should have maintained against the common enemy an internal unity of all the healthy elements therein. Negrin did just the opposite. A totalitarian policy was adopted which had the effect of replacing those elements which did not conform with the Stalinist dictatorship, with a more submissive and obedient element. The police and judiciary set up a tyranny patterned after the Bolshevik model. Shameful political trials were concocted, such as those against the POUM. A secret police, the S.I.M. (Military Investigation Service), spread uneasiness and terror and sowed distrust and discouragement.

Non-Bolshevik organizations maintained a patient silence in order to avoid being accused of playing into the hands of Franco, but in the meantime discouragement was spreading. In Catalonia, goods became scarcer every day. A veritable system of blackmail for armaments and food obtained from the U.S.S.R. was forced upon Spain by the Stalinists, whose formula was: Either you follow our policies blindly or you will get nothing from us.

Incompetents Given Lead

Leading positions were given to the servile lackeys of Negrin on the basis of a most cynical favoritism. So, when Franco's big offensive against Catalonia came, the situation was ripe for a catastrophe.

The military chiefs who had Negrin's confidence, such as Lister, Modesto and Roja, then revealed themselves in all their incompetency. Lister was given the task of defending Barcelona. With their usual fanfare, Communist sheets in foreign countries painted him as a courageous, capable chief. But we knew damned well that his only claims to glory were his persecution of the Anarchists and his attempt in May, 1937, to destroy militarily the libertarian collectives in the Aragon region.

We were not surprised when Barcelona fell. It was apparent, when no real defense was organized after the fall of Tortosa, Tarragona and Sierra de Montblanch, that Barcelona was also to be given up. With Barcelona taken, the rest of Catalonia could not hold out. On the ninth of February the Fascist troops reached the French frontier. Negrin, Alvarez Del Vayo and their fanatical Stalinist side-kicks, the Passionarias and Listers, soon returned to Madrid by airplane. They did not come back to Madrid with the humility befitting people conscious of the defeat

for which their stupid politics was responsible in no small measure; they returned as arrogant dictators, come to issue their imperative orders. The first statements of Negrin were that a purge in the military command was to be undertaken and that a reorganization of the military leadership was to be effected. Instead of relaxing the Stalinist dictatorship, Negrin preferred to strengthen it. Lister, Modesto, and all the incompetent chiefs who were placed on a pedestal by Communist propaganda were vested with still greater power.

Madrid Takes Action

This was the measure which provoked the wrath of the Madrid militants and touched the spark to the powder kegs. When the Defense Junta was constituted, based upon consideration of international policy, which we will see elsewhere, and with the probable support of France and England, the great masses were in a frame of mind prepared for the definitive elimination of Stalinist influence in Spain. From the beginning, the Defense Junta with the praiseworthy aim of sparing precious blood, preferred to use persuasion rather than force. It tried to convince the Communists that they had been betrayed and abandoned by their leaders. Note for example the fact that all the Stalinist bigwigs fled to France as soon as the uprising was seen in its true proportions. Neither La Passionara nor Lister nor Modesto, not even Jose Diaz, Jesus Hernandez, not even Negrin himself, was at the head of his troops to encourage them in their resistance. And, when the Communist cause seemed to be lost, not a voice was raised to tell them to lay down their arms and cease this fratricidal struggle.

The Communist rebellion which could have been squelched within a few hours lasted several days, because of the fact that the Junta made a number of well intentioned delays. Many are astonished that the Communists, who never had any deep roots among the Spanish masses, could have given the impression during these few days in Madrid that they had acquired a considerably large following.

While one cannot deny that Communist propaganda had made some gains in Spain, it is false to assume that they have succeeded in planting any real roots. The truth is that as the Negrin dictatorship grew in scope, non-Communist propaganda was discriminated against day by day to the exclusive advantage of Stalinist propaganda. News print was imported mostly from Russia. This meant that while the CNT and FAI papers and unofficial organs encountered the greatest difficulties in appearing, and were reduced to a minimum size, the press faithful to Negrin was thereby assured an enormous advantage, having at its disposal any quantity of paper desired. The trenches were flooded with Stalinist prose and the latter appeared that much stronger, for it virtually had no competition.— Thus the Communist Party succeeded in gaining a certain superficial influence, but nevertheless it never succeeded in penetrating deeply.

Bourgeois Sources of Communist Strength

At the Congress of the Russian Communist Party, which is now being held in Moscow, Manuisky revealed that in 1931 the Spanish Communist Party had only 800 members. By July 19, 1936, the Communists had only succeeded in gaining some ground among the Socialist youth and this, to be sure, was accomplished by boring from within under the flag of Socialism.

Unable to conquer the Proletarian masses, Communists thought of organizing the petty bourgeoisie and middle classes. In Catalonia the P. S. U. C. (the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia) joined the Third International and undertook to champion all the demands of the bourgeois scum and to defend private trade against Socialization. In opposition to the CNT, the Catalonia U.G.T. recruited into specially creation "unions" small shop keepers and business men; and this whole crew joined the Communists, for Communism now appeared as a conservative social instrumentality. This was a significant element in the growth of Communism in Spain, but, of course, this sort of Communism was no longer communist. It was a propaganda tool against the vigilance of the Anarchists and a great number of Socialists and Republicans who were in opposition to the Kremlin edicts.

This digression will help to explain why the movement of the Madrid Junta against Negrin was fully supported by the Anarchists, by Socialists who were not in the Moscow orbit, and by the different Republican factions. All the Anti-Fascist groups, except the Communists, suddenly found themselves united to reject (to puke up, to be more exact) a man and a policy which had brought Republican Spain nothing but defeat and betrayal. Now that the Stalinist mortgage on Spain has been withdrawn, what will the Defense Junta do? This is a question which is very difficult for us to answer.

Support Defense Junta

In France "Le Libertaire" and the Anarchist Federation supported the formation of the Junta but it goes without saying that this was done without any illusions whatsoever about the real sincerity of those who were responsible for its formation. We have taken considerable pains to note on many occasions that Miaja had long been a full fledged member of the Spanish Communist Party.

If Cassado is now outside of the influence of the Bolsheviks, we must never forget that he is a military careerist and has most probably maintained some connections among his former Nationalist colleagues. As for Besteiro, since the 19th of July, 1936, he has maintained an indefinite position, which can hardly be considered the mark of intransigent Anti-Fascism.

Nevertheless, men of the CNT-FAI, such as Cipriano Mera, Eduardo Vall, were not afraid to work with the Junta from the beginning of the movement and even to join it.

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WHEN the label identifies, it is in the nature of poetry. I remember an apothecary shop in Ville-neuve-les-Avignons, a sanctum of accuracy, where Catholic Sisters, as if to countersign the verity of their Christ, their Marys and their Saints, measured and compounded herb and mineral from the classic amphoras on the formal shelves, with the precision of ritual. Or the lanterns on railroad tracks come to mind, and the lights of river traffic and air travel: telegraphic brilliants that have the finality of authentic verse.

