

SPAIN AND THE WORLD

Vol. II. No. 39.

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ON GOVERNMENT

It is unquestionably true that government is begotten of aggression.

—SPENCER
(Man versus The State)

Government is not reason, it is not eloquence—it is force! Like fire it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

British Plan Fiasco

Direct Action Will Save Spain

Franco's eagerly awaited reply to the British Note has at last been published and according to the Press — not too well received in official circles.

In the distant days of July 1937, the Non-Intervention Committee, in order to justify its existence, began to consider the British Government's plan for the evacuation of foreign combatants in Spain. After daily discussions round a table (whilst innocent women and children were being bombed by German and Italian warplanes in open towns and villages in Spain), they proudly presented a plan whereby they hoped to bring to an end all hostilities in Spain. They had not taken into account that they had to deal with Franco and his foreign allies.

The Spanish Government accepted, but Franco kept Mr. Chamberlain waiting for six weeks before sending his reply which, as the *Manchester Guardian* rightly states has taken us "back where we were" a year ago.

Franco does not want a proportional evacuation of volunteers. In other words he wants all the foreign volunteers to be evacuated from Government territory and about a tenth of his foreign allies would be sent back to Italy or Germany. He also insists that the land frontiers be closed, meaning that all access to Government Spain be closed while he would be free to bring in men and arms by sea; nor does he want any control on foreign aircraft — his most useful ally.

Franco's reply should clearly expose the complete failure of the Non-Intervention Committee. There is only one solution to the Spanish problem; to open the world markets to the Spanish workers. By being able to obtain the necessary arms for the defence of the rear-guard from bombardments from the air, and to enable them to take offensives on all fronts, the Spanish workers will defeat Fascism in Spain.

The Spanish workers — and not Lord Plymouth and his Non-Intervention Committee will finally rid Spain of her armed invaders.

We cannot repeat too often, that the Non-Intervention farce which has crippled our comrades in Spain, can be brought to an end only by the **DIRECT ACTION ON THE PART OF THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD!**

IN FRANCO'S GAOLS

International Brigade Fighter Speaks

THE author of this article, an ex-member of the International Brigade, was captured by Franco's soldiers on the Teruel front in February and was recently released from Franco's gaols. We publish this article because we have good cause to believe that it is true. One has but to read accounts of Franco's treatment to prisoners, such as those by Arthur Koestler or Georges Bernanos, or read in the press to-day of the fact that Franco, in answer to the proposal to expedite the exchange of prisoners, has shot 60 of them—presumably as a gesture of his indifference to other peoples' lives—to accept W. Fennerley's article.—Editors.

During my seven months as a prisoner in Fascist territory I saw the inside of six prisons.

At Talavera de la Reina the prison was a small disused factory which was in a filthy and dilapidated condition. There were three hundred prisoners there and in one room in which I had been placed there were 100 men. The room measured 60 feet by 20. We slept in our clothes, huddled together on the floor; our bodies were covered in lice and as we had no facilities for keeping ourselves clean the bites from these vermin came out in large painful sores.

Twice a day at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. a large covered motor-lorry

called at our prison. This was the "Death Wagon" which took those who were to be executed as far as the cemetery. Occasionally we were put to work on the road leading to the cemetery and consequently became familiar with the general procedure of these executions.

The death sentence was read to the victims at the gate of the cemetery. They were then marched into the cemetery past an informal burial ground where their lifeless bodies would shortly be thrown. The shootings took place against the rear wall of the cemetery which is now pitted with bullet marks.

The prison to which I was sent

in Salamanca was one of two prisons in that town. It had been built to hold 250 prisoners, but at that time it contained more than 1,300 and more arrived every day. Among them were peasants, railwaymen, engineers, labourers, doctors, lawyers—men of all trades and professions, of all ages.

I met one old bearded peasant who introduced me to his son and his grandson who were in prison with him. Some had not even been accused of having committed a crime. Some had been sentenced to death whilst others were serving life sentences of 30 years. In the barber shop was a boy of fifteen serving a twenty years sentence. In the first six months of the war over 4,000 men and women from this prison were shot. One method of execution was to post up a list of prisoners who were to be released that day. In the evening these men were taken by lorry to places outside the town and shot, and their bodies dumped in fields.

At Irun and San Sebastian, the prisons are filled with men and women who have been caught as they tried to flee into France. One of my cell mates at Irun was a young farmer who owned a farm and two hundred sheep, besides other live stock. He had been quite prepared to leave all his possessions so long as he could escape from Franco's territory.

The food we had was bad and uneatable. I suffered untold agony with thirst and hunger besides the insults hurled at me by the guards. Many a time did they spit in my face and dig me in the ribs with their rifle butts. On one occasion I was roped to a wheel in the prison yard for refusing filthy food, and was left for hours in the boiling sun.

These are but a few examples of what goes on in Fascist gaols. A workers' victory in Spain alone will save the thousands of men and women who are dying a slow death in Franco's prisons. Their crime is that some belong to workers' organisations whilst others are just mild liberals.

W. P. FENNERLEY.

PROBLEMS OF THE REARGUARD

C.N.T. and Amalgamation

SOME time ago, at the meetings of the CNT and UGT at Valencia the slogan was raised that these two great Trade Union federations should amalgamate. The CNT protested against this dangerous nonsense in view of the Fascist flavour which pervades the Central Spanish Amalgamation-Committee of the CNT-UGT, which, without demur stated that the sole object of the amalgamation was the fulfilment of the Trade Union Alliance in all its parts. The *Correspon-*

dencia de Valencia, organ of the UGT, also expressed the view that it was absurd to talk of an amalgamation of the Trade Unions while a large part of the postulates of the Trade Union Alliance are still awaiting their realisation. The slogan for the unification of the Trade Unions thereupon disappeared from the discussions of the general meetings.

