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CONTENTS

THE
CIVIL WAR
AND THE
IMPERIALIST CONFLICTS
IN
SPAIN

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CENTRISM UPHOLDS
THE BOURGEOIS DICTATORSHIP

The Spanish Civil War has again brought to the surface the question of Civil War, of class against class and imperialist war. Under the leadership of its class party, the Bolshevik Party, the Russian proletariat in 1917 turned the imperialist war into civil war, into class war. In the absence of class party of the Spanish proletariat the Spanish bourgeoisie and the world bourgeoisie have turned a civil war into a war under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, that is, essentially an imperialist conflict. To analyse this fundamental fact is the task of this article.

The Right and Left Arm of the Exploiters

There can be no doubt that the Spanish bourgeoisie, after having so successfully undermined the class ideology of the Spanish proletariat through its left arm (in its extreme form, the "People's Front"), thought it would be comparatively easy to finish the job of breaking the resistance of the militant Spanish workers, by employing its right arm, - the forces of open and brutal reaction.

The division of labor between the two wings of the bourgeoisie (the reactionary wing being reinforced by the forces of the landlords) seemed to work perfectly. The "liberal" bourgeoisie allowed the forces of reaction to grow under its very eyes, - in the whole state machinery, above all in the army. The scene was set for the last stage of the play. The reactionary wing of the bourgeoisie was to complete the work done by the "People's Front" bourgeoisie. Whenever the antagonism among the exploiters is threatened by a greater danger - a Proletariat Revolution - temporary agreements are obtained to smash the working class. Then, with the proletariat and peasantry smashed, the "liberal" bourgeoisie would have joined the reactionary bourgeoisie in a ruthless class war of extermination.

Both sides were already laying the base for renewed open cooperation. They were ready for a sham battle, but no more than that. The real battle was to come after that, - the war of extermination against the workers and peasants. But they underestimated the tremendous militancy of the Spanish proletariat and peasantry. When the reactionary forces staged their coup d'etat, the workers in the great cities and industrial areas turned against them with such determination, that the whole plan of the bourgeoisie was threatened with complete failure. Class war threatened to replace the sham battle between two sections of the exploiters. The bourgeoisie had to change its whole perspective. The masses had begun to take matters into their own hands. So the masses had to be courted with. The strategy of the bourgeoisie had to be changed from a quick blow to a long drawn-out process of ideological and organizational penetration of the ranks of the workers by the bourgeoisie. In other words, the work of the "liberal" bourgeoisie could not yet be regarded as completed. On the con-

trary, it had to be intensified. To meet an extreme situation, the liberal bourgeoisie had to carry the "People's Front" fakery, which already intended to drop, to extremes. The date for the re-unification with the reactionary bourgeoisie and the joint execution of an openly reactionary policy had to be postponed. It had become necessary first to drive the Spanish proletariat still further off its class line, to which it instinctively clung, in spite of all the work of disorientation of the liberal bourgeoisie and its agents in the ranks of the workers.

National Unity to Defeat the Proletariat

This, of course, implied that the battle between the two sections of the bourgeoisie broke out into armed conflict by the pressure of the proletariat and peasants. The division of labor continues as before, only in a more accentuated form: while the reactionary wing of the bourgeoisie, together with the forces of feudalism, does the bloody job of mowing down the battle lines of the workers and peasants, the liberal wing completes work of bringing the workers (who treachered to get out of hand) back to loyalty to the bourgeois state and to confidence in the "progressive", "liberating" mission of a section of the bourgeoisie. In other words, away from the class struggle, back to national unity. In order to achieve this national unity between exploiters and exploited, the war against the "rebellious" section of the exploiters had to be prolonged as long as the working-class still shows sign of class independence. Under the slogan of "defence of the legal government", supposedly representing the interests of the whole people, against the "dissenters", representing foreign interests, the rebellious workers and peasants are being brought back into the fold of "the nation".

A class party of the proletariat could have prevented the plan of the bourgeoisie. It could have intensified the class war and led the workers and peasants to victory. Its absence left the road free for the bourgeoisie and its agents in the workers' ranks. Fighting for the two sections of the ruling classes (because we must not forget that those fighting under Franco and Mola are also workers and peasants, as the soldiers of every army), the working masses of Spain have spilled their blood and lost their best elements. The ranks of the proletariat have been decimated terrifically. And worst is still to come, - the white terror, first of the victorious "rebels", then of the re-united bourgeoisie! While thus systematically and only too successfully weakening the workers and peasants physically and politically, the two sections of the bourgeoisie have all along endeavored to come to a quicker re-unification of their forces. Behind the backs of the fighters on the front they have secretly negotiated for a truce. The war, while benefiting certain sections of the bourgeoisie (those working for war supplies, - with the workers putting in unpaid overtime!), has at the same time led to such a dislocation of economy generally, that the Spanish bourgeoisie begins to fear that even with a defeated working-class and peasantry its profits will be curtailed enormously.