When to identification the label adds seduction, it is in the nature of oratory. I remember the painted awnings over horse-meat shops in Paris, more garlanded, more beflowered, with more elaborate bows, than the awnings over beef shops in Paris. Or the Marsellaise occurs to me, or Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg, labels identifying patriotism, and tempting men toward death.

When to identification the label adds salesmanship, it is advertisement. I remember the Toasted cigarette, Gillette's safe blades, Dutch Cleanser's good little girl, the Master's voice, Sunkist lemons, Golden Shell, America's favorite dessert . . .

When the label forsakes identification, lets it live or die according to business politics, then with enough backing behind it, the label becomes Fascist; with a more humble backing, we might say Procuress for Fascists. Prostitution rules . . . I remember commerce the country over: drugstores, food stores, hat and dress shops in chains, automobile salons, beauty parlors, Hollywood, Socony, Nation-wide hook-ups, canned humor; and Rockefeller Center, that business cathedral, soaring into vacuum above us all.

The sway of the sellers over the sold becomes prodigious. The subsequent regimentation of intelligence and taste destroys initiative. And creates in the many a totalitarian state of mind; in the few enormous power.

We owe the title to an Italian of Forli, and possibly perfection of the method to him. But history will one day record as fact, what the satirist today only reveals between lines: The United States, not Italy, has the distinction or disgrace of being the first Fascist country. A Fascism, unpolitical, unofficial, economic, to be sure; yet only because our government for at least half a century, with few exceptions, has been controlled by business, not by State authority.

Culturally, we have remained Colonials, some twenty years behind Europe in intellectual and social commitments. Mechanically, industrially, we are the ancients of the modern Western World, the first of the Moderns. It

was the natural outcome of superior enterprise for these giants of industry to lord it over the old-fashioned statesmen and politicians. And to what was due their ultimate success? To an abstraction of their own invention; to the tyranny which they established of label over content; to that dictatorship of the cliché called by advertising buyers an IDEA. ("Get an idee-a", a tobacco magnate said to his publicity man some fifteen years ago, "I tell yu' GET-ANIDEA." — "But what shall I tell them?" — "Tell 'em anything yu' like, tell 'em they'll get gonorrhea if they don't smoke our brand.")

Gradually, insidiously, beginning way back in the days when by Lincolnian force these States became a Union, where a new society had a chance to grow in the sun, without frontiers to fight or popes to fear, — instead labels came to drug the mind and kill knowledge. Was it a specific for this or that ailment our grandparents bought? No, it was Sloan's liniment, Lydia Pinkham's compound, Dr. Carter's little liver pills, the whiskered Smith Bros.' cough drops—taken on trust. Not a sodium to bind cake or bread, but Dr. Price's Baking Powder, inscribed on every riser of the stairs of the elevated roads of our big cities. Children used to wonder why — the same children who were supposed to cry for Castoria and I am certain never did.

So the religion of labels grew until today rarely do we buy food, medicine, clothes, news, or anything else as such. We buy Squibb's, Lambert's, Dr. West, Campbell, Heinz, Blue Ribbon, Del Monte, Betty Wales, Emily, Lane-Bryant, Kampus-Kut, KokoNutRoll . . . And for news we buy from the school of Time-Fortune, Inc., with its Homeric epithets adversely used; so that Painter X's bartender paunch, Politician Y's watery eyes, Author Z's corn-fed voice, are featured above their distinctive achievements. Whereby mediocrity may remain docile and serene, and its purveyors unimperilled by genius. Nor do we buy books or paintings as such. We buy Book-of-the-Month-Club or Books-You-Ought-to-Read. We buy Impressionist, Cubist, Surrealist, or honest American school. So mass consumption is flattered, and individual choice made next to impossible.

The logical standardization essential to a civilized order, has been transformed with us into an autocracy where original subtle quality scarcely survives. Authentic variety has been crushed. And to what end? Was it for any other purpose than to create a plutocracy second to none in the history of human beings?

In the meantime what happened across the Atlantic? As we grew rich Europe began to feel poor. What could they do to compete? They could marry our heiresses; they could buy stock in American markets and make profits. But to world-powers this became increasingly un-

satisfactory. It was merely to become economic colonials, just as we before had been political and social colonials. Some of them borrowed American big money and got us into a war to save the money, which they have not yet been able to return; since really they had to put it back into the plant—in good American fashion. France and England went so far as to use our advertising methods in a small way. But the idea was not popular; and the need not immediate, since they could still rest on the oars of the Great War's armistice, by which huge alien vassalages to East and Southeast were seemingly assured them into perpetuity. Great Britain calling the imperial roll could yet ignore the fact that some of her colonies were answering unpleasantly. And France too remained leisurely, even though cars honked behind her to indicate she was holding up world traffic with her 18th century democracy.

It was the countries impoverished by the fight, who had to become resourceful. In order to compete with us and their victorious neighbors, they got an IDEA, and it was a hot one. They imitated our industrial methods politically. They did it with labels, with intensive advertising—campaigns that should put N. W. Ayer and J. Walter Thompson to shame. They concentrated on just one big client, the State, who they claimed, had the facilities to satisfy every human need. To make doubly sure they re-enforced our methods with guns. Where we have used high-powered salesmanship, and only on occasion the police, they supplemented from the beginning with armed squads. Thus they accomplished in just a few years what has taken us over two generations.

Two of their labels that will readily occur to you are *arriviste* trade marks, not Arrow or Manhattan, but Black-Shirt and Brown-Shirt. The Red Third has a more heroic background, dating from one of the superb storms of history and magnificent victories of humanity over inhumanity; and deserves, if any cliché could, its boasted future. But who except the blind can doubt today that the Soviet bureaucracy under the original label is departing steadily, sometimes precipitously from the Communal goal? (Similarly the Roman Empire once betrayed Christianity; and American Billionarism, Democracy.)

By whatever means were necessary, according to all official inventories, Black, Brown and Red are at length 100 per cent successful in selling the goods. Supply can scarcely keep up with demand. In fact, it is rumored that American Big Business, unless the government quits competing with labels of its own, threatens to improve according to the speedy European plan: Work! Buy! If you don't, we'll shoot!

Perhaps Business will do that, or perhaps Labor will succeed in seizing the power. But whoever triumphs, there will be this to take into account for better or worse: Americans were the first to dominate in the fascist sense. If you are skeptical, consider the three totalitarian coun-

tries across the Atlantic. You will find practises too similar to ours for mere coincidence. You will find the same rotarian gladness, the same prohibition of grief, taboo of art and sex; acceleration of industrial production, cult of exteriority at the expense of intimacy, and above all the same worship of material magnitude. In a word, the very distortion of values that has its imperial precedence in these United States. And you will find there almost as unchallenged as here, the hypnotism of labels so complete that the mass of the people, rich and poor low-brow and high-brow, are unaware of their somnambulism.