Now, however, a new problem has arisen—a problem that is still more weighty than the first named. The question was raised of a "Programme for united action by the Socialists and Communists in Industry." We have absolutely nothing against the endeavours made for the amalgamation of the two Marxist Parties, and rather welcome it as a step towards the strengthening of Proletarian unity. Our objection was directed solely against the grandiloquent and misleading title of a "Single Party of the Spanish Proletariat" which it was proposed to bestow on such a body, as though the Proletariat in Spain did not belong to a great extent to the Libertarian Movement, which is in no way concerned with the above mentioned Marxist Parties. However, as to the suggested "Programme for united action by the Socialists and Communists in Industry," we must ask ourselves, what room is there in Industry for any other programme of action but that of the CNT-UGT? Is it possible that in the midst of the war one could apply in industry as many programmes of action as there are parties and factions? Especially at this moment when the war renders the unified and responsible economic administration equally imperative.

The danger of this nonsensical proposal is still further aggravated when one considers that the Socialists and Communists aim at intervening in economic administration.

Each militant of these two parties is naturally a member of the UGT. This Trade Union body therefore represents the viewpoint of both these parties in the industrial sphere, in the same way as the UGT regards itself as *politically* represented by these Parties. No member of these Parties can possibly adopt any other viewpoint within the Trade Union than that of the UGT. The latter has formed a pact with the CNT for common action, the main purpose of which was the organisation of production with a view to securing the victory against Fascism. For this reason there *cannot and must not be in Industry any other control and administrative organs than those of the Trade Unions*. The Socialists have but one duty in their capacity as producers: to carry out the instructions of the United Committee of the CNT-UGT and to collaborate with them in their difficult task.

From the proposed "programme" of the Communists and Socialists it seems to be a question of usurping of functions of the T.U. Committee, and must therefore be interpreted as a desire to renounce the pact of the Trade Union bodies. The "Programme" stipulates for the formation of united committees of Socialists and Communists in the various industries, who are to act independently of all industrial bodies in accordance with the directions of their Party. The madness of such a proposal is evident. The reader will judge for himself as to the evils such sectarianism are bound to entail. Moreover, what we must never overlook is the fact that we are actually *carrying on a war!* We refrain from discussing the good intentions of the Socialists and Communists. But at this moment, when our liberty, our very existence, is

at stake, to suggest the introduction of new organs into the industrial unions which are to act in accordance with the directions of Parties outside the unions—means the *introduction of chaos and confusion into the industries*, and to do that at such a time would be right down criminal.

This proposal must not be carried out. Either there is a pact of the Alliance or there is not. Either all fulfil their duties in absolute loyalty and sincerity, or each does what he likes. In the factories there can only be one direction, one single united committee. Politicians have nothing to look for in the trade unions. To put such a proposed political committee into operation would be suicidal to the cause of anti-Fascism, even if the pretext is advanced of the "necessity for intensifying production." The responsibility of the Parties conceiving such disastrous proposals is great. They must bethink themselves, and return to reason and sanity, before irreparable damage has been wrought. (German Bulletin)

A Colony In Spain

At the end of last week we received a long report and several photos of the SPAIN and the WORLD Colony in Masnon. Those comrades and friends who have shown their solidarity towards these innocent victims of Fascist aggression will, we are sure, be glad to have details concerning the colony which they have helped to make possible. The report is too long to be given in its entirety in SPAIN and the WORLD. We are therefore preparing it in pamphlet form and a copy will be sent to all those comrades and friends who have sent donations.

The report also deals with the necessary repairs which will have to be carried out before more children can be admitted to the Colony. At present there are 40, but as soon as the repairs will have been completed, another 30 will be cared for.

You, comrade readers, will be responsible for the welfare of 70 small children between 4 and 10 years of age. It is a responsibility which has so far been shouldered by a limited number of our readers.

Our immediate task is to guarantee the financial security of our colony in Masnon. Once this has been achieved, we must set about supporting a second colony.

Comrades! There can be no limit to our activity on behalf of the innocent victims of Fascism in Spain. If you have not already supported our colony do so now!

ORPHANS FUND

- No. 326. Chicago: (per B. Yelensky) (1) £5/10/7.
327. Plymouth: per L. Avery 10/-.
328. Johannesburg: F. Bosazza £3.
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334. Detroit, Mich.: International Libertarian Committee against Fascism (per E. Vivas) £18.
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339. San Francisco: P. Walter 14/-.
340. Mass.: Lincoln Aid Assn. (per L. Constantini) £4/0/9. —£57/1/4

Previously acknowledged £184/16/10.
TOTAL: £241/18/2.

- (1) Proceeds social under the joint auspices of the Free Society Group of Chicago and the Workmen's Circle Branch No. 65.
- (2) Will you please let us have your address.—Ed.
- (3) Part proceeds of outing organised by Italian comrades of Oakwood district with co-operation of the "International Libertarian Committee against Fascism in Spain" of Detroit.

To The Editor,
SPAIN AND THE WORLD.

Dear Comrade,

I was interested in the article, "Palestine and Socialist Policy," by our good friend Reginald Reynolds, in *Spain and the World* of July 29th. There is much in it with which I fully agree, but a great deal more which seems to me contradictory for a Socialist and a near-Anarchist. Before I point out these inconsistencies, I wish to say that our friend's article lends itself to the impression that he is a rabid anti-Semite. In point of truth, I have been asked by several people how it happens that *Spain and the World* printed such an anti-Semitic article. Their surprise was even greater that Reginald Reynolds should be guilty of such tendency. Knowing the writer I felt quite safe in assuring my Jewish friends that Reginald Reynolds has not a particle of anti-Semitic feeling in him, although it is quite true that his article unfortunately gives such an impression.