The Power of the Proletariat

But what has prevented thus far a truce between Azana-Caballero and Franco-Mola is the fact that, in spite of all, the working-class is not yet as completely driven off its instinctive class independence as the bourgeoisie needs it. Betrayed by all their leaders, from the S.P. and C.P. to the Anarchists and the P.O.U.M., the workers of Spain continue to revolt against the truce with the liberal bourgeoisie which these leaders try to impose upon them. On Oct. 14 the Anarchist Minister of Economics in the Catalan Government has to admit that "my decree suspending all collectivizations and confiscations which were taking place in industrial and agricultural enterprises, has been attacked throughout Catalonia". Hundreds of little facts can be gleaned from the Spanish press, especially from that of Catalonia, which show that the workers have not yet been made to understand completely that their "proletarian duty" now is to SUSPEND THE CLASS STRUGGLE, "for the sake of the struggle on the front against fascism". The various organizations with influence in the working-class, in fact all of them without any exception, continuously urge the workers to work longer hours without pay, not to fight for a raise in their wages, etc. LA BARCELONA, the Barcelona organ of the PCIB, comes out openly against "excessive conquests" of the workers organized in the trade unions, and for "sacrifices" and more "heroism". The working-hours it proposes are 10-14 hours. (Oct. 17) The same tune is played in practically every issue of the various organs of the S.P., C.P., the trade unions, and above all the Anarchists. The argument in each case is a twofold one: we must all pull together, we must all sacrifice, in order to "win the war" (the phrase current in the whole press, including LA BARCELONA) and, the special argument of the "working-class press", the workers CAN sacrifice, because it is THEY who now run the economic and political life of the country. And the bourgeoisie applauds! Especially Azana and Companys, the spokesmen of the Spanish and Catalan bourgeoisie, find no works big enough to praise the "spirit of sacrifices" of the Spanish and Catalan liberal bourgeoisie for the "common good". Like all exploiters they leave "heroism" and "sacrifices" to the masses. And they know that THEY still run the economical and political life of the country.

Proletariat Betrayed by the Leaders

The workers do not KNOW this. They only sense it instinctively. That is why they continue to confiscate and collectivise the socialise FROM BELOW. But from day to day their field of activity is being restricted FROM ABOVE, by their leaders who have sold out to the bourgeoisie. Now the bourgeoisie has "socialist" and "communist" and "anarchist" ministers at its disposal, this has become much easier than before. Step by step the living stream of the revolution is canalised into legal channels - the "new revolutionary legality", as the P.O.U.M. calls it. The revolution is being strangled by those who in words proclaim to lead it to victory.

While the workers still fight to carry on the revolution in

the factories and fields, that is there where the very roots of their class consciousness lie, where they face the CLASS enemy directly, it appears that in the political field they have already almost completely succumbed to the slow poison of the propaganda of the liberal bourgeoisie and their conscious and unconscious agents, whose ranks have now been swelled by the anarchists and the P.O.U.M. The fact which shows this is that they accept the "new" state as THEIR state. How could we expect it to be otherwise if their own leaders, both "Marxist" and "anarchist", tell them that it IS their state? This is precisely the field in which a class party is INDISPENSABLE to the proletariat. The workers will always continue to fight, but to raise their fight above the struggle against the immediate enemy, the boss, to the struggle against the whole system, means in the first place to raise it to a struggle against the bourgeois STATE. And that requires a crystal clear understanding of the NATURE of the bourgeois state and of the many FORMS it can take, without changing its class content. That understanding the proletariat can reach only through its Marxist, communist class party.

P.O.U.M. and Syndicalists Betray Proletariat

Although the about-face of the anarchists from their opposition to ANY kind of state, including the dictatorship of the proletariat as a necessary stage towards a free, stateless society, to the support of a plainly bourgeois state could be anticipated theoretically, still the speed with which it has come about, and the forms it has taken, are startling. In Barcelona, above all, where the anarchists are the leading force in the working-class, their betrayal has been the key to the triumph of the bourgeoisie under Companys over the working-class. The confusion in the minds of the workers who are under the influence of the anarchists must be terrific.

The betrayal of the anarchists has been the key to the triumph of the bourgeoisie. But that triumph would not have been complete without the simultaneous betrayal of the "Marxist", "communist" P.O.U.M. They were given by the bourgeoisie a far more difficult task than the anarchists. The anarchist followers had always been theoretically confused. The followers of the P.O.U.M., on the contrary, had been taught to look to such clear, scientific men as Marx, Engels, Lenin, as their spiritual leaders. They had been taught Lenin's position on the state. To make them accept a reformed bourgeois state as THEIR state, the leaders of the P.O.U.M. had to produce THEORETICAL arguments. And they produced these arguments. While continuing to swear on Lenin's "State and Revolution" as their bible, they have succeeded in distorting every one of his concepts into its very opposite. The "Socialists" never accepted these arguments. The present-day "Communists" (Stalinists) conveniently forgot them. The P.O.U.M. retains their shell, but completely changes their content. Their service to the bourgeoisie, in its hour of need, is immeasurable. Their betrayal of the proletariat is equally immeasurable. And those who, like the Trotskyite "International", promised the P.O.U.M. their "political" support, will never be able to whitewash themselves of their share of responsibility for this betrayal.