Don't mistake me: this hymn of hate has not the intention of denouncing labels. Without them, we should become at best hermits, at worst brutes. Labels should be as multiple as species, as specific as trends of thought or action, as discriminating as human intelligence at its most acute. Labels name values and crystallize groups. An accomplished society goes with them to left, to right, through centers, in intersecting planes, where program and performance take place in varying velocities; and the crossing of these different tempos make the complexities that have come to be known as civilized.

Nor do I mean to charge American labels with complete deception. Spiritually they are cheerful charlatans — they allow the buyers no hint of elegance beyond what cloak and suit trade can provide; of health beyond what the balanced vitamins will give; of ecstasy beyond that of bride and groom delirious over frigidaire and shaving cream. Yet, materially speaking, no doubt the magnates are scrupulous enough. Who would presume to question the purity of our illustrious pharmacals, or the infallibility of our motors and machines? On the other hand, and this is disturbing, production no longer has to be scrupulous. The formula is secret; the buyers are serfs; the multiple label is king. So in Europe, in the fascist countries, government is clandestine; citizens are peons; the totalitarian label reigns.

Our outlook is bleak, with this, however, to look forward to. Heraclitus said: "You cannot step into the same river twice, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you." We who were the first victims may by that token become the first rebels. Having submitted the longest, we may be the first to recognize fresh waters. Today capital is fighting to keep its stolen privileges; labor to appropriate its democratic rights. Tomorrow the reverse may be true. Out of the struggle shall we hope for a moment of new balance, whereby labels shall rediscover their proper function? That is, to distinguish, to identify, even to court and persuade . . . and never to coarsen through despotism.

Let those who love liberty fight with this renaissance at heart. Or is it too late? Are we as a race already hell-bent toward idiocy? Is that where Europe is following us?

December, 1937.

A LETTER FROM ENGLAND

WRITE in the midst of political confusion. In Madrid and other parts of Republican Spain a military junta is in control and is apparently supported by the anarchists in an attempt to suppress a communist revolt. The nationalists look on and wait for the right moment to march in. On the other side of the Pyrennees hundreds of thousands of refugees are suffering the worst horrors of war—hunger, despair and disease. In France angry voices are raised against this brutal form of hospitality, but even charity, in these days, is a political and not an ethical value. In England we have a few feeble committees, mostly composed of well-meaning middle-class intellectuals, who try to raise a few hundred pounds to relieve this mass agony. But the people at large remain indifferent, and their indifference is not stirred by any whips of scorn from those who rule us. Chamberlain, like a cadaverous vulture, surveys the bloody fields from the heights of his class-conscious security. Soon the corpses will be ready to strip; the “trade drive” over the battlefields has already begun.

The old perfidy is now called political realism. In the name of this realism, but actually at the behest of the inactive capital which for some years has been accumulating in the City, all bonds of honour must be abrogated. The treaties which bound us to the defence of Abyssinia and Czechoslovakia are abandoned; the freedom of the seas, the principle upon which our Empire was built up, is surrendered to the more urgent needs of world capitalism. For it was world capitalism that was challenged in Spain, and for the moment it is world capitalism that has triumphed in Spain.

This vital crisis in the history of socialism has found the Socialist party disunited and impotent. I am not going to enter into the petty conflicts of personalities which agitate the surface of the English labour movement. The Cripps affair involves all kinds of motives, among which jealousy is prominent. Cripps is undoubtedly the ablest politician in the socialist party—even by demagogic standards. But he belongs to the upper classes and is very wealthy. Without questioning the honesty of his convictions, we can observe how well they serve the purposes of his ambitions. But the same is true of lesser men—of Attlee, Dalton and a score of other “public school men” who have deserted the interests of their class for the prospects of political power. The working man is right in his instinctive distrust of such men. To what extent his distrust is adequately represented by Sir Walter Citrine and other trade union leaders is not easily estimated; for these leaders have to a considerable degree been de-classed; Citrine's knighthood is evidence of that fact. Furthermore, these trade union leaders now constitute a bureaucracy operating in its own “class” interests, and opposing, not only the intrusion of upper and middle-class careerists like Cripps and Dalton, but also,

even more firmly, the rising of new elements among the workers themselves. The London bus strike of about a year ago—a strike organized by workers' committees in defiance of the trade union executive—was the first open demonstration of this division within the labour movement.

Perhaps the most fundamental division—though by no means always openly confessed—relates to Russia. Citrine and other trade union leaders have been to the U.S.S.R. and have come back, if not disillusioned, at least cautious. The trade union attitude determines the official labour party attitude. Cripps, on the other hand, accepts the Stalinist “Popular Front” policy, and is willing to co-operate, not only with liberal elements to the right, but also with the communist party itself. In this he has the support of the principal labour party “intellectuals”—notably Cole, Laski and Crossman. How these intellectuals can still believe in the myth of a democratic Russia is one of the mysteries of our political life. Either they do not read the mass of accumulated evidence—beginning with Emma Goldman's book of 1922 and reaching its last devastating revelation in Anton Ciliga's book of last year (“Au Pays du Grand Mensonge”)—or by some process they blind themselves to the facts. In either case it can only be described as a pathological defect. Meanwhile they mislead or confuse a considerable section of the working-classes. It yet remains to be seen what support Cripps will get in the constituencies, and whether he will be able to modify the official party attitude on the question. My own opinion is that the workers, confused by these divided counsels, will either abstain from political action, or accept a strong centralized government of a semi-fascist kind. For the very confusion of the Socialist party enables the reactionary forces to present a front of unity and even of social progress.

But this is also obviously the moment for the growth of a non-parliamentarian type of socialism. Anarchism has never been a popular doctrine in England, and even under its more practical aspect, as syndicalism, it has always been regarded as a foreign importation. But assuming that the workers become disillusioned, not only with their bureaucratic executives, but also with the agents of Stalin's nationalist policy, then the only hope for the future would lie in some kind of insurrectionary movement, originating in the workshops and repudiating both the trade unions and the Labour Party. Such a movement, whatever it was called, would inevitably take on an anarchist character, and though everything possible has been done to suppress all knowledge of the strength of anarchism in Spain, the civil war has nevertheless made the workers aware of a living distinction between communism and anarchism; and when the true history of the last phases of that war are written, the ambiguous role played by communism will be evident.

It is obvious that the socialist movement has reached one of the turning points of its history, not only in Great Britain, but throughout the world. So far in every crisis

nationalism has triumphed over socialism—not only in Germany and Italy but equally in Russia and Spain. It is much too optimistic to assume that this is merely a temporary set-back. Even if fascism collapses in Germany and Italy, it will not be replaced by communism or any other form of socialism, but merely by another form of nationalist government. It must now be clearer than ever that socialism can only be established on the basis of a socialist economy. Socialism in one country is not merely a fallacy; it is a deception practiced for tyrannical ends. For even if a country were so balanced in its natural wealth and means of production that socialism were possible in an economic sense, there is no means of isolating such a country from its non-socialist neighbours except the means of self-defensive armaments; and the provision of these armaments not merely upsets the *economic* balance of the country, but creates a non-productive class of vast dimensions and power which upsets the *political* balance of the country.