I have no quarrel with our good friend about his charges against the Zionists. In point of fact I have for many years opposed Zionism as the dream of capitalist Jewry the world over for a Jewish State with all its trimmings, such as Government, laws, police, militarism and the rest. In other words, a Jewish State machinery to protect the privileges of the few against the many.

Reginald Reynolds is wrong, however, when he makes it appear that the Zionists were the sole backers of Jewish emigration to Palestine. Perhaps he does not know that the Jewish masses in every country and especially in the United States of America have contributed vast amounts of money for the same purpose. They have given unstintingly out of their earnings in the hope that Palestine may prove an asylum for their brothers, cruelly persecuted in nearly every European country. The fact that there are many non-Zionist communes in Palestine goes to prove that the Jewish workers who have helped the persecuted and hounded Jews have done so not because they are Zionists, but for the reason I have already stated, that they might be left in peace in Palestine to take root and live their own lives.

Comrade Reynolds resents the contention of the Jews that Palestine had been their homeland two thousand years ago. He insists

Palestine and Socialist Policy

Emma Goldman's Views

that this is of no importance as against the Arabs who have lived in Palestine for generations. I do not think either claim of great moment, unless one believes in the monopoly of land and the right of Governments in every country to keep our newcomers.

Surely Reginald Reynolds knows that the Arab people have about as much to say who should or should not come into their country as the under-privileged of other lands. In point of fact our friend admits as much when he states that the Arab feudal lords had sold the land to the Jews without the knowledge of the Arab people. This is of course nothing new in our world. The capitalist class everywhere owns, controls and disposes of its wealth to suit itself. The masses, whether Arab, English or any other, have very little to say in the matter.

In claiming the right of the Arabs to keep out Jewish immigration from Palestine, our good friend is guilty of the same breach of Socialism as his comrade, John McGovern. To be sure the latter makes himself the champion of British Imperialism while Reginald Reynolds sponsors the Arab capitalist rights. That is bad enough for a revolutionary socialist. Worse still is the inconsistency in pleading on behalf of land monopoly, to which the Arabs alone should have the right.

Perhaps my revolutionary education has been sadly neglected, but I have been taught that the land should belong to those who till the soil. With all his deep-seated sympathies with the Arabs, our comrade cannot possibly deny that the Jews in Palestine have not tilled the soil. Tens of thousands of them, young and deeply devout idealists, have flocked to Palestine, there to till the soil under the most trying pioneer conditions. They have reclaimed wastelands and have turned them into fertile fields and blooming gardens. Now I do not say that therefore the Jews are entitled to more rights than the Arabs, but for an ardent Socialist to say that the Jews have no business in Palestine seems to me rather a strange kind of socialist.

Moreover, Reginald Reynolds not only denies the Jews the right of

asylum in Palestine, but he also insists that Australia, Madagascar and East Africa would be justified in closing their ports against the Jews. If all these countries are in their right, why not the Nazis in Germany or Austria? In fact, all countries. Unfortunately, our comrade does not suggest a single place where the Jews might find peace and security.

I take it that Reginald Reynolds believes in the right of asylum for political refugees. I am certain he resents the loss of this great principle, once the pride and glory of England, as much as I do. How then, can he reconcile his feelings about political refugees with his denial of asylum to the Jews. I must say I am puzzled.

Our friend waxes very hot about national independence for the Arabs and for all other peoples under British Dominion. I am not opposed to the struggle for it, but I do not see the same blessings in national independence under the capitalist régime. All the advancement claimed for it is like the claims for democracy, a delusion and a snare. One has but to point out some of the countries that have achieved national independence. Poland, for instance, the Baltic States or some of the Balkan countries. Far from being progressive in the true sense, they have become Fascist. Political persecution is not less severe than under the Tsar, while anti-Semitism, formerly fostered from on top, has since infested every layer of social life in these countries.

However, since our friend champions national independence, why not be consistent and recognise the right of the Zionists or of the Jews at large to national independence? If anything, their precarious condition, the fact that they are nowhere wanted, should entitle them to at least the same consideration that our comrade so earnestly gives to the Arabs.

I know of course that a great many of the Jews can lay no claim to being political refugees. On the contrary, most of them have remained indifferent to the persecution of workers, socialists, communists, trade-unionists and anarchists, so long as their own skins were safe. Like the middle-class

in Germany and Austria, they have exploited labour and have been antagonistic to any attempt on the part of the masses to better their condition. Some German Jews had the temerity to say that they would not object to driving out the *Ost-Juden* (Jews coming from Poland and other countries). All that is true, but the fact remains that since Hitler's ascendancy to power all Jews without exception have been subjected to the most fiendish persecution and the most horrible indignities, besides being robbed of all their possessions. It therefore seems rather strange for a Socialist to deny these unfortunate people a chance of taking root in new countries, there to begin a new life.

The last paragraph in Palestine and Socialist Policy caps the climax. The author writes: "What does it matter who makes a demand or why it is made, or who pays the bill if that demand is just? To reject a just demand is to brand ourselves as friends of tyranny and oppression; to accept it and to work for it is not only our duty but the only policy that will expose the pretensions of our enemies."

The question is, dear Reginald Reynolds, who is to decide what is a "just demand"? Unless one makes oneself guilty of the charge the writer hurls against the Jews, "the intolerable arrogance of people who regard their own race as superior," one cannot very well decide whether the demand of natives for the monopoly of their country is any more just than the desperate need of millions of people who are slowly being exterminated.

In conclusion, I wish to say that my attitude to the whole tragic question is not dictated by my Jewish antecedents. It is motivated by my abhorrence of injustice, and man's inhumanity to man. It is because of this that I have fought all my life for Anarchism which alone will do away with the horrors of the capitalist régime and place all races and peoples, including the Jews, on a free and equal basis. Until then I consider it highly inconsistent for socialists and anarchists to discriminate in any shape or form against the Jews.

EMMA GOLDMAN,
LONDON, AUGUST, 1938.