Central Task: Smash Bourgeois State

To deny the class character of the state and to present it as something above the classes is the central aim of the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the Marxists. To expose the class character of the state, ANY state, and to lead the workers in the struggle for the COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF THE BOURGEOIS STATE APPARATUS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS AND FORMS and to replace it by a completely new proletarian state apparatus is the central task of the Marxists. The struggle against the revisionists has above all been a struggle against two concepts: that the proletariat could take over the state machinery of the bourgeoisie for its own class ends, and, that there could be transitory forms of the state between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat. And it is precisely these two revisionist concepts which the P.O.U.M. puts forward today. Stripped of all bombast their new "theory" is as follows: "The military-fascist insurrection has destroyed the whole bourgeois state apparatus. It has broken up the army. It has disorganized the other armed forces and all state institutions." And again in a general formula: "History has taught us that unsuccessful reactionary coups d'etat have in a revolutionary period the effect of making the bourgeois state apparatus unworkable." (P.O.U.M., Madrid edition, August 28, 1936). In answering this argument it is only necessary to point out that the same number of the paper reports that the bourgeois state apparatus is still full even of outright fascist elements and that it is impossible to dislodge them because they have the support of their superiors. And the bourgeois censor gives the readers an object lesson in the degree to which the "whole bourgeois state apparatus has been destroyed", by cutting whole sections out of the paper.

The Proletariat and the Army

Now to the army. While it is true that the majority of the regiments sided with Franco and Mola, a complete skeleton force remained in the hands of the Madrid regime, with general staff, generals, colonels, etc. This section of the old army, together with the strong police force, especially the special anti-working class formations, like the civil guards and the shock police, and a good section of the Navy, has remained the backbone of the bourgeois state. Not for a moment during the whole period of the struggle has it been even as much as weakened. On the contrary it has gained greater strength every day. General Miaja, left over by the People's Front government to defend Madrid, quickly took away the power of arrest, the right to post armed sentries, etc. from the trade unions.

destruction of the bourgeois military machine by the workers, with the cooperation of sections of the soldiers, civil guards, and the policemen, was no longer necessary, since that job had already been done - "by the military-fascist insurrection"!

It is difficult to imagine a more fundamental revision of the Marxist position on the state.

The so-called working parties thought it the best policy to keep silent on the question of the relations between officers and soldiers, of military discipline, etc. In fact they kept silent on the whole question of the role of the "loyal" troops, except that they welcomed their "loyalty" and cooperation. Their existence was somehow treated as a fact not needing any discussion. While the "working-class parties" were busy mobilising the masses for the front, the bourgeois army, police etc, step by step encroached upon the military formations of the workers, and instead of being dissolved by them, they succeeded in subordination them. In this work they were not only left completely unmolested by the leaders of the working-class, but were given actual, though probably only half-conscious aid. For what these leaders and their press continuously stressed was the "confusion" on the front and in the rear, and the need for a "unified command". Naturally none of them came out openly for the subordination of the workers' military formations to the bourgeois general staff. But by not demanding its dissolution, they actually laid the base for the creation of a "unified command" in the hands of the bourgeois general staff (the class character of which has not changed one iota by the fact that today it counts, in addition to its little Ludendorffs, quite a few Noskes). To-day the Spanish and Catalan bourgeoisie has succeeded in re-building a powerful military machine, with the old army, civil guards and police as the kernel, with the old officer corps (plus a few "working-class leaders" who understand the "requirements of the hour"), and with the masses of workers in the militia IN THEIR CENTURY OLD ROLE AS MERE CANNON FODDER FOR THE BOURGEOISE.

Smash Exploiters Rule

At no time have the "working class" parties issued slogans that would direct the powerful revolutionary energy of the masses to smash the capitalist state. "Where the workers took the factories and fields the proper consolidation of the rule of the Soviets was not carried out to lead to the development of dual power, to the smashing of the bourgeois state and the establishment of the Soviets as the form of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Instead the working class parties placed the emphasis AT THE FRONT. It is necessary to fight at the front, but if power is not consolidated in the rear, and instead the rule of the bourgeois remains OVER the "workers control of production" the fight at the front is transformed into a fight to defend private property, to fight for the Dictatorship of the Exploiters in a workers form.

This is the conversion of the class war into Territorial War as a form of subordination of the armed proletariat and peasants to the exploiters.

This brings out clearly the Lenin concept of the slogan, "FOR THE RIGHT of Self Determination." and not, "For Self Determination." Not only are the Fascists using Self Determination in Morocco for reactionary purposes for German and Italian Imperialism; the Catalonian Nationalists, the New Government with the POUM and the Syndicalists are also using the Self Determination for the reactionary purpose of the French and British Imperialists.