The conclusion is, that we can only begin again from the beginning, building up an international of socialists; socialists sworn never to desert each other for nationalist motives; socialists convinced beyond any possibility of compromise that the only chance of accomplishing socialism lies in the renunciation of nationalism and of its symbol, the state. The failure of communism does not mean the failure of socialism. From its earliest days socialism has included two mutually inconsistent doctrines—communism and anarchism. Those who have still faith in the dignity of mankind and in its capacity to build up a world of justice and freedom must not despair because one method of procedure has been tried and has failed. They must rather return to an examination of first principles, and then they may discover, in the light of the historical experience of the last thirty years, that when the working-class movement elected to follow Marx rather than Bakunin, it made a mistake for which it is now paying in terms of humiliation and defeat. The other method of socialism remains to be tried. Will the workers of the world take heart, and on this untried basis attempt to create a new civilization amid the ruins of capitalism?

—HERBERT READ.

CENTRAL SPAIN

(Continued from Page 5)

The hatred, the bitterness sown in hearts of sincere militants by the disastrous actions of the Stalinist sabotage of the war, the favoritism, the treachery, tended to justify this support. Their past, their war record put them beyond suspicions. Eduardo Vall is to be looked upon as the man who on the night of the 6th and 7th of November, 1936, saved Madrid from the invasion of Moors and Italians. It was Eduardo Vall, old militant of the CNT-FAI, who was given the task of defending the capital in those tragic hours. The immense prestige which he had among the Madrilenos speaks for itself. As for Cipriano Mera, it is superfluous to recall the prin-

ciple role that he played in the military operations in the central region of Spain. This was just one of the high points in his life as a militant revolutionist. The proletariat of Madrid extended to him a well deserved confidence and admiration. It was he who was responsible for one of the greatest victories of the popular army, that of Guadalajara.

Pawn of Big Powers

These men joined the Junta because they had understood for some time that Russian intervention in Spain had but one real aim, to permit the U.S.S.R. to find a place for itself in the game of Western powers. They had realized that the Spanish workers had served too long as guinea pigs ("conejos de India"—"cobayes") for the Stalinist experiments. After the fall of Catalonia it was realized by those who were well informed that there was no hope for a military resurgence of the Loyalist cause. The duty of all conscious militants who considered the social and revolutionary future of Spain, was therefore to find ways and means of terminating with the least possible loss a war which had taken a frightful toll of lives. The desire to avoid reprisals and a bloody repression guided our comrades. Considering this as the real reason for the support of the Junta, we approved this action; but it goes without saying that the Miaja-Cassado-Besteiro trio could not have had the same reasons as our comrades for eliminating the Communists and ending the war. It seems clear that London and Paris are using the Junta in order to gain a point for themselves at Burgos, where the Italians and Germans would like to be complete masters. Remember the coup of the British warship "Devonshire" in the surrender of Minorca! England and France may be attempting a similar operation in giving, behind the scene, support to the formation of the Junta with a view to concluding a peace without reprisals "among Spaniards." And to take away from Franco the pretext of anti-Bolshevism which serves to keep him under the tutelage of Mussolini and Hitler. The inertia of the international proletariat has given free scope to both the Fascistic imperialisms and Democratic Imperialisms in Spain. States have been permitted to take the place of working masses in Spain. A proletarian revolution, which would have given Socialism the opportunity to develop freely, has been conquered by the cowardice of those very people who should have given all their strength to support it.

Let us not weep then today if we see it crushed under the heels of the unholy alliances of imperialist states . . . Let us rather strive to understand, to clarify and propagate the significance of the magnificent social accomplishments of the revolution, let us illumine the horizon of mankind with the heroic epic of those who, in saving the honor of socialism, have given the exploited and oppressed masses of the earth a new hope for a world of justice and liberty.

BEHIND the fitful peace that rules in France today, the sinister forces that for five years have been biding their time, prepare to raise their heads. Premier Daladier himself, the Popular Front hero of 1934, now a virtual dictator for at least several months to come, with the encouragement of the Franco triumph in Spain, may yet give the signal for such a cataclysmic outburst of reaction. The premier with his new decree laws has already shown that he will not act as he did a few months back with such caution, if the suspension of the social laws may be described in so mild a term. At that time he had to reckon with a weakened but seemingly powerful C.G.T. Today, everyone but the Confederation itself, it appears, is aware of the grave changes that have taken place since the debacle of November 30th.

What greater proof would be necessary to show that the November general strike was justified than in the new decree laws of the premier? What better testimony is now needed to demonstrate the utter negligence of the C.G.T. when it prepared its forces toward that dismal failure? Daladier, now redeemed in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, has opened wide the doors for reaction, for vengeful hatred to beat upon the backs of workers. The premier grooms himself for the role of dictator, his reward for delivering the bourgeoisie from the peril of an imagined revolution. And if France prepares for war, its proletariat, probably to the startled dismay of of C.G.T., will not be consulted. No longer will German labor laws be the envy of French capital. Sixty hours per week for the armament industry. Forced labor even for those who work, and naturally for the unemployed as well. Meetings are forbidden. The holding of a gigantic mass meeting on Spain by the anarchists to expose the horrible conditions of refugees; was stopped by the French fascist police.

The Paralysis of Labor

That the C.G.T. suffers from Blum, Jouhaux, Thorez and a long list of Stalinist labor politicians who have shown themselves everywhere to be the most venomous of poisons, can be seen with half an eye. But it is, however, only a fraction of the truth to attribute the strange lingering malady of which the membership of the C.G.T. suffers to the failure of the general strike as engineered by the aforementioned devoted leaders of the Confederation. The Stalinists, and one would think it a humorous spectacle in different and less tragic circumstances, still pretend with considerable oratory that the strike was a success. These gentlemen, of course, cannot close their eyes to the thousands of dismissed militants, the abrogation of the social laws, the increased taxation on the poor and the tremendous speed-up of industry. But,

they insist, while draping themselves in the tricolor, that the severity of repercussions proves conclusively the success of the general strike. Would that our comrades in Spain could logically and with success prove likewise the defeat of Franco!

A graph of the critical period in the paralysis of French labor would start not from November 30, 1938, but from the time of unity between the C.G.T. and the Communist C.G.T.U. in 1935. The rise of Blum to power in 1936 coincides with the July 19th outbreak of the fascist rebellion in Spain. The growing paralysis of labor may be accurately measured not alone by the successive defeats of the Popular Front, but by its almost unbelievable indifference to and countenance of Blum's Judas policy in respect to the struggles of their brothers to the south. And even today, with the victory of Franco in Spain, with the horrible tragedy of refugees from that country, while men of heart over the world cry with rage at the betrayal, Blum, Jouhaux, the C.G.T. look upon the French assassins with complacency and accept without a cry of "Liars!" the official explanation of the government that the "customary" French generosity is being extended to the Spanish refugees.

The Doctors Have a Plan!

