

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION

BULLETIN OF THE WORKERS' PARTY OF MARXIST UNIFICATION

P. O. U. M.

AGENTS FOR ENGLAND:

The I. L. P.
The Marxist League

PRICE IN ENGLAND: 2d.

AGENTS FOR U. S. A.:

Y P S L
The Labor Book Shop
PRICE IN U. S. A. 05

EDITORIAL OFFICE:

«THE SPANISH REVOLUTION»

10, Rambla de los Estudios
BARCELONA

CONTENTS

1: Stalinism. 2: Fighting Men From Britain. 3: What Are They? 4: Resolutions of the Central Committee of the P. O. U. M. 5: Conference of Town Councillors. 6: For Socialization of the Land. 7: Revolutionary Morals. 8: Revolutionary Justice

STALINISM

The POUM Before the Workers

The official Communist press of Spain and elsewhere has been carrying on the campaign begun by the official Soviet organs, «Pravda» and «Izvestia», and has brought very grave accusations against the P. O. U. M.

We are accused of being agents provocateurs in the pay of the Gestapo and the «Fifth Column». In several organs of the Communist International it has been stated that the P.O.U.M. in collaboration with the Fascists, organised a plot aiming at the assassination of Azaña, Largo Caballero, Dolores Ibarruti (Passionaria) and José Diaz. These are concrete accusations and appeared in the Communist press.

Comrade Victor Serge, in an article sent to «La Batalla», suggests, among other measures, the constitution of an International Commission of Enquiry, composed of well-known persons in the working-class movement. The Executive Committee of the P.O.U.M. has decided to follow the suggestion of Victor Serge. In order that it may command the greatest possible measure of authority, the International Commission of Enquiry should include a representative of each of the following organisations: the Communist International, the Labour and Socialist International, the Fourth International, the International Workingmen's Association and the International Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Unity. This Commission should investigate independently and freely the concrete accusations levelled against the P.O.U.M. It should begin, in our opinion, by demanding the evidence for these accusations.

We are convinced that the working-class of Spain and of the world will understand and support the P.O.U.M.'s demand, a demand which no one can legitimately oppose.

A new sensational trial has been started in Moscow. This time the prisoners' bench is occupied by Radeck, Piatakov, Muralov, Sokolnikov, Serebriakov and others no so well-known, sixteen in all. Those shot in September were also sixteen. That seems to be the capacity of the executioner's cart of the Stalinite Thermidorians. The accused in this trial as in the one of last summer, are old guard Bolsheviks, revolutionary fighters from the heroic days, old friends and comrades of Lenin.

What has happened is simply that in Russia the most elementary workers democracy has been abolished to make way for the bureaucratic regime of a personal dictator. Of the October Revolution and the Leninist tradition nothing or very little remains. The fighters of October, the old comrades of Lenin have become embarrassing witnesses, in fact real obstacles, to those who are now trying to exterminate them physically after having suppressed them politically. Last time it was Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Smirnov. To-day it is Radeck, Piatakov, Muralov. To-morrow it will be Bukharin. They are already preparing a new cartload. Stalin unquestionably bases his power on terror.

The accused are denied all possibility of defence. In Lenin's time, at the trial of the Socialist Revolutionaries, a foreign workers' delegation was allowed to attend. During the famous «industrial trial» the accused, many of whom occupy bureaucratic posts in Russia to-day, enjoyed every sort of means of defence. Why are these denied to-day to the men who, together with Lenin, forged the revolution of 1917?

After the shooting of Zinoviev and Kamenev, the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity proposed the formation of an international commission of enquiry to investigate the charges against them and against Trotsky himself. At the time we supported this step, and we continue to do so with the greatest energy to-day. The international proletariat must know the whole truth. The workers cannot be expected to support the soviet cause unless they know what is going on in Russia.

From the resolution of the Executive
Committee of the P. O. U. M.

We Demand THE FORMATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY TO EXAMINE THE ACCUSATIONS LEVELLED AGAINST US.

Fighting Men From Britain

The first I. L. P. contingent is off for the Aragon front after a week of intensive drill in the Lenin Barracks of the P. O. U. M. Their final appearance in Barcelona, the march to the North Station, was the occasion for enthusiastic public acclaim. They marched to the tunes of the INTERNATIONALE and YOUNG GUARD, which were caught up by the people lining the streets. Other English and American comrades are arriving in smaller numbers and preparing to join them:

On Tuesday morning, January 12th, the first contingent of our I. L. P. comrades from Great Britain arrived in Barcelona. This contingent was formed in Britain by Bob Edwards, Lancashire representative on the National Administrative Council. All these comrades belong to the I. L. P., and they have come to Spain with one object, to fight in the ranks of the P. O. U. M. militia. The I. L. P., realising the principles which guide the activities of the P. O. U. M., feels that the best way to demonstrate their community of thought and their solidarity of action is to identify itself with the work of the P. O. U. M. in Spain.