Class War and Imperialist War

The "Workers" government of the Stalinist and Socialist in Madrid and the "Workers" government of the POUM and Syndicalists and other forces in Catalonia once again reveals the fact that between the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Dictatorship of the capitalists no other KIND of State can exist. These governments are bourgeois governments cloaked in workers form. Nevertheless, these States of the exploiters are passed over as Workers States for which the masses shed their blood.

So too, the liberal bourgeois have been able to convert the class war of the proletariat in Civil War against capitalism, into a phase of the armed struggle of different international imperialist groups. Here too, the liberal bourgeois call upon the workers to sacrifice for the defense of "Independent Catalonia" or the Peoples Front as servants of one group of imperialists against another group of imperialists.

But today as yesterday, only the Complete independence of the Working Class can lead to victory. The events in Spain reveal more clearly than any recent event in working class history, that such independence can be achieved only under the leadership of a Marxian Party, which unfortunately does not yet exist in Spain. The most important task of the Spanish proletariat and the Marxists throughout the world is the building of such a Party.

THE P.O.U.M.
and the two
CENTRIST INTERNATIONALS

The P.O.U.M. is testing its centrist line in Civil War and thereby presents us with a striking confirmation of the fundamental agreement between the right Centrist London Bureau and the Left Centrist Trotsky Bureau, since the new turn of the I.C.L. The Workers Party of Marxist Unity was a merger of the former Trotsky group (Nin and Andrade) and the former right wing Communist Group (Maurin). The Nin-Andrade leadership of the Communist Left of Spain were outvoted by its membership which refused to carry out Trotsky's new turn and enter the Socialist Party. Nin and Andrade accepted the decision of the membership and carried out a line to the left of Trotsky's line, and to the right of the Revolutionary Workers League line.

The merger of the Nin-Andrade group with the Maurin group brought them into the London Bureau.

Today, in struggle, the centrist P.O.U.M. is to the left of the London Bureau and to the left of the Trotsky Bureau. AS such the P.O.U.M. represents a merger in ACTION of the theories and positions of the London and Trotsky Bureau, and presents the clearest example of the failure of Left Centrism to lead the proletariat to power.

Up to the time of the struggle the main criticism that came from the left centrist Trotsky Bureau was the fact that the Nin-Andrade group REFUSED TO ENTER THE SOCIALIST PARTY. This was an attack from the RIGHT.

As late as August, AFTER THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN BROKE OUT the American Trotskyites through the "Socialist Appeal" said the following, "The Party of Marxist Unity---might have played an important part in the development of the Socialist wing by entering it and strengthening it. But Maurin values his organizational "independence" far more than revolutionary politics."

All of the Centrist groups the world over flocked to the support of the P.O.U.M. after the largest and closest of these organizations sent representatives to Barcelona, and after the capitalist press spoke of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Catalonia--which never existed.

The Socialist Workers Party of Germany, one of the leading parties in the London Bureau, not only gives full support to the P.O.U.M. but rationalized its false position by a new "Leninist" formula: that the bourgeois state disappeared.

LINE of the London BURO parties is **FUNDAMENTALLY** no different-- even though they are to the right of the P.O.U.M. LINE. In ACTION in their own countries they will commit even worse errors.

The London Buro and its sections came out in full support of the P.O.U.M. Even the Lovestone Group tried to shine in the fight of the P.O.U.M., when Hensen came back from Barcelona with glowing reports of its activity.

The New York Fields Group came out at the beginning of the struggle for full support to the P.O.U.M., and criticized the Revolutionary Workers League at our first mass meeting on the subject, the first mass meeting of any group in New York on the Spanish Civil War, when we refused to give support to the P.O.U.M., pointing out that we only support a Revolutionary Marxian Political organization and that we were sending a representative of the Central Committee to Spain.

In the September issue, the Fields paper gave the P.O.U.M. some mild "left" criticism, but said, "At the same time it is the duty of all revolutionists and advanced workers to support every step taken by the Workers Alliance and the P.O.U.M. that sharpens and intensifies the clash of CLASS against CLASS and leads toward SOVIET RULE and the DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT."

All centrist say that the steps they take lead toward Soviets and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. If you do not understand that these STEPS do not lead to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, above all the support of the "second best" is, a Centrist Party that means you are a Centrist. In addition the P.O.U.M. position on Workers Alliances are a caricature of Soviets.

The Trotskyites, although they are crawling out now, and their European sections are far ahead of the American section on this, nevertheless they gave their full support. Let us hope the workers who are misled will find their way from the Trotskyite Centrist to the position of the Marxian and to the Revolutionary Workers League, after seeing their line in ACTION in Spain. Don't forget, they were for the Socialist Party, criticized the POUM for not entering the Socialist Party and later "found the POUM"

The Trotsky Buro said the following: La Batalla, Aug. 7/36- Report of a telegram: "The world organization for the 4th International and in particular the Internationalist Workers Party and its Revolutionary Socialist Youth organization (French section of the 4th Int'l, send fraternal greetings to the workers of Catalonia and Spain. The Buro of the 4th Int'l has asked all its affiliates in France, Belgium, Holland, America, etc, to lend all their political, material and practical support to the revolutionaries of the P.O.U.M. Forward to Soviets in Spain, France, and World! Forward on the road indicated by Lenin and Trotsky!"