Amid the rumblings from Munich, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Italy and the French reactionary developments, the C.G.T. today keeps itself busy. The learned doctors have uncovered a strange remedy for the victims of their cowardice. It might best be described as a sleeping potion. The Pontiffs of its Administrative Commission cannot find a better answer to the government offensive than by dusting off a hifalutin Plan, pigeon-holed for three years—a program for French rehabilitation of industry, agriculture and finance. It would be interesting to examine a few points of the plan of capital and labor cooperation for which the C.G.T. in a playful mood is mobilizing all its propaganda organs, though we should not forget that at this same moment the reaction is plotting a complete overthrow of the system with which the C.G.T. is tinkering. According to Raymond Bouyer in the "Peuple," employers are stirred by this plan. Perhaps they would be considering the rocky period of French history in which it has been presented, but as the same writer must regretfully note, they haven't taken any time off from carrying out their own plan of depriving the workers of any gains they obtained during the period of direct action.

In an opening paragraph of the Plan, the C.G.T., not eager to alarm anyone, makes clear that it is "definitely not a plan for social transformation," but accord-

ing to Jouhaux, it is only concerned with "guaranteeing our national security." The C.G.T. then proceeds to lay its finger on the real culprits of capitalism—the two hundred families, and all impressions to the contrary, unless you work for one of these tycoons, your boss has interests identical with yours. In fact, says one of the pamphlets, "Ouvriers et Paysannes," issued to popularize the new program, "a long campaign of lies has led workers to believe otherwise." Another pamphlet explains that stockholders and bondholders also suffer under capitalism. It would appear that the problem for the C.G.T. now would be to find a real capitalist.

The creation of an economic parliament composed of representatives of employers, labor, industry, commerce, agriculture, artisans, professions and consumers, to sit constitutionally side by side with the present parliament, is the great feature of the plan. This economic parliament would be consulted on all decrees affecting the economy. It would submit suggestions for legislation and would without a struggle be made the directing body of a nationalized Bank of France. Coming from the C.G.T. the latter suggestion proves conclusively that the organization is punch drunk from the beatings the Bank gave it during the Popular Front regime.

The plan further envisages a more complete exploitation of colonies and, in conclusion, after a few sentences of international good will between workers (now that Spain is lost) submits the unemployment problem to the good graces of the State. But Minister Reynaud has already disposed of this solution in his remark "more machine guns and less ornamental fountains." And Daladier has already incorporated his minister's sentiment into law by decreeing forced labor for the unemployed.

The Stalinists Plan Too

Let no one imagine that the C.G.T. can proceed in so airily a fashion during these troublous times and not pay the penalty. The indifference of the employers to the plan is matched only by the indifference of the workers, and the encouragement it has given the government to proceed at a faster pace on its dictatorial program. Internally, the effects of its cowardly policy can already be noted in membership losses. There can be no doubt however that growing Stalinist control has contributed likewise to the unhappy situation. Though the old C.G.T. leaders feel secure in their lofty positions, the communists have made deep inroads in particular regions. The Paris region has now become completely Stalinized in control. In 1936, parity existed on the executive committee between the old C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U. By 1937 parity was destroyed, 22 to 13. In 1938, the Stalinists reduced to seven the number of ex-

confederates. The congress of the Paris region last month elected a completely purged committee.

But all does not go well. The aforementioned congress in Paris showed definitely that things were amiss. *How would one explain the fact that only 295 of the 628 affiliated syndicates were represented?* Has the C.G.T. been completely colonized? But perhaps the absent ones understood perfectly the uselessness of the proceedings, its unimportance to the working class. And it's not likely that they are going to change their opinions especially since their general treasurer, Gaston Guiraud, got his walking papers. It's true that nominations are open for any candidate, but "What's the use," reply most of the syndicates. The new method of representation gives the larger unions, communist controlled, the power to do as they please.

The Balance Sheet Tells the Story

We do not wish to underestimate the effect of the government's policy of repression following the failure of the general strike. But the Stalinist control of the Paris region has also borne its fruit. The 1938 financial statement of the Paris unions gives us an inkling of its effect. Comparing the report of 1937 with the latest, we find that a total of 1,831,621 less monthly dues stamps were paid. If we accept the official average of 8 monthly stamps per member, the loss of membership in Paris would be 225,000. In September, 1937, 1,087,682 stamps were paid; in September, 1938, only 617,732; in October, 1937, 749,176 stamps, in October 1938, 601,151; in November 1937, 979,020 stamps, in November 1938, 403,845; December, 1937, 939,401 stamps, in December, 1938, 652,490. Thus in the four-month period from September 1st to December 31, 1938, there was a loss of 1,500,000 stamps from the same period September 1st to December 31, 1937. The general strike, of course, took place on November 30, 1938.

But the conquest of the C.G.T. in France by the agents of Moscow is not complete. At the Lille Congress of the Departementale du Nord, the hardworking miners and mill workers rebuffed the communist command. The Lille Congress preferred to side with its old reformist fighter, Georges Dumoulin, a crafty leader of long experience. But Dumoulin will not bring the social revolution. He may not lead them into disastrous adventures of the Stalinist political variety, but his victory is of doubtful joy considering his own rightist variety of class collaboration which he openly advocates. It is noteworthy, however, that here the leaders of the congress had to carefully skirt the question of Spain in order to avoid putting Jouhaux on the spot.

Tomorrow and Tomorrow

What lies in store for France? The future is none too bright if one measures the capacity the French worker is showing to halt the march of events. He is a pacifist by virtue of many years' education. Somewhat irked by the treatment his government accorded the Czechs, he spoke hot words before Munich, but accepted the aftermath with considerable relief. His sense of solidarity had been successfully squelched by Blum in respect to the Spanish struggle, so one can understand perfectly how easily his wounded dignity was healed by ultra-leftist phrases assuring him that under Hitler the Czechs would be no worse off than they would be under their own bourgeoisie. Daladier has probably deeply appreciated the latter argument since it aided his policy of appeasement so magnificently. Jacques may distrust the premier's *penchant* for dictatorial methods, but what best characterizes the French worker today is his feeling of utter helplessness, which is, with the active support of the C.G.T., driving him into the refuge of nationalism. And thus more easily does he fit into the sinister plans of the rising dictator.

Can the trend be stopped? Will the fate of Spain bring French labor to the realization that the reaction is plotting a similar fate for them? Will the impending war clouds jerk labor from its apathy and with a true program of social reconstruction can it once more hurl its challenge at the bourgeoisie? Without doubt the hope lies in a spontaneous mass upsurge of French labor as it occurred in 1936, which once more, but with finality must strike terror into the hearts of the reaction.

REACTION SPREADS

(Continued from Page 3)

the courage to voice their opposition openly, but have given their secret aid to the reactionary forces that pave the way over the backs of aliens, for deportations, concentration camps and suppression of labor struggles. This is a sad commentary on those forces upon which the main burden of battling for the rights of labor, aliens and human liberty and dignity falls. And we believe that this shameful attitude should be openly brought to the attention of all unionists for them to exert their utmost energy in rebuilding their organizations as bulwarks against the coming reaction.