The comrades comprising the section come from every part of Great Britain. Glasgow is represented thoroughly. London, the Midlands, the North Country and South Wales have equally sent of their best. One of them hailed from other climes than those just referred to. This comrade, whom we shall not name, comes from the Middle West and was a student in the University of Wisconsin. He explained that he had some difficulty in getting his passport fixed up, and it appeared to him that the simplest thing was to come without a passport! He is already on the best of good terms with the British comrades, and seems perfectly happy to be at their side.

This contingent is the first of a series which will be coming from Britain during the next two or three months. Bob Edwards suggests that we should form an English-speaking batallion, attached to the P. O. U. M. International Column. «It is much better», said Bob, «that our boys should train and fight together. As a homogeneous body of English-speaking comrades, they will be able to pull their weight, whereas, if they are disseminated among our Spanish comrades, they will not be anything like so effective.»

This point of view was explained to Comrades Tarafa, in charge of the Lenin Barracks; he immediately detached an English-speaking Spanish comrade from another regiment, and placed him at the service of the British contingent.

With the boys is a socialist comrade, Doctor Levin, from New York. Naturally, this medical man places his services entirely at the disposal of any section of the Spanish workers, but, in compliance with our request, Comrade Tarafa has ordered him to be attached officially to the British contingent.

One does not like to be too enthusiastic, but it is very moving to think that these comrades, at the call of the I. L. P., have spontaneously offered their services and all that this implies, to help forward the triumph of the Workers' Revolution in Spain.

On Sunday, January 10th, twenty-five fighting men, comprising I. L. P. members and sympathisers from all over Britain, left Victoria station, London, to play their part in the struggle against international Fascism in Spain. The week-end papers declared with considerable emphasis that the Spanish frontiers were closed. There was, therefore, considerable uncertainty in the minds of our twenty-five comrades. Many doubted whether they would actually see the fighting front in Spain. Three days after leaving London, however, we crossed the Spanish border to the strains of the International.

Our journey to Paris went through without a hitch. The lads were considered to be very extraordinary people by our fellow passengers on the boat. Ostensibly we were visiting Paris for a week-end, but everybody knew, including police, passengers and customs officials, that our real destination was the Spanish fighting front, and treated the lads accordingly. One humorous customs official, after enquiring in a loud voice in French that few of us could understand, caused quite a commotion by pointing dramatically to our new army sleeping-bags, and declaring «Paris, did you say? I think, Barcelona!» After being met in Paris by our comrades of the Revolutionary Left of the S. F. I. O., who treated the lads to a fine tea and a visit to their local headquarters, we set off from the Quai d'Orsay on our way to the frontier town of Perpignan, down in the south of France. On the station, just before our departure, I was informed by an English-speaking French porter that many hundreds of German and Italian Fascists had passed through that station on their way to fight for Franco, Fascism and Reaction.

And now we are in Barcelona. Comfortably installed in the Lenin Barracks, which is under the control of the P. O. U. M. Prior to the Catalan Revolution this was a military barracks, of a crack cavalry regiment. The wealthy sons of Spain were trained for their military adventures in Morocco and other parts of the world in the interests of a small minority of wealthy Spaniards. They were used in many a conflict against their own countrymen, the working men and women of Spain, in order to maintain the luxury and ascendancy of the capitalist class. Now for the first time in its history, this barracks is being used to train men of the International and P. O. U. M. militia, who are destined to free Spain from tyranny and oppression and to lay the basis of the great socialist, classless society.

The food is good, but it will take the lads a week to get used to the drinking of wine at practically every meal. A packet of cigarettes is supplied to each man per day, and the pay received is remarkably good, namely 10 pesetas. The pay came as a surprise, as all of our lads had volunteered to fight and had never considered the possibility of such a regular sum.

The men will receive fifteen days training, and by that time they should be ready for service at the front. Meanwhile, we want to strengthen this contingent. We want to make it a hundred, and perhaps two or three hundred strong. Then, it can become a force in the struggle for a free Spain, and it can make a very important contribution towards an early victory for the Spanish workers.

British Author With the Militia

At the beginning of January, we received a visit in Barcelona from Eric Blair, the well-known British author, whose work is so much appreciated in all English-speaking left circles of thought. Comrade Blair came to Barcelona, and said he wanted to be of some use to the workers' cause. In view of his literary abilities and intellectual attainments, it appeared that the most useful work he could do in Barcelona would be that of a propaganda journalist in constant communication with socialist organs of opinion in Britain. He said: «I have decided that I can be of most use to the workers as a fighter at the front.» He spent exactly seven days in Barcelona, and he is now fighting with the Spanish comrades of the P. O. U. M. on the Aragon front.

In a postcard which he sent us, he says: «When I have persuaded them to teach me something about the machine-gun, I hope to be drafted to the front line trenches.»