Appeal (two months after the civil war broke out) in referring to the P.O.U.M., as editor's footnote that the "Workers Party of Marxist Unity." represents, Revolutionary Marxism".

The Trotskyites, like to POUM-talk against the Peoples Front, but like the POUM Act for the Peoples Front. The clearest expression of their centrist position on the question of the Peoples Front, which we pointed out two years ago, is contained in a statement in the Organ of the Struggle of the Young Workers, published by the Jeunesses Socialist Revolutionaries (Fourth Internationalists) French Trotskyites, in Vol. 3 number 33, July 1936 as following."

The fall of the Peoples Front Gov't would unleash Fascism's march toward power, Fascism unleashing Civil War. The Gov't must not remain at the mercy of a few rotting Radical parliamentarians. It must gain from the direct support of the proletariat. The unshakable stability needed to carry out as a whole the reforms in the Peoples Front program-which, although it gives only slight concessions to the working class, will run into the dogged resistance of the big capitalists.

If Blum really wants to fight for the interests of the French proletariat, he must immediately carry out the measures mentioned above.

Blum must choose between these measures, i.e. war against the bourgeoisie, and the status-quo, which leads inexorably to betrayal of the interests of the working class.

Leon Blum had already declared in the Chamber that he considered the occupation of the factories illegal. Salengro, to stop the cries of the Stovsky-like Radical senators, that if tomorrow the occupations of factories on farms began again, the Gov't would end it by every means at its disposal.

These words show which way the Blum Gov't is going. We call you to be on guard, workers; they are preparing to betray you! Blum-Salengro are preparing both the fall of the Peoples Front Gov't and the fall of themselves. They're opening the gates to Fascism. On Guard! Vigilance!

The dissolution of the Leagues has been carried out on paper only. The Fascists are mobilizing, arming, preparing civil war. Dissolution is not a step backward, but forward for French Fascism; for it forces it to give up its mongrel vague forms, it forces it to concentrate and to adopt a political program. Doriot's French Peoples Party is the direct child of dissolution. Fascism has now found its fighting formation. Thanks to Blum-Salengro.

Civil War will be delayed only if the Gov't takes the following measures: Arrest the leaders of the bands; ban the Fascist papers; auxiliary police, workers militia; arming the workers. Under the vigilant protection of the French workers, the Peoples Front Gov't can carry out the program which the masses want it to carry out.

generation of the Trotskyites in the United States has moved in ACTION far to the right of the position on PAPER held by the International Buro. This is the logical development of the Trotsky line since the new turn of the I.C.L., where ever they carry it into action. Let one of their sections participate in a Revolution on their present LINE, and we will see errors and betrayals worse than the P.O.U.M.

Another important aspect of the Trotsky line in Spain that must not be forgotten is the activity of THEIR group that entered the Socialist Party. What has become of Fersen and his "Group" that carried out Trotsky's line? Why talk, as Shachtman does for the Socialist Party? Did Fersen already "reform" the Socialist Party?

Since the Civil War the Trotskyites have sent comrades into Spain from their Belgian, Italian, United States and other sections. The La Batalla reports in different issues at least a half hundred such comrades. What has become of them? What is their line? Who are they supporting?

To tell the truth, they went along with the P.O.U.M., and some had to be driven from the Socialist Party orientation to the P.O.U.M. orientation. But now some of these comrades are beginning to revolt against their own LINE in ACTION. Let us hope a few will find their way to Marxism.

*****N*****

Nov. 6, 1936

CENTRIST ACROBATICS WITH THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Faced with expulsion in a short while, the Trotskyites in the Socialist Party are forced to demarcate themselves from the reformists. In the past few months a series of articles have appeared in the Socialist Appeal and in the American Socialist Monthly by leading Trotskyites, giving a garbled centrist position on war, the Zinoviev trial, the Labor Party, and the Spanish Civil War.

The unsavory task of putting their position on Spain into pamphlet form has fallen on the shoulders of Felix Morrow. The Pamphlet, entitled "The Civil War in Spain", marks another big step towards reformism.

It is noteworthy that none of the leaders of the Trotsky movement in the United States, Cannon, Shachtman, Goldman, etc, have undertaken the task of writing this pamphlet. One of the lesser lights is used for that purpose, so that some time in the future the "leaders" can crawl out of responsibility for their false position.

The Trotskyite, Morrow, also is for soviets. But in his whole pamphlet of 64 pages, neither the words nor the theoretical content of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat are mentioned. Like his Menshevik predecessors Morrow finds nothing wrong with the functioning on the Catalonian Committee of 15 and the Council of Economy, of members of the left bourgeois parties and reformists. Throughout his pamphlet he calls on the workers of Spain to follow the course of the Catalonian proletariat. He points with pride to the fact that in actuality the Catalonian President, Companys, has no real power, that the left bourgeois parties "are dragged along" "because they are at the mercy of the armed proletariat". But that is evidently sufficient, for there is not one word calling for the destruction of the Companys government, impotent as it may be today, and the substitution of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

In March 1917 the bourgeois ministers of Miliukov and Guchkov were also impotent. The soviet of Tseretselli and Dan allowed it to exist. And in August 1917 the same Miliukov, in league with Kornilov, attempted to drown the soviet in blood. Were it not for the vigilance of the Bolsheviks that would certainly have occurred.