To those who still hold illusions as the liberal character of the Roosevelt administration in respect to such rights as we have discussed, we should like to remind them that the government has not let up in its persecution of Marcus Graham, editor of the anarchist paper "Man!" And it has just been brought to our attention that through the Post Office Department an attempt has been made to censor "Revolt," issued by the Revolutionary

Workers League of the United States for reprinting a section of Marx and Engel's "Communist Manifesto." By defending ourselves against such persecutions will we be able to ward off the attacks which reaction is planning for the future.

QUESTION BOX

A COMRADE from Tacoma, Washington, asks us whether "the libertarians intend to *abolish all authority* as the first step toward social reconstruction."

We singled out this question from a few others because it embodies in a conjectural form one of the common misconceptions prevailing in regard to the libertarian idea. Because the libertarians uphold the ideal of the *ultimate* emancipation of the individual from all vestiges of authority, it is very often deemed that this emancipation is conceived by them in the nature of an instantaneous historic act, of a miraculous historic transformation along the lines envisaged by the writers of social utopias.

Libertarians are not necessarily utopians, although, due to specific historic causes, they have in their midst a larger proportion of utopians than the representatives of other radical movements. There is no logical connection at all between the libertarian idea as such and the negation of transitional stages in its realization.

Authority cannot be abolished by a single historic act: it can be uprooted and weeded out only in a long process of social transformations, re-education of the great mass of humanity in the school of mutual aid and solidarity afforded by a socialized economy and a free political order. The immediate task facing our generation is not that of an integral realization of the libertarian ideal of the total disappearance of authority from social relationships, but of laying the chief basis for a new social order enabling it to evolve by the cumulative process of its own progressive development toward the ideal of a non-governmental society.

It is in the conception of the nature of this *necessary premise* for the peaceful evolution toward the ultimate ideal that the libertarians differ from the Marxist protagonists of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." They do not differ, as it is erroneously assumed by many people, in point of acceptance of such a premise in terms of a transitional period, which is to realize certain basic changes in the social order.

The libertarians hold that such changes must also extend to the field of political relationships. In other words, the necessary premise of a social order evolving toward the full abolition of authority should be a political system in which authority plays a progressively *decreasing* and not *increasing* role. The libertarians reject as illogical and unscientific, the Marxist idea of dictatorship leading toward liberty; that is, of sweeping away all checks and curbs imposed by progressive societies upon the exercise of authority, of augmenting the power of the state to the degree prevailing only in the oriental despoties of the ancient times—and then to expect that by some miraculous process this hypertrophied state will have dissolved itself in the new social organism.

Instead of dictatorship as the political form of the transitional period, the libertarians advance the idea of a decentralized political order as the starting point of the new social development, an order in which authority is left to function in society but at the same time it is hedged about by *so many limitations* and social controls as to make its gradual swallowing up by the newly emerging social relations a comparatively easy and painless process.

THE THREE-CORNERED battle for control of the U.A.W. (United Automobile Workers) has completed its first phase. As the smoke clears from the scene the opposing camps are revealed in the following positions. The Homer Martin faction, which claimed a majority of the union has discovered much to its chagrin that he and his Lovestoneite friends are in control of less than one-third of the union membership. The two other factions are temporarily united though the CIO and the Stalinist bureaucracy battle each other behind the scenes.

The Homer Martin convention resembled an American Legion rally in spirit. Amid flag waving and red-baiting, the delegates hysterically endorsed the activities of Martin, the jingoist Macartney and his confederate Parker. They adopted resolutions which mirrored the spirit of the convention leaders. In particular, one resolution makes the oath of allegiance to the constitution and the flag obligatory on any worker applying for membership. The language used in their denunciations of Lewis and the CIO as communists was reminiscent of some of Father Coughlin's gems of wisdom. Finally, the convention reaffirmed its opposition to wildcat strikes and sitdowns and showed clearly its determination to fulfill the notorious contracts made with the auto barons. Whether or not Martin and his crowd join the A. F. of L., his brand of unionism will continue to receive the full support of the fascist-minded employers. Indeed, it is highly probable that Martin's faction will serve as a corner-stone in erecting a string of fascistic unions similar to the Catholic unions in Quebec and the Catholic fractions in the Transport Workers Union here in New York.

The main body of the U.A.W. convened in Cleveland where in the struggle for control of the union the CIO made the greatest gains. The attempts of the Stalinists to win the presidency for Richard Frankenstein and elect their own slate of candidates as vice-presidents were foiled by a successful coalition of the CIO bureaucracy and the socialists. As a compromise measure, however, the communists were given strong representation on the newly elected executive board. The convention likewise showed employers that there was no cause for alarm and expressed its determination to curb outlaw strikes and enforce the contracts on the workers. Despite talk to the contrary, the CIO bureaucracy remains in the helm. But the spirit of militancy that forced the auto kings to recognize unionism has faded. The gains made by the workers as a result of the unprecedented series of sitdown strikes were left unguarded and are being bargained away by the leadership. The clashes between the various factions for monopolistic right to control the treasury has precipitated a crisis during which at least 100,000 disgusted members have dropped out. The industrial interests, never asleep, are cooperating with the reactionary state government of Michigan to pass a bill outlawing the sitdown strike and making any strike unlawful that has been called without eighteen days' notice. (In transportation and utilities 40 days' notice is required.) Among the other equally reactionary provisions is one which prohibits mass picketing.

Since neither convention has solved the basic questions of democracy and working conditions, it seems likely that the U.A.W. will become little better than a company union unless drastic action is taken immediately. The rank and file must clean house and wrest control from the labor politician and inaugurate anew the spontaneous militant sitdowns which once before had stopped the reactionary elements in their tracks. The time has come to make a clean break with the business unionism of the AFL-CIO variety and until that is done the U.A.W. will fail to forge ahead.

* * *

Encouraged by the results of the last election, and emboldened by the weakness of labor, the reactionary forces are "making hay while the sun shines." Congress has cut the \$150,000,000 WPA appropriation requested by the president to \$100,000,000, and as a result, 700,000 relief workers will be cast adrift by June 30th. While millions are on the brink of destitution, billions will be spent for bullets. In this crisis, the Workers Alliance urges us to rely upon Roosevelt and his friends in Congress. A picture post-card campaign and a dose of appeasement is their best solution to the attack. Why the absence of mass picketing, strikes and demonstrations which marked the formation of the Workers Alliance? The answer has become too obvious for many of its members already. Like the CIO, the A. F. of L. and the Stalinists, the Alliance has become a respectable body. As a recognized bargaining agency for WPA workers, it has achieved a quasi-official status. Both the Socialist and Communist politicians who control the Alliance are hearty New Dealers, each for reasons of his own. Many, if not all of the leaders, have received subtle bribes in the form of supervisory and executive sinecures in the work relief set-up. This is especially true in New York City where the Stalinists are well entrenched. The workers on the WPA are beginning to show displeasure with the high handed manner in which the organization is acting. Many have dropped out of the Workers Alliance and others are taking matters into their own hands without the blessings of the leadership. This latter tendency is encouraging since a return to the early militancy amongst project workers is the only solution compatible with the present situation. The Alliance must be made an organ of workers rights and not those of its comfortable leadership.