FIGHT
for the World Revolution
ENLIST
in the P. O. U. M. Militia

IF they are not Socialist, nor Communist,

The belief still persists abroad that the Spanish Socialist and official Communist Parties, and their United Socialist Youth, in spite of their middle class alliance and their failure to push the revolution, must in some way be working class parties with a Marxist, or at least a socialist program. Unfortunately, that is only wish thinking. We present their own words, as spoken by the Secretary of the United Socialist Youth, which are compared with those of our own Iberian Communist Youth.

nor Marxist,

What Are They?

THE STALINIST POSITION

From the speech of Santiago Carrillo, Secretary of the United Socialist Youth of Spain (the fused Socialist and Stalinist youth organization), opening the National Congress of Youth at Valencia.

January 15, 1937.

On Socialism

«We do not fight for a socialist revolution». «Our organization is not socialist nor communist, but an independent organization».

On Marxism

«The United Youth are not Marxist Youth».

On the Class Struggle

«Our aim is the Spanish National Federation of Youth, together with the Catalan and Basque Federations».

Toward Reactionaries

«We appeal for the collaboration of the Catholic Youth, whose spirit and belief we do not combat».

On Unity

«We want the unity of all youth, not on Marxist and Communist bases, but on bases of mutual coincidence such as the war against fascism and the defence of civilization. Do not be deceived. We call for unity and we declare that we are not trying to absorb you, but to constitute with you the great Spanish Youth Federation».

On Democracy

«We fight for a democratic, parliamentary republic.» «We want a strong democracy of the popular classes.»

On Internationalism

«Now is the time to organize a new Spain, a Spain that shall be respected in the concert of nations».

THE ANARCHIST POSITION

The Anarchist Libertarian Youth distributed leaflets with the following comments on the Conference at Valencia:

«That they are not the youth of tomorrow is shown by their attempt to revive democracy. Every time they speak of the parliamentary, democratic republic in Spain, they stab the heart of the heroic revolutionary people who are fighting for their liberty. It is a crass error in the twentieth century to try to unite the Spanish youth in the name of such a discredited slogan as patriotism.

THE P. O. U. M. 'S POSITION

From the «Appeal to the Revolutionary Youth of the World» issued by the Executive Committee of the International Bureau of Revolutionary Youth and the Iberian Communist Youth of the P.O.U.M.

January 10, 1937.

«For the working youth there is but one task—to conquer the fascists and make the revolution».

«In the revolution the truly communist youth has decisive tasks to fulfill».

«The Iberian Communist Youth fights with the P.O.U.M. to hold the conquests of the revolution and to push them to their final victory.»

«The Iberian Communist Youth and the revolutionary socialist youth will not let themselves be robbed of the right of Marxist criticism».

«There is no such thing as a youth front without working class and bourgeois youth with different class interests.»

«Comrades at the front and in the factories, be alert and active. There are many enemies and don't rest until they are routed».

«For six months the workers have waged their heroic struggle against the Spanish capitalists, landlords and the church».

«The Iberian Communist Youth fights for the unity of the revolutionary youth. No unity without aims, but the united action of all working youth, against the youth front, for the united action of the revolutionary youth».

«Young comrades, everyone, every organization must decide. The capitalists stands on one of the barricade with the fascists and democratic governments and their reformist parties; on the other side the revolutionary workers and peasants».

«The war in Spain is an advance skirmish in the world-wide division between fascism and social revolution.»

«The Spanish revolution will be the point of departure for new revolutionary struggles in many countries».

«For the united action of the Revolutionary Socialist Youth of Spain and of the World!»

The Anarchists paper, SOLIDARIDAD OBRERA, commenting upon the speech of Carrillo to the National Youth Conference, says:

«**Reformist Quackery.** The destinies of the working class cannot be played with so frivolously as does the Comrade Carrillo. If the United Socialist Youth are not Socialist, nor Communist, nor Marxist, what are they? The only thing that is clear in all this is that they want to go back, on account of their mental cowardice, to the good old days of the Workers' Republic of all Classes. This cannot be tolerated, Socialist Comrades; it will not be tolerated.»

Conference of Town Councillors

More than a hundred municipal representatives of the Party, from as many Town Councils, gathered in Barcelona on January 10th to discuss the problems which the Revolution has placed before the Town Councils. Comrade Tussó and the Comrades of the Central Municipal Committee of the Party, Bonet, Martí, Quer and Oltra, presided. The information given and the principles approved by the delegates can be used by the Party in preparing the resolution to be adopted by the next Congress. It was clear that our party comrades, working in the Town Councils, have done an excellent piece of revolutionary work.

The high points were furnished by the delegations of Alfarràs, Manresa, Súria, Sabadell, La Bisbal, Bonmatí, Vendrell, Palafrugell and Rubí. These towns provided examples of the municipalization of real estate and farm land, and the return of the fruit of the soil to the peasants; of the centralisation by the Town Council of the taxes to be paid to the State and the Government, and the application of one per cent of the industrial production to the payment of municipal taxes; of the municipalization of public utilities; of a five per cent tax on the liberal professions and on the salaries of workers above a certain level; and commercial taxes.