Abstractly soviets are the instruments of the revolution and later of the rule of the proletarian dictatorship. But in life they become the instruments of the proletarian revolution only when dominated by the Revolutionary Marxist Party; they become the organs of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat only when the Party leads it to the destruction of ALL forms of bourgeois power.

But the Trotskyists, from Trotsky down to Morrow, have changed their entire concept of the Party. Content to live in the same party with social-patriots and social-chauvinists they can see nothing wrong in living in the same dual power organs with bourgeois ministers and side by side with the bourgeois government. That to them is the "road to victory". Especially since the bourgeois representatives, in Morrow's opinion, are merely "hostages". But what is the perspective after the Committee of 15, which is only a weak stage of dual power, and what of the Companys government? Like their Menshevik predecessors the sun rises and sets on dual power. Beyond that there is nothing.

What glorious omissions! To the left Morrow nods, "I am for Soviets and Workers Militia". To the right, "But that is sufficient, I am not for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. I can see nothing wrong in living side by side with Companys and his emissaries to the dual power".

~~structure of a bourgeois cabinet, but the program one brings to it.~~ It would seem that a minister in a bourgeois cabinet could adopt a program that is not bourgeois. Let Caballero adopt a program different from Giral or Hernandez and all is well! What the Trotskyite Zoller in France spoke of a little more abstractly, "A People's Front of Action", the Trotskyite Morrow in the United States speaks of more concretely; the People's Front government can make an about face; all that is necessary is for the left-wingers in the S.P. who have been "chaffing at Caballero's vacillations" to make him more firm and adopt a correct proletarian program inside the bourgeois cabinet. A bourgeois People's Front Government of the Proletariat!

The negative, confused and deliberately fraudulent method used by Morrow to slip across the Zoller concept is not to be regarded as a bad formulation. The P.O.U.M., which the Trotskyists support, has a small tactical variation of this concept, that the state disappeared entirely.

II

In one lame sentence Morrow speaks of a new "revolutionary" Party. It will be welded together, he says, in the "crucible of Civil War". Of course, then, the Party is not yet a living force in Spain. But now, how account for the fact that the Catalonian proletariat is marching along the "road to victory", and, in the words of Trotsky, "This very alliance" (of workers, soldiers and peasants) "is being created and tempered right now in the fire of Civil War in Spain"?

Lenin taught that the masses by themselves can never achieve socialist consciousness; that without a Revolutionary Marxist Party they can never march along the "road to victory" or gain the correct perspective of a revolutionary struggle. The lessons of the two revolutions of 1917, March and November, confirmed this theory 100%. In March the proletariat meekly handed over power to the bourgeoisie after having captured it on the streets, because the Revolutionary Party was not sufficiently alert to the situation, because it was following rather than leading the masses. But in November, under the direct leadership of the Bolsheviks the tables were reversed.

But for the Trotskyists these very lessons, so sharply defined by history have suddenly become passe. For them it is conceivable that without the Revolutionary Party the workers by themselves have developed a sufficiently clear perspective to be marching along the "road to victory".

To cover up their own false policy, which liquidated the Spanish vanguard and frustrated the building of a Revolutionary Party in Spain, the Trotskyists must now dress up the set-backs in Spain as victories, in order to show that after all a Party is not so essential for victory and that they, the Trotskyists, are exonerated for having helped liquidate the vanguard organization and failed to build the Party.

Small wonder then that they have not a word of criticism for the Syndicalists, for whom the question of the Revolutionary Party is also not a primary one. Small wonder that they are so optimistic about the Spanish Civil War - whistling in the dark. Small wonder that by the time Morrow's pamphlet appeared off the press the utter bankruptcy of his position was illustrated in life itself. Nin, leader of the P.O.U.M., and the Syndicalists, far from keeping the emissaries of the left bourgeois parties as "hostages" in the committee of 15, joined the bourgeois ministry of Companys themselves. In a similar fashion 19 years before the Menshevik Tseretselli subordinated the Soviets to the Kerensky ministry of which he was also a member, and thus tried to liquidate the dual power.

III

The crux of the whole question in Spain today is the question of the Party. Without it the proletariat is lost. The Trotskyists, not yet entirely severed from the umbilical cord of the past and slightly fearful of the memory of some of their older members pay tribute to the primary question of the day in Spain, the Party, with one hazy sentence - and spend 64 pages covering up the tracks (in true stalinist style) in the other direction. For the truth of the matter is that the Trotskyites are opposed to a new Revolutionary Party. They are for the reform - even after Caballero's treachery - of the old Socialist Party.