OUR BALANCE SHEET

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NOTE

Owing to lack of space, we will not publish a detailed account in future issues. Only the actual state of the deficit and the Solidarity Fund (which will be called the "Press Fund" in future in order to avoid confusion) will be published in each issue.

Comrades sending us money in respect of sales or subscriptions will be sent a notification immediately on receipt of their remittance. In the event of their not receiving a notification within a reasonable time they should get in touch with us. This, we hope, will avoid valuable time being lost in the case of a letter which has been mislaid in the post.

Further, each month we will have a duplicated detailed balance sheet, a copy of which will be sent to all comrades and to secretaries of groups who have sent contributions to "SPAIN and the World."

All this entails more work for us, but with the limited space available in our paper we feel justified in making these new arrangements in regard to "SPAIN and the WORLD'S" Balance Sheet.

—The EDITORS.

Pages of Working Class History

19th July 1936 in Barcelona

by Garcia Oliver

THE LIBERTARIAN militants expected the things that happened, for they clearly foresaw them. They knew that in the event of the Rights being victorious in the elections, that victory would be followed up by most ruthless persecution of the Proletariat and by the destruction of all its social achievements, which would be resisted with might and main by the Proletariat. On the other hand, if the Left were to gain the victory, then the Right would rise against it, for it would mean that it had lost its last legal card in the game and it would try to retain its power by means of a military and clerical coup d'état. With this conviction and from this viewpoint—so soon to be amply confirmed by the subsequent historical events—it will be readily assumed that we did not remain idle.

In the first place, our comrades who were in military service and in the airports brought us interesting information. From this we learnt about the secret meetings of the officers; also of the weapons stored at the barracks and those of the officers with Fascist tendencies took home with them. Other of our comrades, serving in the Police Force, supplemented this information. In this way, with the data at our disposal, with the gossip at the street corners that came to our ears and the rumours floating about, it was possible for us to approach in adequate time that portion of the workers of Spain who belonged to our organisations, and to urge upon them the necessity for equipping themselves, so as to be prepared to resist with every means possible any attempt on the part of the Reaction.

Our comrades in the barracks put us wise as to the tremendous activities going on there during those July days. We enjoined our trustworthy comrades to be on the alert, to arrange to take their hours of indispensable rest in turns, so that they might ever be on the watch and ready to act at any moment it was found necessary. Thus, the very first inkling of the Revolt found us in the streets all ready and determined to resist it to the utmost.

However, before we come to this, it must be mentioned that there were hardly any armaments in Barcelona. Only a few of the groups had pistols, and we could foresee the events rushing in upon us ere we could secure adequate supplies of ammunition.

In view of this state of affairs, Ascasso, Durruti, Aurelio Fernandez, Sanz and I made a special point of cultivating friendly relations with some of the Aircraftmen of the *Prat de Llobregat* Base. After our talks with these men, we were able to make our plans. We had met at the home of our Comrade Vivancos (now Lieut.-Colonel of the People's Army) when our friends from the barracks informed us that there were stored some 90,000 rifles, several dozens of machine-guns, cannon and other weapons at the *San Andres* Barracks. During our discussions with our friends of the Air Force it was made clear to them that this Depot must constitute the main source for the arming of the People in their fight against the Fascists. It was considered of the utmost importance that the said armaments be transferred into the possession of the people who—inspired with enthusiasm and led by men of our Organisations—would then be in a position to face the Rebels' Army. There was no doubt that the people would soon be defeated unless they could arm themselves. Our few hundreds of pistols could not possibly be expected to prevail against an army with first-rate equipment as the Rebels' was, and we could not help the apprehension that the workers would be defeated within 24 or 48 hours if sufficient munitions could not be placed at their disposal. For this reason we stressed the point, in our talks with our airmen friends of the *Prat de Llobregat* Base the urgent necessity of breaking into the *San Andres* Barracks, so that the people might get hold of the weapons stored up there.

On the day of the Revolt, the C.N.T. gave out the slogan that the *San Andres* Barracks must be stormed directly it was bombarded by the airmen, so as to seize the machine-guns, rifles and other munitions that were stored there. It was not till the afternoon of that day that this was actually carried out, and I must confess I experienced some very apprehensive moments, as I regarded the situation lost to us.

There was one factor, however, which we could not have taken into account, but which proved favourable to us and was decisive in securing for us a complete and final victory two hours later. This factor with which I had not reckoned was the lack of knowledge of the topography and general situation of the town on the part of the Rebels.

It is said that Goded was a great strategist. I cannot see it, for his strategic genius was nowhere revealed. Of the

three great arteries which unite the upper part of the town with the Harbour and the lower part, the *Paralelo*, the *Ramblas* and the *Via Layetana*, the Rebel troops occupied merely the *Paralelo*. They did not dare to seize the *Via Layetana* which they could have done from the *Pase de Colon*, because they feared the action of the Police Administration situated there at the time, as also that of the Minister of the Interior of the Generalidad, situated in the vicinity. They preferred to launch their attack on the *Via Layetana* from the *Plaza Uruquinaona*, whereby they lost time, while leaving to us completely intact so valuable a strategic artery as was the *Ramblas*. Apart from us, there was no one in the *Ramblas*, and after we had cleared this path—and many other paths leading to this Avenue—we soon transformed it into our Headquarters. Thus we were able to maintain excellent communication with our people who were fighting in other places. From the *Ramblas* we were able to advance without any difficulty towards the *Via Layetana* by way of the numerous streets and alleys, and from the other side towards the *Paralelo*, through the Fifth District which was as familiar to us as our own house. Apart from these, we were also in communication with the *Plaza de Catalun*, for the Fascists were in possession only of the Military Casino and the corner of the *Paseo de Gracia*.