The Conference continued throughout the morning and afternoon, and approved the following principles to serve as a basis for the municipal programme of the next Party Congress:

1. The town should be governed by a Council composed of delegates of factory and shop workers, peasants and soldiers. Every town should elect its Council in accordance with this principle, in order to eliminate from the municipal government elements not belonging to the working-class.

2. The Town Council, being the genuine medium of expression of the will of the workers, shall concentrate in its hands the political, executive and judicial power.

3. The Council shall municipalize real estate, and shall administer the public services, and shall make a direct and unified payment of the taxes due to the Central Government and the State.

4. The Town Council, or the Trades Unions in collaboration with the Council, shall control the gas and water services, the municipal transport, health services, hotels, cafés and restaurants, and other services of purely local scope.

5. Taxation of those services which cannot be municipalized, such as electricity and general transport, whose activity falls outside the area under the control of the Town Council.

6. Direct taxation of industry, commerce, the so-called liberal professions and real estate.

7. Monopoly of local commerce, centralization of people's food supplies, and control of distributive agencies; the co-operatives to be given the task of municipal distribution, with an agreement concerning the division of profits.

8. The Town Council shall encourage general culture in such fields as the Central Workers' and Peasants' Government is unable to cover, helping to establish nursery schools, kindergartens, technical and professional schools and libraries.

9. It shall likewise organize health services, sanitary services and social assistance, in such a way as to obtain the greatest benefit for the workers.

10. A Central Municipal Secretariat was set up by the Party, under the charge, for the present, of Comrade Tomas Tussó.

Municipal Co-operatives

The village of Rubí has taken a step forward on the road of revolution. In a meeting of the town council on January 14th, an agreement was reached to set up an Authority for organizing the General Cooperative of Consumption and Distribution of Rubí. This project had been submitted by the P. O. U. M. representatives of the town council and accepted unanimously by the other comrades of the C. N. T., the Esquerra, the Acció Catalana and the Agricultural Union. With the creation of this General Cooperative, private commerce will automatically disappear from Rubí.

RESOLUTIONS OF

From December 20 to 25, the Enlarged Central Committee of the P. O. U. M., was in session at Barcelona, defining the attitude of our Party toward the momentous problems facing the workers of Spain and the world. In the last issue we presented the Resolution on the Internal Situation. In view of their historic importance, we shall continue giving the resolutions. They should be studied by every worker.

On Municipalities

With the revolution, the time has come for the Iberian municipality to take on the character of a political administrative body, representing the collective interests of the community. It was robbed of that character by the governments of the Monarchy, priests and landlords, and by the capitalist republic. Now the creative spirit of the working class has crushed the town overlord and tax collector, to make place for the new municipality, a cell in the new society.

The Central Committee has studied and discussed in detail the important matter of the municipal policy to be followed by our party. In the building of socialism, the municipality has a leading rôle to play; it must clarify confused and erroneous positions assumed in the early phase of the revolutionary organization of the economy. Above all the function of the municipality in the building of socialism is to throw light on the kind of work the trade unions must contribute toward our revolution.

A basic question is the uniformity of the work to be done by all the comrades of our party who hold seats on the town councils. This uniformity, of course must not overlook the special features of the various towns.

With this in mind, the Central Committee charges the Executive Committee to call a conference of the Town Councillors belonging to the P. O. U. M., to discuss and draw up provisional conclusions—to be valid till the next meeting of the Party Congress—upon the following basis:

1. The municipality must be the genuine representative of the workers' democracy.

2. The municipality should be the collective enterprise of the community.

3. The intervention of the municipality in the building of socialism should include the municipal operation of public services and such industrial activity as can not be collectivized by the workers.

4. Abolition of the tiny municipalities, based only upon geographical proximity, wherever that corresponds better to the needs of the socialist economy.

On Trade Unions

After a careful examination of the Trade Unions policy to be adopted by the Party in the conditions created by the Revolution, the enlarged Central Committee declares:

- That the Unions have lost their character as instruments of the struggle against capitalism in the economic field.
- That they have become organisations through which, in reality, the new economic structure is being built up.
- That they have not yet lost their character as instruments of the class struggle.

Taking these fundamental principles as a basis, the Central Committee decides:

- To appoint a Union secretariat.
- To organise fractions in the unions, locally and in the various industries.
- To remain in the U. G. T., and to hasten the entry into that body of the old unions of the F. O. U. S. (United Workers' Syndicalist Federation).

OF THE P. O. U. M.

On Agriculture

The delegates to the Central Committee have fully discussed and considered the present situation of the working-class in general and of the peasants in particular, since the latter suffer most directly from the present confusion and lack of capable leadership, and from the reformist and counter-revolutionary policies of the P. S. U. C. and the U. G. T., as well as from the premature forced collectivization imposed by some of the C. N. T. Unions. We have accepted the following program, to be put into practice as soon as possible in order to end this state of affairs and to avoid a still more dangerous situation later on:

1. Complete approval is given to the conclusions of the Party Agrarian Conference, held at Barcelona on the 15th of November, as published in the Party press (See THE SPANISH REVOLUTION for November 25th, Vol. I, No. 6).