* * *

The CIO and AFL unity conferences have become especially significant of late since it was no less a friend of labor than President Roosevelt who brought the warring factions together. That Roosevelt did so solely for the good of labor can be believed only by the naive camp followers of the New Deal.

Only weighty considerations could have urged him to take this step, and one of these reasons may be the clear demonstration of the recent elections that a Democratic victory in 1940 is impossible without the full support of labor. The rivalry of Green and Lewis had threatened to split his labor vote. Another reason may be the desire to regiment labor into a single organization amenable to administration control, a policy which from the outset has been part of the New Deal program. This policy takes on added significance because his war preparations of industry would lack totalitarian efficiency without a similar preparation of labor organizations. Important as the above considerations may be, the proposed amity maneuvers are indicative of a very unhealthy state of the labor movement. That both the CIO and A. F. of L. should show willingness to become "government sponsored" is testimony to how feeble a struggle against war and suppression of civil rights may be expected from the labor movement. And that this infamous procedure should be greeted with shouts of glee and paeans of praise from the liberal and radical press, is a further sign of bankruptcy in labor's ranks.

The time is ripe for the revolutionary left wing of the labor movement to swing into action. It is for these elements to fearlessly point out the dangerous position and trends in the CIO and A. F. of L. It is for them to build from the cremated bones of business unionism, fighting revolutionary industrial unionism.

* * *

We have received a communication from H. J. Emery, a member of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, concerning the article, "Maritime Unions" (Vanguard, Vol. 4, No. 7). The writer takes

exception to some of my statements. Referring to the statement "sixty full book members of the SUP were prevented from sailing on the SUP ships," he asks, "can you prove that this is not a lie?" At New Orleans, La., the SUP which had been doing its shipping through the I.W.W. hall when it moved into the headquarters of the S.I.U. of N. A. under control of "Finn" Sheftadt. The "Finn," a notorious strike-breaker of the old ISU and who had been able to maintain his control because of his contact with the Mississippi Steamship Co., began at once to terrorize the membership of the SUP by making one shipping list for both SUP and SIU. Members of the SUP stayed away from the hall until the presence of 60 members on the beach aroused the curiosity of Lundeberg in San Francisco. Several months later in an issue of the *West Coast Sailors*, the "Finn," reporting for the port of New Orleans, told the membership that one Bowerman was crazy. Bowerman, an SUP member and Despatcher at the SIU Hall was run out of town by gunmen of the Mississippi SS Co. after he had protested to the company that they were not living up to the agreements. The "Finn" incidentally announced that he had now established two shipping lists which enabled the SUP members to sail.

"You state," says our correspondent further, "that Lundeberg refuses to ship members of the IWW." The case of the *Sage Brush* is one in point here. The ship had been taken back under SUP jurisdiction at Philadelphia in June, 1938, with the help of the IWW which had also aided the SUP to regain the Shepard Line ships from the NMU. Heretofore, the SUP shipping had been done through IWW halls on the East and Gulf coasts. But SUP officials were now in receipt of instructions to ship the crew of the *Sage Brush* through the ILA hall. Incidentally, it was necessary to receive police protection for the crew who went through picket lines, though IWW cards would have received recognition from the NMU pickets for that ship.

He objects to the statement that SUP has withdrawn its active support from the fight against government regulation. It is a fact that the IWW was not able to interest members of the SUP in the fight until the latter began to grow fearful that they would lose the Dollar Line ships which at that time were being reconditioned by the Maritime Commission for a renewal of their round-the-world-service. When the last of the Dollar Line boats departed from New York, SUP controlled because of this fight, they withdrew their support from the picket line.

Our criticism of the SUP is based solely on grounds of principle. We still maintain that affiliation to the A. F. of L. was a serious mistake. Nor do we underestimate the militant spirit of the membership, which we now trust will guide the SUP on a true course. (Many members of the SUP now realize that affiliation with the A. F. of L. was a mistake.) We are only too glad to give credit where credit is due. We are vitally concerned in the struggle against government regulation, and are glad to learn that both the SUP and the NMU have come out against the Fink (Government hiring) Hall. If the SUP was not wholehearted on the Fink Hall question on the East Coast, the issue became crucial when it struck home on the West Coast. Let us hope that this will teach the seamen everywhere that this fight must be carried on always both in and out of season, that this fight represents a principle and not an expedient.

In his letter the writer defends the SUP as an organization controlled by its membership. This question was not raised in my article. However, we intend to take up this aspect of the question in relation to the old line A. F. of L. setup in the SIU of which the SUP is part.

OUR MOVEMENT IN BULGARIA

The following report from our comrades in Bulgaria is most heartening and is of deep interest to Libertarians everywhere. After a period of terrific persecutions and slaughter which shocked the world, the anarchist forces of Bulgaria are coming back against terrific odds. The seeds of anarchism have been too deeply planted for even Fascist brutality to uproot in this important little country, the gateway to the Near East.

THE ANARCHIST movement in Bulgaria has remained organized in spite of the terror existing for the past five years and has not lost contact with the masses.

Propaganda is of course forbidden and the groups are operating underground. Their press is secretly issued and liberation ideas are spread constantly among the youth. The suppression of revolutionary ideas attempted by the ruling class has thus not been successful. There are around 100 groups which are organized into four regional unions composing the Anarchist-Communist Federation. The Federation organizes a congress each year and publishes monthly its underground paper, "Bread and Liberty." And whenever events call for it, tracts and brochures are issued. This literature is spread by the groups and by special comrades delegated for the risky task by the organization. This activity does not always go off without an accident. The police are constantly making raids and arrests among militants suspected of being anarchists. During 1938, more than 100 comrades were arrested and two trials took place in which severe sentences were meted out to the condemned.

The influence of the anarchists is considerable and in the last few years the peasant movement, known as "Vlassovden" has come under the leadership of the anarchist groups. A labor movement based on class struggle is forbidden in Bulgaria. The workers are forced into groups in a manner similar to the corporative unions of Mussolini. There officials are, of course, do-nothings. But in spite of police surveillance, we have made inroads. Comrades have succeeded in getting into directing posts under cover of which they spread their ideas. All revolutionary workers unite periodically in purging these organizations of elements who were placed there by the government. We have likewise not forgotten the cooperative movement and the youth organizations, in both of which we are growing because of our activity.

Besides the Anarchist-Communist Federation there exist anarcho-syndicalist groups, who, though desiring to build revolutionary unions, are naturally prevented. They are likewise grouped as we are and publish literature periodically.

—"Le LIBERTAIRE."