Very soon we became aware of the state of disorganisation in which the Rebel command found itself, and as we were surrounded by thousands of men, mostly armed with rifles, we decided instead of the sporadic shootings, to make a united attack, in order to break the Fascists' line which they had formed along the *Paralelo*. We then left to Durruti one of the few machine-guns which we had secured after storming the Barracks at the *Avenida de Icaro*. Durruti, with a group of comrades, undertook the watch at the *Plaza del Teatro*, with a view to defending the *Ramblas* against any possible attack and to cover the movements which Ascasso and I had to make, our aim being to break the Rebels' line along the *Paralelo*.

Ascasso turned into the *Conde del Asalto* street, while I went into the *San Pablo* street. We two were to meet at the same point. But Ascasso's position was extremely difficult, for while taking up his position opposite the *Paralelo* he was face to face with an enemy excellently equipped and well entrenched!—In the *Atarazanas* Barracks, the Customs Headquarters and the Electrical Works. Whereas Ascasso and his comrades were almost unarmed—the few pistols they possessed could certainly not help to break through the enemy's line. When we reached the point where the *Ronda* crossed,

(Continued on page 3)

Revolutionary Economy

The Agricultural Collectives Complete Their Work

THE collectivisation of the soil has met with not a few enemies. Some opposed it from sheer ignorance, others out of deference for mistaken traditions, while still others resisted it with the avowed intention of damaging the Workers' Cause. Yet, despite all this, the work of the C.N.T. in regard to the collectivisation of the land is making gigantic strides. Castile stands as a shining example, as a pattern. The C.N.T. Regional Committee of the Castilian Agricultural Workers is co-ordinating all efforts, with a view to reconstructing the agricultural system on an entirely new basis.

The splendid work carried out by the various isolated collectives—such as those of Thielmas, Miralcampo, Herencia, Montes Libres, etc.—fades into insignificance when compared with the well-planned and systematic work of reconstruction which is going on in the villages of the five Provinces of Castile. A few collectives here and there, unco-ordinated among themselves would not represent a definite advance on the former system of working the land. It is only the co-ordinated work in close co-operation with the Regional Committee of the Confederate agricultural workers which is bringing about the intensive re-construction of the rural economies. In this way, all collectives will be enabled to have the advantage of technical guidance and expert advice in all branches of agricultural work—this in accordance with the proposals submitted by the Castilian agricultural workers at the Plenary Conference on Rural Economy held by the C.N.T. at Valencia in January of this year.

Partly, the decisions made at

the Conference at Valencia had already been put into operation in Castile before the conference. Thus, for instance, the point that the workers should be represented at the meetings of the Collectives. Their wages system is still more progressive than that adopted by the Conference, for in nearly all the communities in Castile the "family wages" (wages according to the number of members in a family) had been introduced. The most important point is the centralisation of the administration which has to deal with very substantial sums and great numbers of workers.

No Paid Bureaucrats

Recently a Technical and Statistical Central organisation was established. This will not be composed of paid bureaucrats. These technical and statistical bodies of the C.N.T. will be formed of responsible representatives from the various territories, and they will not receive any extra advance on their wages or provisions, as used

to be the case in former days. These comrades will elaborate various plans for the improvement of the various branches of Agriculture: increased production, utilisation of power from the water sources, reforestation, improvement of cattle breeding. On the basis of exact statistics, they will study the requirements of each particular district, and the results achieved, with a view to stimulating this to the utmost.

1936-37 Figures

The figures published by the Minister of Agriculture regarding the production in 1936 and 1937 show an extraordinary increase in production during the last year. That is a double success, if one takes into consideration the fact as to the great number of agricultural workers who were mobilised. The shortage of labourers constitutes a difficult problem, with the solution of which the Plenary Session of the CNT has been wrestling. Their efforts have already met with some success. But the workers are taking into account the prolonged duration of the war, and for this reason the preparation and training of women in work usually done by men is being systematically carried on. The Agricultural Trade Unions have opened classes everywhere for the instruction of women and girls, so that the latter could gradually replace the men in all branches of the work.



The Spanish Workers' Struggle is-for FREE Socialism!

ASSIGNMENT IN UTOPIA

(continued from page 4)

Corps concealed the famine of 1932-33, and pen pictures are given of this.

In *Rededication* Eugene Lyons explains how the end came for him. He had revealed to the U.P. Agents in London, over the telephone some news about the East, and the G.P.U. came down on him, and ultimately he was recalled to New York.

The book is the story of one man's life and a rededication to the cause of Human Justice, Freedom and Liberty and human dignity. The disillusionist had been so complete, that many would have become embittered at all things concerned with the workers' struggle for power, but not so with Eugene Lyons. He visualises beyond the excesses of the G.P.U., the deification of Stalin, the totalitarian State, whether of the Russian type or the German and Italian variety, and is able to see the

triumph of socialist freedom and dignity.

One more quotation from the closing pages of the book:

"Stalin stands as the symbol of the 'permanent Transition' which has taken the place of the permanent revolution, once basic in Socialist thinking." "The Ancient Russian symbol of absolutism, the 'Little Father' is again enthroned. The glorification of Stalin must be seen to be believed."

Beyond what is contained in the last quotation, the Author sees the triumph of freedom, liberty and human dignity. One can quarrel in some respects with the Author, but in the main every lover of freedom and liberty must agree with him, no matter how much one feels the tragedy which is Russia today, and the disappointments which have been ours as well as of the Author as a result of this tragedy.

EDGAR PARKER.

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(Continued from opposite page)

we took cognisance of the situation. We now endeavoured to reach the Marques del Duero street, so as to attack the enemy from the rear. Actually it was opposite the "Moulin Rouge" where the most palpable defeat was inflicted upon the rebels. The people, whose main equipment consisted of but a few hundred rifles had defeated the regular army.