2. In line with the first of these conclusions, an educational program should be pressed with all the means at our command, through the press, platform and radio, in favor of socializing the ownership of the land and putting an end to the series of abuses that have followed the requisitioning, which create ill-will among the peasants, making them in fact enemies of the revolution.

3. The redistribution and collectivization of the land must be realized through the trade unions.

4. In view of the uneasy psychological state of the peasant masses, they must be assured the fruit of the labor on the land which they cultivate, with no one else taking the least part of it.

5. Cooperatives should be created within the trade unions, among whom the sections of our party should intensify their work of education by adapting themselves to the outlook of the agricultural workers, and pressing for the immediate elimination of the series of parasites who exploit the consumers and producers as middle men.

6. We lend our support to collectives, formed after a careful study of the conditions and possibilities has assured a larger return than individual cultivation.

7. We shall continue the campaign for the complete realization of the compulsory trade union decree, with the ultimate formation of a single Agricultural Union in each locality, which is the only way to end the disorder now reigning in most of the Catalan country-side, as well as outside of Catalonia.

8. We shall study the feasibility of appointing one comrade in each rural district to act as Agrarian Secretary for our party, and to find the special characteristics of that area which might require changes in these conclusions before adopting them there.

4. To make the internal administration of the U. G. T. as democratic as possible, to arrange as many meetings as possible, and, if necessary, to demand them.
5. To hasten the progress of collectivisation by federating in each district the collectivised undertakings belonging to one industry, in order to centralise production and distribution, as an interim stage on the way to socialism.
6. To appoint a Committee of Economic Research, having as its object the systematisation of the tasks to be carried out in the new economic phase.
7. To make public the reformist economic policy of the present leaders of the U. G. T. and the P. S. U. C., to fight for the independence of the Union organisation, and to insist strongly that a Congress of the U. G. T. be held.
8. To use the present favourable conditions for unity of the Unions in order to hasten their fusion in one central union, to start a campaign of agitation and propaganda, aiming, as an interim arrangement, at the creation of a liaison between the local branches of the U. G. T. and the C. N. T., as well as the holding of joint meetings, in order to prepare the way for a Congress to unite them.
9. To speed up production in all war industries.

Agricultural Decree

In view of the urgent need, arising from the new situation created by the popular reaction against the military rebellion, to define the present rights and obligations of the tillers of the soil, the following decree is proposed by the Councillor for Agriculture, and approved by the Council:

ARTICLE I. All agricultural contracts which were in force in Catalonia on the 19th day of July 1936 are considered null and void. These include in general all those agreements and contracts by means of which the returns from a piece of land used for agricultural purposes were assigned in an oppressive manner.

ARTICLE II. While the Generality of Catalonia is not at present legislating finally on this question, the cultivators now occupying the land are liable for the land taxes and other contributions due to the State, Generality or municipality, which encumbered the said lands on the 19th day of July, 1936; this decree, however, shall not add to the rights of the cultivators of the land.

ARTICLE III. Without the express authority of the Government of the Generality, no authority or organisation is permitted to collect from the cultivators any payment, in money or in kind, by way of rent for the land or of special tax in addition to taxes current on the 19th of July, 1936.

ARTICLE IV. All previous orders in conflict with this decree are abrogated.

Barcelona, January 1st, 1937. J. Tarradellas, First Councillor, and José Calvet, Councillor for Agriculture. (Approved by the Council, January 5th, 1937).

For Socialisation and Redistribution of the Land

The situation in the country-side has changed much since the 19th of July. The peasants, without asking the permission of anyone, have put a stop to the payment of rent; in part they have redistributed the land among those who had none, taking it from those who formerly exploited it with the aid of hired day labourers, or from those who held too large an amount to cultivate efficiently.

The Council of the Generality has now issued a decree which attempts to give legal status to this action carried out five months ago by the agricultural workers.

Continuing its custom, however, of tagging behind events, instead of setting an example, it refuses to recognize the need of a more equitable distribution of the land, even though in the second article of the decree it is stated that the peasants who are in possession of the land at present have to pay the taxes imposed by the State, Generality or Municipality. In fact, the only thing it does is to recognize their right to continue in possession. Inasmuch as it does not take into account the fact that the amount of land may far exceed their ability to work it, it recognises the right of some owners to continue the exploitation of the land with labour other than their own.

The socialization of the whole of the land should be the first in the series of actions that must be taken if it is really intended to satisfy the agricultural workers. It makes no difference whether the land-owner is a fascist or not. Does the tenant have to pay any less to the one than to the other? It is the same to him whether he is exploited by a fascist or a republican.

If this step is not taken immediately, serious results will follow. The countryside is already disturbed by the apathy of official circles towards the demands of the people. To attempt to remedy their discontent by laws which are absolutely inconsistent with the position of the workers would be suicidal.