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NO MORE COMPROMISE

by PIERRE BESNARD

The following article by Comrade Pierre Besnard, an ex-secretary of the I.W.M.A. to which the CNT is affiliated, opens up a discussion on the lessons of the Spanish tragedy which we will continue in the Vanguard. While we agree with Comrade Besnard that the fundamental tenets of Anarcho-Syndicalism were not strictly adhered to by our revolutionary Spanish comrades, and that these tenets still occupy first place guiding our relations with the capitalist world we find it incumbent upon us to point out that the actions of our comrades in Spain cannot be judged apart from the international situation to which the civil war gave rise. We reaffirm our conviction that collaboration with the bourgeoisie should be shunned, but we must again insist that tribute should be paid to the CNT for the heroic struggle it was capable of maintaining. Our comrades understood their responsibilities and, not being dogmatists, were able to conduct their work as an integral part of the Spanish struggle against the formidable intervention of the fascist powers.

THE struggle that is at an end in Spain shows beyond the shadow of a doubt that all collaboration and compromise with the bourgeoisie must henceforth be banished from our midst. Between us, one thing exists: *The Class Struggle*. It is within the power of no one to conceal this fact and only the elimination of classes and the institution of economic and social equality will result in the disappearance of this struggle. On every occasion that we do not recognize this basic truth, we shall inevitably be defeated in the ensuing struggle.

Each time it finds itself in difficulties, the bourgeoisie accepts and even demands collaboration with the proletariat. But when the crisis is over, it resumes its freedom to do as it pleases and, naturally, turns its weapons in full upon the working class. This pattern of events has been followed in all periods of history, not just in revolutionary ones. But, however disastrous might be its practical consequences in the ordinary day to day struggle, it takes on catastrophic proportions when it concerns such elemental social conflicts as was the case in Spain.

Let the bourgeoisie be "left" or use ultra-leftist phrases, invariably they are for a line of action contrary to the interests of the people. Even if they wished to be otherwise, it cannot be so for their interests are forever fundamentally opposed to that of the workers. Let them rally enthusiastically and even aid the revolution in periods when they cannot help doing otherwise, it is only to have their past actions forgotten or overlooked. And when the leading figures and politicians of the dying regime proclaim themselves openly for the new order and support the most radical groups, as they did in Spain, one can be sure that it is only to bore from within and to secure positions of prestige which will permit them in time to strangle the revolution which in a moment of weakness called for and made use of their cooperation.

Too feeble at the outset to speak as masters, they will begin by silently worming themselves into the revolutionary councils where gradually they gain a certain authority and undermine that of true revolutionaries. With an air of innocence they push the sincere into stupid blunders, and one fine day, they show their true colors. When the role these men played will finally be understood, it will be already too late to repair the damage inflicted in the name of some "technical advantage" or other worthless pretext.

The desire to defeat the politicians in the field of politics is the greatest mistake that revolutionaries can commit. The desire to overthrow the bourgeoisie in collaboration with certain of

its elements is no less dangerous. These two things are to be avoided at all costs. Nothing must be allowed to effect a reconciliation with our enemies. Not even the most imminent peril! A sudden and certain betrayal is in store for us if we disregard this historic truth, if we place even the slightest faith in those who are destined to be our enemies. Whatever mistakes we make in the course of the revolution, none can be so serious as those which involve us with the opposing class, even if they assume a democratic guise.

The bourgeoisie, since its birth in 1789, has never deviated from its course of deceiving the people and stripping every social upheaval of its accomplishments. So it was in 1830, in 1848, in 1871. The results were identical. The Spanish Revolution of April 14, 1934 followed in the footsteps of its predecessors and the seal has just been placed on the revolution of July 19th. These facts should prevent anyone from still maintaining that collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its politicians is able in some way to insure the success of the revolution. Cold doctrinaires such as we can derive no advantage from the unhappy conclusion of the struggle, but we have the right, in spite of having ardently wished for another end, to say that we had foreseen it. Beyond some relative merit, much in Spain followed the general line of social history. Our one desire is not to see these errors repeated and we will do all in our power toward that end.

Improvements that can possibly be made in society at the expense of solidly entrenched interests are indeed puny. They will merely affect some detail but leave intact the foundations. So it will be as long as we have the class struggle. This fundamental fact has convinced us of a doctrine which experience has tested and which no one can therefore dare modify, presumptive as he might be. Those who for one reason or another have transgressed, have been convinced much to their regret of the law's inflexibility.

Let us then remain on our own ground where we are strong. I believe that I have sufficiently covered this in my books* where I have treated the ideology, the plan of realization and the morality of our movement on both a national and international scale. We have here and in other works by militants since Bakunin, Kropotkin, Rocker and numerous others, all that is necessary to accomplish our task without having recourse to the advice of the bourgeoisie.

Let us then study our literature, take heed of our international congresses and shun false departures from a doctrine which is and must become the practice of tomorrow. We will thus be on the right road. All other roads are misleading which will either get us nowhere or lead us to defeat.

Let us stress the idea that even under the most favorable circumstances all compromise only guarantees us the perpetuation of the authoritarian state and the triumph of our enemies, the politicians, whose program carries but two articles: One, to take power, and Two, to keep this power by all means even the worst. If we sincerely wish to liberate our class and all of humanity we must work towards our goal: for feudalism and liberty, and not for centralized power and dictatorship.

Let us go in this direction and in no other, without compromise of any kind. We have the means. Let us have the will!

*"Les Syndicates Ouvriers et La Revolution Sociale"
"Le Monde Nouveau"
"L'Ethique du Syndicalisme"

The efforts for the release of the Harlan, Kentucky miners who are serving life terms as a result of the famous Battle of Evarts in 1931, have never been relaxed during these long years by the Kentucky Miners Defense and Herbert Mahler, its Secretary-Treasurer. In 1935, they were able to effect the pardon of 3 miners, leaving the remaining four languishing behind prison bars separated from their homes and families.

The Defense has accomplished prodigious work in obtaining confessions of perjury, and recommendations for release of the men from 46 of the 47 living jurors. They have presented new evidence time and again to the governor at pardon hearings, but the chief executive continues to evade the issue.

Unless all organized workers, and all friends of the workers, protest against further delay the pardon appeals of the Harlan miners will remain mere pawns in the game of politics. Help to win freedom for these innocent union miners by:

1. *Writing a letter, or having your organization send a resolution, to Lieut-Gov. Keen Johnson, Frankfort, Ky., urging immediate pardons for the Harlan prisoners: W. B. Jones, 22064; Chester Poore, 22050; Jim Reynolds, 22051; Al Benson, No. 22052.*

2. *Contributing to the nation-wide pardon campaign fund. Act today. Send your contributions to:*

KENTUCKY MINERS DEFENSE
Herbert Mahler, Secretary-Treasurer
75 Fifth Avenue — New York City

VANGUARD SUSTAINING FUND

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Leaves Pier 1, North River, N. Y., at 9 A.M. Return trip from Bear Mountain at 6:30 P.M. Adults, \$1.00; Children up to 12 years, 50c. There will be swimming, dancing, games, refreshments and spaghetti at Bear Mountain. Auspices of the Brooklyn II Proletario Group, 158 Carroll St., Brooklyn.

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