The first barracks to surrender was that situated in the Avenue Icaria, the last was the Cuartel Atarazanas, where Ascaso met with a glorious death. The airmen made a raid in the afternoon over the San Andres barracks, and the people now had armaments at their disposal.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE MILITIA.—The Central Committee of the Militia came into being immediately after the victory over the Revolt, and this was due to the initiative of President Companys, who united in his office the representatives of all Anti-Fascist Sectors. In the course of a memorable conference with men of the CNT and FAI he explained to them his views, recognising that we were absolutely masters of the situation in Catalonia. Companys, on giving expression to his definitely Liberal opinions, offers his unconditional assistance to the workers. If we considered that he would be an obstacle, then he was ready to retire. If, however, we were of the opinion that he can be useful, then he is prepared to make practical propositions calculated to bring about, within the shortest time possible, a normal state of affairs and to make it possible to give armed assistance to the other part of Spain.

As a result of that conference with Companys and the contact with other Sectors (which actually represented very little at that time) the Central Militia Committee was formed. This was given executive powers and functioned in so excellent a manner as to become a most effective organ of the Government. Among various other less important sections, the Committee appointed a War Department which was discharged with the organisation and preparation for the despatch of the militiamen to the Fronts. This Department had to deal with all questions in any way connected with the war. Another Department was that of Public Safety, which

succeeded, in a very brief space of time, in establishing revolutionary order in the rear on a solid basis. The Propaganda Department fulfilled an extremely useful task by encouraging the enthusiasm of the masses and by sending out communications abroad throwing light on the true character of our fight.

The Committee was composed of representatives from all Anti-Fascist Sectors, but the Libertarian Organisations were in the majority.

The War Department was entrusted to me, that of Public Safety to Aurelio Fernandez, and the Department for organising Provision Supplies to Domenech. Soon after the Committee began to function it was faced with the problem of organising militiamen to be sent to Zaragoza where, as we learnt, the Fascists had conquered. We called up an immense number of volunteers who came up in lorries and carts and gathered in the Diagonale. From these a staff of units were formed by Durruti, Jose Graner, Perez Farras and others. On reaching Lerida, the units separated—Durruti with Perez Farras marched towards Bujaraloz, while Del Barrio with others marched on Huesca. In order duly to appreciate this gesture of the heroic militiamen (Milicianos) it must be borne in mind that the Rebel forces were held at bay and were unable to penetrate into Catalonian territory for many months!

The circumstances which made it possible for the 19th of July to end in a victory for the workers were mainly these:—

- (1) The working class of Barcelona had imbibed revolutionary ideas for many years from the Anarchist Movement. Hence they were prepared and determined to fight.
- (2) The leading elements of the CNT-FAI did not fail them. On the contrary, from the very first moment they placed themselves in the forefront of the battle and did not leave the streets until the Military were defeated.
- (3) The Anti-Fascist attitude of some of the officers, mechanics and Aircraftsmen of the Prat de Llobregat Base.

(4) The fact that a large majority of the Storm Troops and of the Police Force with their officers joined the ranks of the People.

(5) The CNT-FAI, while absolutely masters of the situation in Barcelona and in Catalonia, did not choose to turn themselves into a totalitarian power, probably on the ground of mature revolutionary consciousness of a very high degree.

We therefore did not bring about a totalitarian Revolution; but, on the other hand, we did accomplish a very far-reaching Revolution—so far-reaching, in fact, that even to-day, after two years of constant concessions and compromises, there are still upheld principles and proofs thereof which can never disappear. Traces of our Revolution are deep, very deep. Doubtless, nowhere can such deep-rooted traces of Revolution be found, not even in Russia.

Had we attempted to turn the movement into a totalitarian one, by throwing our preponderating influence into the balance, it would lead to a great catastrophe. If, despite all our concessions, the countries abroad refused to render us assistance that was so urgent, one can easily imagine what the international attitude would have been if we had turned our victory to totalitarian account. Totalitarianism is the inevitable hook against which all popular revolutions are bound to clash.

Our mature revolutionary sense prompted us to seek contact with the other Anti-Fascist Sectors. Thus we have shown an example hitherto unknown in Revolutionary history, when—though we formed the majority—yet did not yield to the temptation to establish a Dictatorship. This attitude on our part was neither understood nor duly appreciated by the other Anti-Fascist Sectors. However, at any time it can be proved by means of facts and documents that for two long years it was possible to maintain resistance to the enemy ONLY owing to the fact that the CNT and FAI had from the very beginning insisted on and promoted the unity of all Anti-Fascist Sectors.

GARCIA OLIVER.

The Autobiography Of A Woman Rebel

A REVIEW BY ETHEL MANNIN

My Life as a Rebel, by Angelica Balabanoff (Hamish Hamilton, 10s. 6d.)

THERE was recently reviewed in *SPAIN AND THE WORLD* one of the most valuable books yet written on Soviet Russia — Eugene Lyons "Assignment in Utopia"; now comes another immensely important book, the autobiography of Angelica Balabanoff, one time secretary of the Third International, "My Life as a Rebel." Both Lyons and Balabanoff began as ardent Communists, and approached Soviet Russia in a spirit of mingled exultation and reverence; and both had the bitter experience of their passionate faith dissolving and collapsing in a well-nigh intolerable disappointment and disillusion. It is the story of Emma Goldman's disillusionment all over again. Lyons was six years in the Soviet Union, and he writes that the memory of those years is filled with pain. He had, he says, too large an investment of personal hope and faith at stake to take his disillusionment lightly. It was the same with Emma Goldman. The same with Angelica Balabanoff. Balabanoff left Russia in 1921, four and a half years after she had returned to it "with such hope and eagerness to participate in the consolidation of the Workers' Revolution."