It is impossible to retreat from the path already taken. Forceful action in accord with the workers' demands at the front and behind the lines is imperative. This means socialization of the landed property, not the creation of new owners. The material possession of the land is not the peasants' aim. What they want is the assurance of no more hunger. The peasant does not need property-titles to live, but he does need land to work, where he can live peacefully, with no fear, no injustice, and with the certainty of being rewarded for his efforts with cultural and economic progress.

Revolutionary Morals...

Marriage

Only persons acquainted with Latin or Balkan countries can realize the tremendous significance of modern marriage institutions free of clerical domination. The new marriage laws giving legal sanction to weddings celebrated before responsible trade unions or political bodies, as well as chiefs of military columns, are reproduced in part on this page. Since Comrade Nin's decree granting full legal rights at eighteen years (See THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, vol. I, no. 6, Nov. 26), persons of that age may marry without parental consent. Due to this, to the new divorce laws and to the general psychology of revolutionary freedom, the marriage rate has increased enormously. A corresponding increase in the crop of babies is expected this spring.

Divorce

Divorce was not possible in the days of the Monarchy. Since April, 1931, under the Republic, it was possible, but very difficult and expensive to obtain. The resulting pent-up restraint only became evident with the flood of divorces immediately after the new revolutionary divorce decree was instituted. No longer are ill-mated couples required to pretend to live together while leading lives of illegal love on the side. Today a glance at the divorce statistics shows that only five minutes are required to obtain a divorce. There can be no question that prostitution is declining from the tremendous proportions it has hitherto held, in spite of the additional impetus it receives from a war time situation, and it is certain that more happy families will result from these measures. Since now the couple realizes that only their mutual feelings, and perhaps the approval of their acquaintances, binds them together, the divorce rate will fall again, as in the Soviet Union, to a point below that of such countries as the United States.

Abortion

Another forward step toward freedom is achieved in the new abortion law in which the Catalan Councillors of Health and Justice have decreed standards for legal abortion. This reform has two aspects. In the first place, it will raise abortion from the underground existence of a clandestine traffic, with such serious risks for the mother, and place it upon a level of scientific practice. In the second place, abortion can be carried out not only for therapeutic and eugenic reasons, but also for the purpose of voluntary birth control.

While Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and even the U.S.S.R. limit the practice of abortion, Catalonia sets up a popular service for the artificial interruption of pregnancy, the only limits being three months duration of the pregnancy or else serious mental or bodily ailment of the mother.

A filing card of medical and psychological data, from those mothers who are willing to give it, will, within a few months, permit a statistical study of the psychological motives and somatic factors which lead to the practice of abortion.

Freed of Capitalist and Clerical Domination, such are the attempts of the Catalan Workers to build a New World.



Marriage Decrees

The new revolutionary legal structure must take into account the regulation of family relations which shall be established on the principle of the freedom of the married parties.

Since July 19th, 1936, the people have been adopting attitudes toward family relations more in agreement with these ideals.

For this reason many marriages have been contracted under the authority of responsible committees of trade unions and political parties of the anti-fascist front of Catalonia.

Therefore, in view of the aspirations of the working class and in order that the formal initiation of married life may be recorded with the civil authorities, the Councillor of Justice, in accordance with the Council of the Generality, decrees:

Article I: The marriages celebrated before responsible committees of political parties and trade unions participating in the fight against fascism, shall have full civil effect in respect to the persons and inheritance of the married parties and their descendants.

Article II: The People's Judge of the District shall attend the marriage ceremony referred to in the preceding article.

The judge may however delegate any person of full civil capacity who merits his confidence.

Article III states the necessity for acquainting the People's Court of intentions to be married twenty four hours in advance.

Article IV: The responsible committees of the political parties and trade unions fighting against fascism, which have celebrated marriages before this decree, shall send to the civil registrar of the People's Court of the district where the contracting parties live, a duplicate of the marriage record to be placed on file.

Barcelona, October 2, 1936, Luis Companys; Councillor of Justice, Andrés Nin.

Article I: The heads of columns, commanders of the army, chiefs of armed bodies or persons delegated by same can authorize marriage of militia men, soldiers and individuals of the armed forces at the front wishing to contract marriage and presenting the legal requisites.

Barcelona, October 2, 1936, Andrés Nin, Councillor of Justice.

A New Inquisition

The parts of Spain under the Generals are showing a medieval atmosphere. Persecutions and inquisitions are the order of the day. The so-called «Official Daily» of the Burgos Junta publishes an order that all Anarchist and Communist books be burned within forty hours.

Revolutionary Justice

In Catalonia, the workers have achieved a number of notable class conquests, in the economic and social fields, as well as in the spheres of public order and of military and judicial affairs. In these fields the republicans and reformists are trying to enforce a backward move. They are attempting to return to the capitalist-democratic position. They have a plan and a programme.