The P.O.U.M., Morrow states, "has swerved considerably away from its centrist course". Unfortunately, however, "its main forces are limited to Catalonia and Valencia". Any party that has swerved away considerably from centrism must obviously be Marxist - there is nothing in between centrism and Marxism. But then why doesn't Morrow call upon all workers to break with reformism and centrism and join this Marxist Party. Certainly its small size is no barrier. Relative to the size of Russia the Bolsheviks were much smaller.

We disregard for the moment the fact that the P.O.U.M. is a hopeless centrist outfit, which, although it took one step to the left, took three to the right when Nin, its leader, entered the bourgeois ministry. But if the Trotskyites can recognize in their brother centrists a Revolutionary force why do they not call on all workers to join this force?

The unvarnished truth is that their New Revolutionary Party is nothing more nor less than the Socialist Party purged of Prieto, with the P.O.U.M. liquidated into it. Why doesn't Morrow point the way for the POUM? Who will organize the New Party? Why the ambiguity and vagueness? The revolutionists among the left-socialists Morrow says "will enter the REVOLUTIONARY STREAM". The revolutionists amongst the stalinists will enter the "NEW REVOLUTIONARY PARTY". What the distinction? Enter a revolutionary stream can mean a

The left socialists are guilty only of tactical mistakes, that there is nothing intrinsically bankrupt with the 2nd International. Caballero's treachery is passed off as "vacillations", at the which the leftwingers "have long been chaffing". Here vacillations! This former privy councillor of King Alfonso, who helped put down strikes in 1931, who is the Spanish counterpart of Kautsky! Lenin, who was a Marxist, pointed out that the German Caballero, Kautsky, was a thousand times more treacherous than the German Prieto, Noske. But Morrow, who is a centrist, speaks of the Spanish Kautsky as a mere vacillator.

In the left wing socialists Morrow can find nothing basically wrong. Speaking of the program adopted by them in June, he says, "It was weakened by many grave errors.... But it signified a profound break with reformism". The S.P. "enormously facilitated the struggle against fascism". The left socialists "acquitted themselves magnificently"; nothing could halt the "revolutionary development of the left socialists" in the period prior to the fascist insurrection; the "vanguard of the left socialists teach the Spanish proletariat the Leninist conception of the class nature of the army."

Further, the left socialists precipitated a strike wave prior to July 18th; they precipitated seizure of land by 25,000 peasants in Badajoz; they helped the strike wave reach "the proportions of a revolutionary crisis" in which a million were on strike during the first days of July, and the strike covered not only the city but the village as well - as for instance "Malaga Province" in which 125,000 peasant families were on strike.

To cap his whole position regarding the 2nd International and the Socialist Party in Spain, Morrow again resorts to an old trick of all centrists. By speaking of the past he lays down the perspective for the FUTURE. In condemning the P.O.U.M for having failed to enter the S.P. when Trotsky called upon them to do so, and "throw its forces on the side of the left wing", Morrow is laying down the policy of liquidating into the Socialist Party NOW. For, what conditions have changed? The "revolutionists" amongst the left wing are still "chaffing at Caballero's vacillations" as before. Given the same situation, the same tactic still holds good. And the one hazy, fraudulent sentence of Morrow's about a new Revolutionary Party, means nothing more than the old Socialist Party with a slightly altered composition!

IV

Morrow's 64 page pamphlet deals with 1931, 1933, 1935, and February 1936 prominently; but only in the last ten pages or so does he deal with the present events.

On one page he speaks hesitantly of a new Revolutionary Party and on another he lets it be known that the Socialist Party can and should be reformed, that a little more effort must be made to rid it of its bureaucratic traditions, which are not EASILY overcome, but overcome nevertheless. (Having knocked their heads against a stone wall, the Trotskyists must obviously speak of its not being EASY).

The fundamental questions Morrow omits altogether. The international aspects of the Spanish Civil War, the need for a Communist Fourth International - of this not a word. The most important question facing the world working class and PARTICULARLY THE SPANISH WORKING CLASS - of this not a word.

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the only instrument of working class power - of this too not a single word or hint.

The primary question of a Revolutionary Marxist Party in Spain - the key question of the Spanish Revolution - that is stuck into an obscure corner in one sentence, which is belied by the rest of the pamphlet.

The worst enemy of the Spanish Revolution at the moment, the Spanish Kautsky, Caballero, is passed off as a mere errant boy given to "vacillations". And the Syndicalist leadership, which is violently opposed to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and will drown it in blood if only it gets the opportunity - of them not a word of criticism.

Morrow's acrobatics are fancy. But acrobatics on the edge of a knife can not go on indefinitely. Sooner or later the acrobat must descend to the solid ground of reformism. From the present Trotskyist position to reformism is but a stone's throw.

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RESOLUTION ON THE CIVIL WAR AND THE IMPERIALIST CONFLICT IN SPAIN

The Generalidad of Catalonia by its class character is a dictatorship of the exploiters in the form of a "Workers Government" similar to the Madrid Peoples' Front Government of the Socialists and the Stalinists. In Catalonia the exploiters were unable to hold the proletarian revolution in check with the aid of the Peoples Front, so the Generalidad had to call in the left working class organizations such as the POUM and the Syndicalists which dominated the growing dual power.