In her autobiography, "Living my Life," Emma Goldman writes movingly of her meeting with Angelica in Moscow, shortly after her meeting with that other outstanding Communist, Alexandra Kollontay, whose casual acceptance of the contradictions, injustices, persecutions, on all sides had so profoundly shocked her. She found Angelica as warm and human as Alexandra had been cold and inhuman. "Angelica Balabanoff lacked what Kollontay possessed in abundance; the latter's fine figure, good looks, and youthful litheness, as well as her worldly polish and sophistication. But Angelica had something that far outweighed the external attributes of her handsome comrade. In her large sad eyes there shone profundity, compassion, and tenderness. The tribulations of her people, the birth-pangs of her native land, the suffering of the downtrodden she had served her whole life were deeply graven on her pallid face . . . Without a word from me Angelica Balabanoff guessed my doubts and travail." Angelica Balabanoff's anxiety over the direction the Revolution had taken "undermined her health and paralysed her will. Her mental state was due to the methods employed by her party, including the widespread suffering, the terror, and the cheapness of human life. Angelica could not face them."

She nevertheless clung painfully to the regime, through repeated disillusion and ill-health. She continued to serve the Soviets, but her

An American Girl in Besieged Madrid

JANET RIESENFELD went to Spain to begin a series of European dance-recitals and to marry her Spanish fiancé. The Civil War caught her. In

Dancer in Madrid

she tells how, arriving with no preconceived attachment to side, she soon was working ardently for the Government cause; and how she detected her fiancé in treasonable activities for Franco's "fifth column" for which he was arrested and shot. The book is full of vivid scenes—e.g., the grief in the great theatre when the death of the poet Lorca was announced, the first air raid, the sniping in the streets.

"It is extremely seldom that one can recommend a book to everybody, and extremely pleasant when one can. I can think of no-one, except the very stupidest Fascist, who would not enjoy reading Miss Reisenfeld's account of her adventures."—BRIAN HOWARD (*New Statesman*)

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position became increasingly impossible, for, in her own words, "I had either to speak out or seem to be an accomplice, yet there was no way in which I could express my disagreement with dominant policies either through the Soviet papers or in public meetings." She became so ill that her life was in danger.

Yet it was not on account of her health that she finally left Russia, but because she gathered the strength to swim against the stream. When she announced her intention of leaving, of refusing to collaborate any longer with the Soviets, Clara Zetkin was one of those who pressed her to stay—not realising that she herself was one of Angelica's greatest personal disillusionments because of her inordinate vanity and susceptibility to flattery, allowing herself, because of it, to become a tool of Zinoviev and the bureaucratic clique generally, whilst fully realising—none better—the tragic mistakes they had imposed upon the German Communists. Angelica had been not only Clara Zetkin's "ardent disciple, but also her friend," but towards the end she was forced to face the bitter fact that she could no longer look upon her as either friend or teacher.

Italy, where so great a part of Angelica Balabanoff's revolutionary career had been worked out—she was for ten years associated with the then revolutionary Mussolini, and co-editor with him of the Socialist daily "Avanti"—being now closed to her, she went back to Stockholm, the scene of her earlier activities. When she there regained her strength after her four years of overwork and semi-starvation she went to Vienna, "the starving capital which war and famine ruined," and where the Socialist workers' were laying the foundation of a new society. An attempt was made to get her back to Moscow. She made a condition of her return that the work she

should do there should have nothing to do with the Communist International, which, she wrote to



A recent photo of
Angelica Balabanoff

the Central Committee, she regarded as "demoralising the movement throughout the world." Nor would she break with her Italian Socialist comrades, who in their defeat before the rising tide of Fascism were defending Socialism with their lives. Shortly after this she received not an invitation but a command to return to Moscow to account for an article she had published in an Italian paper. She did not obey, and a few days later saw in "Pravda" that she had been expelled from the Communist Party for her "Menshevik approach" and her "collaboration" with a "social fascist" paper—though she had never belonged to any Menshevik organisation, and the "social fascist" paper was "Avanti" the headquarters of which had just been attacked and burned for the third time by the Fascist Blackshirts!

In view of recent events in Russia it is intensely interesting to observe that in the same issue of "Pravda" in which was announced

Balabanoff's expulsion there was an article by one Jaroslavsky, "who developed into a specialist in denouncing and defaming at the orders of the Central Committee." Balabanoff had the distinction of being the first of the leading Party members whom he was ordered to denounce; the second was Trotsky; the third, Zinoviev himself!

This is an entirely fascinating book; through its pages move the figures of Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Karl Liebknecht, Tagore, Gorki, Modigliani, the painter, John Reed—he it was who urged she should write her memoirs—the young Mussolini, desperate, starving, down and out, suicidal. And Angelica knew them all, and many other outstanding men and women in the international revolutionary movement, in Scandinavia, Italy, Russia, France, Switzerland. The book might almost be regarded as a history of the socialist and revolutionary movement of the late nineteenth and twentieth century. Balabanoff is a born rebel. She writes, "Whenever I am asked how I came to turn my back upon my family, upon the comfort and luxury of my home in southern Russia and to become a revolutionary, I am at a loss for an answer. No definite date or fact suggests itself to me. All the years of my childhood, as far back as I can remember, seem to have been years of rebellion—against my mother, my governesses, the conventions and restrictions of my life, and against the destiny for which I was being trained."

She broke with her father, emotionally and intellectually, long before the physical break. She decided that she must go not to Zurich where most Russian students went, but to the Universite Nouvelle in Brussels, the centre of Belgian intellectual radicals of the time, the leading spirit amongst whom was the Anarchist, Elisée Reclus. Balabanoff writes of him, "Reclus was a revolutionary as well as one of the most brilliant

scientists of his day; he had participated in the Paris Commune and had been expelled from France because of his Anarchism. He was typical of the intellectual Anarchists of that time. His own life was a daily exemplification of his views."