We have often had occasion to point out the revolutionary conquests in the field of working-class justice which were achieved in Catalonia while our comrade, Nin, was Councillor of Justice. The new People's Courts, which we discussed in *THE SPANISH REVOLUTION*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 28th, were his most significant contribution. These courts gave justice a new and revolutionary form. They are a revolutionary creation, a valuable instrument in the hands of the workers against their enemies. But the present P.S.U.C. Councillor of Justice wishes to reform them.

The substitution of Vidiella for Nin as Councillor of Justice of the Generality was not merely a change of persons. It was a change of parties, the P. S. U. C. taking the place of the P. O. U. M. We regret to say that they do not hold the same revolutionary conception of justice as had prevailed since July 18th. They have proceeded to reorganize the system of working-class justice which our comrade had inaugurated. The P. S. U. C. press reports their new councillor as saying:— «Justice is absolutely the same as formerly. The same code of laws, penal and civil, the same procedure, penal and civil, the same tribunals.» He makes this false statement when all the world knows how notoriously rotten were the old Spanish courts and police! No country in Europe had such a deep-rooted system of bribery and no machine of capitalist justice was more ruthless towards the workers. We do not wish to identify the new Councillor of Justice with the old Spanish justice, although he himself tries to do so. He admits that yet another new judicial system will be necessary. By what means would he make this reform? «In the first places, he says, «acts considered punishable must have punishments which correspond to those of the penal systems now in force.» What are the penal systems now in force? Those in force in capitalist countries. Are these the systems to be introduced into a country in the full current of revolution.

He went on to say: «It is decreed that the members of the People's Court cannot belong to any Party which is acting in support of fascism at the present time.» What does this mean? In Nin's decree it was ruled that the members of the court must have belonged, for at least two years, to some organisation now struggling against Fascism, in order to ensure their political and revolutionary soundness. The reform which Vidiella is trying to introduce would only exclude avowed Fascists. The great majority of professional judges and the clerks have not been militant fascists. But they have been in the service of the capitalists. Can they be allowed to return to the administration of justice?

We will not insist further upon the reactionary character of this reform. We only say that events are showing that we were right. It is not merely a question of replacing Nin and the P. O. U. M. in the Council of the Generality, but rather of changing the revolutionary policy which they represented.

To Help the P. O. U. M.

We request the comrades receiving bundles to let us know of their arrival by number and date of receipt. There have been stoppages which we cannot remedy unless we know about them. In sending money for the bulletin, or as help for the P. O. U. M. we advise that the Independent Labour Party, 33 St. Bride St., London, has agreed to act as a forwarding agent. That is the safest channel. We have not billed the comrades receiving either bundles or single copies, but are asking them to pay us the proceeds of sale or what they can. Groups raising other money as well for the P. O. U. M. may ear-mark the appropriate amount considered as payment for *THE SPANISH REVOLUTION*.



Sell Our Bulletin

Fresh orders for *THE SPANISH REVOLUTION* have boosted our circulation from 2,000 to 3,000 in the last two weeks. Orders include South Africa, Palestine and Sweden. The variety of revolutionary groups rallying around the P. O. U. M. is amazing. As an example, we get an order for 120 copies of each issue from the Marxist Group of Croyden, who say: «We have a committee which is busy collecting money and clothing for the P. O. U. M. Despite our differences with you on the question of the International, we shall support the P. O. U. M. because we regard it as the only party in Spain which stands for the Socialist Revolution.»

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION can be had through our agents for two pence or five cents a copy. Order from:

The Independent Labour Party, 35 St. Bride St. London.

The Marxist League, 238 Edgware Road, London, W. 2.

The Labor Book Shop, 28 E. 12th Street, New York City.

The League for a Revolutionary Workers' Party (U. S.) 126 E. 16th Street, New York City.

The L. R. W. P. (Canada), 4, Irwin Ave., Toronto, Ontario.

Friends of Spain, 2007, Maple Ave., Evanston, Illinois.

The Y. P. S. L. 549 Randolph St. Chicago, Illinois.

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, 10 Rambla de los Estudios, Barcelona, Spain.

Other agents are requested. Money for the P.O.U.M. can be sent by money order or the American Express Co. to the I.L.P. London, to be forwarded to us here.

NEWS AND NOTES

An American, Editor of LA BATALLA

An American comrade, Joseph M. Escuder, who was affiliated with the Revolutionary Workers' League in New York, has arrived and taken up his new position as managing editor of LA BATALLA, the central organ of the P. O. U. M. He has brought to it the snappy journalistic set up, so familiar to American and English readers, but little known in Spain. The 30,000 Barcelona readers of LA BATALLA are now greeted each morning with the most attractive paper in Spain.

The P. O. U. M. Press

Beside its Central Organ, LA BATALLA, the P. O. U. M. has twenty five publications today, including six local daily papers and several weeklies and such special organs as the four foreign language bulletins. Since last July the press of the P. O. U. M. has undergone a prodigious development. All of these publications are directed by tried, responsible militants, impregnated with the general political line of the party and with the fundamental problems of the war and the revolution. Sunday, January 17th, they all gathered at the editorial offices of LA BATALLA in a press conference of the P. O. U. M.