The Generalidad and the class it represents are bound with indissoluble ties to the Anglo-French Imperialists. This government does not even carry out the reforms it promulgated and is only conceding "reforms" to the degree that the revolutionary pressure of the masses forces them through. In granting "reforms" the Generalidad has kept intact the Royal Laws which uphold the capitalist property relations. Under war measures and forms of state capitalism the Generalidad fights for its life against Fascism on the one hand, and against the Dual Power of the Proletariat on the other hand.

The workers control of Production developed under Dual Power and was handed back to the exploiters when the leaders joined the Generalidad and dissolved Dual Power. It is now workers control in name but not in content. Workers control is meaningless unless this control is consolidated by DUAL POWER through the workers' committees, which later smashes the capitalist state and takes over FULL POWER through the organs of DUAL POWER.

The Generalidad has dissolved the anti-Fascist Committee and has dissolved the organs of Dual power, as useless duplication, with the approval of the Stalinists, Syndicalists, and the POUM leadership.

In reality the useless duplication was the Generalidad. The bourgeois state does not disappear of itself as the POUM and the SAP claim - because counter-revolution took the offensive against the capitalist state in the form of the Peoples' Front. The bourgeois state must be smashed by the armed workers under the leadership of the revolutionary party using the Soviets of Workers, Peasants and Combatants to replace the Generalidad.

The agrarian reforms were taken by the armed peasants under the protection of the armed workers in the period of developing dual power before the Syndicalist and the POUM entered the Generalidad. The Generalidad "sanctions" that which was already done, and now places a brake upon further development of agrarian reforms. Confiscation of the landed estates of the enemies of the Generalidad is a war measure any exploiters' state will carry out.

The Generalidad subordinates everything to the defeat of Fascism. This is a catch phrase to disarm the workers and smash their organs of dual power. This is a means of turning the civil war of classes into a geographic war, with the workers subordinated to the left bourgeoisie. This is a means of diverting attention "to the front" while the exploiters destroy the dual power of the workers and reestablish their own rule, in the rear.

At the same time the Generalidad claims that the Civil War of the classes has nothing to do with the imperialist conflict. But the Anglo-French imperialists, with the Soviet Union at their tail through

the League of Nations, the Franco-Soviet pact and the Neutrality agreement, has established its hegemony over Catalonia, liquidating the dual power, as a class domination. Upon this basis they use the workers in the imperialist conflict against Germany-Italy and their reactionary agents in Spain.

Through the People's Front and the slogan of subordinating everything to the defeat of fascism the imperialists utilize the working class for their common foe in the imperialist conflict. Fascism cannot be defeated by the left bourgeoisie; cannot be defeated by the Peoples' Front; cannot be defeated by the Generalidad, no matter how many battles are won in the WAR. Only the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat can defeat Fascism. It was the armed might of the workers, in spite of the Peoples' Front and the Generalidad that won the battles from the Fascists. It was the Peoples' Front and the Generalidad that prevented a follow-up of the victorious battles to a victorious war. This was because the Peoples' Front and the Generalidad feared the Proletarian revolution more than they feared the counter-revolution of the reactionaries and the fascists. The Stalinist aid to one group of exploiters (Peoples' Front) versus another group of exploiters (Fascists) has nothing in common with Lenin's policy of utilizing the friction of the enemy to advance the independent action of the proletariat for its own class interest.

The slogan of Fascism vs. Democracy expresses the line of the Peoples' Front and of subordinating the working class to the left bourgeoisie, of transferring the vicil war of the class into an imperialist conflict.

The slogan of Communism vs. Fascism is the slogan which required the organization of Soviets, of dual power, of SMASHING of the capitalist state, and of the establishing ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS.

Unless the revolutionary vanguard organize a Marxist party and subordinate the military action to the POLICY OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION the setbacks will result in a working class defeat and the Spanish Civil War will be used as a prelude to the second imperialist war.

At the same time the workers of Catalonia must not confuse Companys' self-determination propaganda with the Lenin slogan of the right of self-determination of the oppressed minorities. Companys' propaganda for "self-determination" is a trap to divert the proletarian energies from the class war to the imperialist conflict.

The further the Generalidad proceeds with its domestic and international policy the more the real nature of the government and its deception will be revealed to the proletariat and the petty bourgeois masses. New organs of dual power of the armed workers and peasants will spring up where the others were betrayed and cut down at the top. The proletarian revolutionists must carry on extensive work of clarifying, of organizing workers' committees and of uniting the vanguard into a Marxist party.

Proletarian State Power in Catalonia can change the relation of forces and make possible a victory in Spain. This will be the needed impetus for the French working class and the Belgian workers in developing struggles. It will lay the firm foundation for the Communist Fourth International and enable the proletariat in the Soviet Union to dislodge the Stalinist cancer, and revitalize the world labor movement.

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Delegate of the Revolutionary Workers League of the United States,
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