But read the whole exciting, absorbing story of this remarkable woman's career for yourself. The book reads as easily as a stimulating novel; its interest never falters; a longish book, it never seems long in the reading. Although one could quote so endlessly from such a book that within a limited space it is almost dangerous to begin, there is perhaps for present purposes no better introduction to the book than Balabanoff's observations on the Spanish struggle. "In spite of the economic backwardness of the country," she writes, "the Spanish labour movement was the most militant in Europe—completely permeated by a revolutionary Socialist and Anarcho-Syndicalist tradition. More than any other European workers, perhaps, they were convinced that they had "nothing to lose but their chains." Their desperate and heroic struggle against the combined forces of Spanish, Italian, and German Fascism, the almost incredible endurance they have displayed, as well as the support and sympathy which their struggles have received from revolutionaries and liberals in other countries, are a light which helps to illumine the whole world in the dark years through which we are living. "So, too," she adds, "is the less conspicuous and less dramatic struggle carried on by the victims of Fascist suppression in Italy, Germany, and Austria."

Her summing-up concerning Russia is that the masses, whilst still cherishing the basic program of the Soviet regime, "resent more and more—though they are unable to express the fact—the corruption of the spirit and purpose of their Revolution." She believes that if a new World War "does not plunge us into a new nightmare within the next few years," a new international labour movement can be built again, and that "such a movement will have learnt from its past defeats at the hands of Fascism and from the mistakes of the Russian experiment," that a new generation will build more wisely and more successfully on the foundations laid by dead, or defeated, or exiled comrades. This, too, it should be recalled was the spirit of Eugene Lyons' summing-up; he distinguished between the U.S.S.R. and the Socialist dream, but concludes, "No set-back can end the adventure in idealism. That adventure began with the dawn of the race and will continue when the slogans and phobias of our own day will have been forgotten."

It is not too much to say that the whole of Balabanoff's life has been an adventure in idealism, and her book has real historical value, as Reed knew that it must have when he urged her to write it. For she has not merely seen history in the making, but been a participant in it.

ETHEL MANNIN

Assignment In Utopia

Assignment in Utopia, by Eugene Lyons (Harrap, 15/-).

(continued from previous issue)

In 1929 Stalin made a speech in which that year was described as the year of the great *break*, and the Author comments on the C.P. as he saw it then, and I can only give a short quotation of these comments:—

1. The C.P. became sacrosanct.
2. Stalin became the personification of that sanctity, the inspired oracle and the repository of all wisdom.
3. The conviction that Human life is valueless and the raw stuff of history took a firm hold on the ruling group.
4. Social origin became the measure of personal value.
5. Class War proclaimed as supreme method of social advance, being artificially stimulated where it did not exist. The nurturing of hot-house class struggles became the order of the day. Thus the Kremlin went further than Marx, as Marx recognised the class struggle arising because of the inherent conflicts of economic interests.
6. All who did not accept Moscow's Leadership were classified as Social Fascists.

The above points are interesting for comparison's sake with the present reactionary line of the Third International and no further comment is required.

There is also a very fine description of the Five-year Plan during which time the remarkable formula was exhibited all over Moscow, two plus two equals five.

Doubt is largely concerned with the liquidation of the Peasant. On the 27th December 1929 Stalin launched a slogan "liquidation of

the kulaks as a class," and 65 days, again to quote the Author "Hell broke loose in 70,000 villages of Russia." The word Kulak means *fist*, but the definition of the word was extended to such an extent that a poverty stricken peasant without a bean who did not agree with the official line was dubbed a "Kulak Agent," and had to pay the price accordingly. Stalin failed to define Kulak and failed, too, to caution against excesses, and the result is known,—or is it known? The Author says: "Villages without a single Kulak in the economic sense liquidated four to five per cent of their inhabitants as kulaks or kulak agents all the same."

In March 1930, Stalin peremptorily called off the terror, and in an article called "Dizziness from Success" he blamed the local officials for being over-zealous.

Then followed the Ramzin Trial in 1930 and the great scoop of the Author in the fact of being the first *Newsman* to personally interview Stalin, but the entire chapter must be read to do adequate justice to this story.

After this Lyons went on a vacation in the U.S.A., but to be home did not stifle the doubts, and he also came in for some criticism from American Communists, who began to question his integrity concerning some criticisms he had made.

Disillusionist speaks for itself. The outstanding feature in this book is the "valuta" business. Torgsin (trade with foreigners) was started for the benefit of the resident foreigners and tourists in Moscow with an eye to roping in some of the Dollars, and the better paid Russians who had managed to scrape together some valuta, even if received from relatives abroad

were allowed to spend it at Torgsin, but with the watchful eye of the G.P.U. upon them, and it transpired that later on when the valuta persecutions were in full swing, the G.P.U. made full use of what they had gleaned from watching the people who visited Torgsin and other places where valuta could be spent. "By 1931" the Author says, "all the works of Marx and Lenin, all the speeches of Kaganovich and Kalinin, were outweighed in the scales of Russian consciousness by this one word. Valuta shops, valuta restaurants, valuta arrests, valuta tortures, valuta whores, just a few dimensions of that inexhaustible word. To record that it means *real values* such as foreign money, precious metals and jewels, do not begin to explain it."

The 1933 Metro-Vickers trial is mentioned, but there is no space to quote on this trial. The Author does however, end his statement on the trials by a significant remark:

"Dictatorship under an infallible leader calls for a system of scapegoats. Between the first and the last demonstration trials that I attended, the Shakhtz case and the Metro-Vickers case, I saw that system shape toward perfection. Pre-revolutionary engineers, professors, Mensheviks, foreign technicians, had been condemned and punished to explain the difficulties, but the difficulties were not thereby ended. Not even those among us who were most critical of the sacrificial rites would have guessed that the system would be refined further, to the point where in 1936-37 it was destroying revolutionary military heroes and the fathers of the Bolshevik Revolution themselves."

The Author claims that the Press (continued on page 3, column 1)

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