The problems of publicity and education in the present revolutionary situation, as faced by the party press, as well as the question of the so-called anti-fascist papers that have been turned into the organs of other parties by reformist manoeuvres, were discussed. Plans were made for technical improvements which will make the press of our party worthy of the revolution.

After Franco

With great enthusiasm, the workers of Castillanroy (near Huesca) have organized a new section of the P. O. U. M., in a part of Aragon recaptured by the workers militia. At the same time the youth have gathered into the ranks of the revolution by setting up a section of the Iberian Communist Youth.

New York Comrades

A comrade serving in the militia on the Aragon Front, M. Leszez, wants to get in touch with his brother, Joseph Lesh, whom he thinks may be known by members of the Socialist Party in Brooklyn. Please send any information to this office.

MORE PAMPHLETS ON SPAIN

Why Bishops Back Franco by John McGovern, M.P. A very readable 12-page pamphlet on the position of the church in Spain. Recommended for those who talk of «Red atrocities against the Church.» Price, two pence — half penny post free or 1/6 a dozen from the Socialist Bookshop, 35, St. Br. de street, London, E. C. 4.

Spain's Challenge to Labour by H. N. Brailsford. Brailsford's offensive against non-intervention. Published by the Socialist League, 3, Victoria Street, London S. W. at one penny.

British Medical Aid for Spain. This is a graphic, illustrated account of the work of the unit in Spain. Profits on the pamphlet go to the B. M. A. funds. Price 3d. from the «News Chronicle», London.

A Lead to World Socialism. The interesting report of the Brussels Congress against War and Fascism. The speeches of Comrades Julian Gorkin and Fenner Brockway are given in full. For revolutionary socialists who desire to understand the world situation today and especially the true position of the Spanish workers' struggle for freedom. Published by the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity, 32 pages price 6d. Write to the I. L. P. or to our Editorial offices for supplies.

Council of the Province of Valencia

The Council of the Province of Valencia has been formed with the following organizations participating: five seats to the C. N. T. (the Anarcho-Syndicalist Unions), five to the U. G. T. (Socialist Unions), one to the P. A. I. (the Anarchist Federation), one for the Left Valencians, two for the Valencia Left, one for the Socialist Party, one for the P. O. U. M., one for the Syndicalist Party, and one for the Republican Union. The Communist and Spanish Republican Left Parties have not designated their representatives because they would not accept each a single seat on the Council.

The first meeting was presided over by the Governor who appointed Comrades Miro of the C. N. T. and Carbonero of the U. G. T. as vice-presidents. Comrades Sixto Rabinat of the P. O. U. M. was named as secretary. A committee was appointed to suggest the distribution of the portfolios.

New Council of Castellon Province

On January 18th, the new provincial Council for Castellon was formed with three representatives of the U. G. T., three of the C. N. T., and one each of the following parties: Communist, Socialist, Left Republican, Iberian Anarchist Federation and P. O. U. M.

Fleeing from the Fascists

The morale of fascists is best shown by the desertion of soldiers from their ranks. The number coming over is surprising in view of the dangers and difficulties involved.

Usually the soldiers bring their guns with them. They come under cover of darkness and now of the dense winter fog. Sometimes they get away by leaving their gun behind them and pretending to go out in search of kindling wood. That is an ordinary event, but the other day we had a curious case.

In the advance lines of the Battalion of Manresa, which holds a part of the Huesca sector, a soldier presented himself with four guns, two hand grenades, and four gun locks. The militiamen were surprised to see a man so heavily loaded, especially since the fascists are keeping a close look-out to prevent desertions.

He explained himself in this way. «There were many occasions when I could have come over with just my own gun, but I thought that would not be enough. I waited for a chance to bring four guns. I almost gave up that plan though, because they watched me too closely.

«The fascists have imposed a reign of terror more barbarous than you can imagine», he said. «Only a stubborn person can resist it. Perhaps you can bear to see a man shot, but not children. I never used to believe the accounts of fascists cruelty in other countries, but now I can. I brought you four guns and myself and that was the best I could do. But please don't make me talk about those sad things. Let me forget them.»

These were the words of a soldier who had lived several months under fascism.

For the International Working Class

In the attack on the Apiés hills and the village of Ljerta which, in co-operation with other P. O. U. M. forces and with the Red and Black column of the C. N. T., we carried out on the 5th January, our Swiss comrade, Gregor Bobloff and our Czech comrade, Rudolf Habies were killed.

They have given us all an example of true revolutionary youth. They left their good positions, their fathers, mothers and children, and, under great difficulties and without documents, they crossed the various frontiers, in order to help their Spanish brothers in the struggle against Fascism.

We will avenge them!

The P. O. U. M. Shock Battalion, ROVIRA, Huesca Front