

REVOLT!

INCORPORATING SPAIN and the WORLD

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Facts About Central Spain

What was the military position in Central Spain after the fall of Barcelona? Was continued resistance possible?

AFTER the fall of Barcelona the military situation in Central Spain was hopeless. Only five ports remained under our control, and it was an easy matter for Franco's fleet to effectively blockade the coast and prevent arms and food from reaching us. General Rojo, one of the military chiefs stated that after the fall of Catalonia the war had been lost. The defeat on the Ebro front was in effect a rout. In one day Modesto's and Lister's troops retreated 32 kilometres without offering any resistance. Furthermore we had enormous difficulties in receiving arms from Russia for which we had paid beforehand in gold. Arms which were to have arrived last August reached us months later when Tarragona fell into Fascist hands. Another important fact is that after the fall of Barcelona Negrin reduced his famous 13 points to only 3. (1. Independence; 2. Amnesty; 3. Plebiscite). It indicates that he actually knew that it was impossible to hope for victory.

How was the Defence Council formed?

THERE was a general desire for peace in Central Spain after the fall of Barcelona. A few loyal professional soldiers made plans for a coup d'etat as did also the Communists. The former, because they saw the hopelessness of increasing the bloodshed when there was no hope of victory, the latter in order to control the evacuation of their own militants regardless of the others. Negrin returned to Spain for more than one reason: for moral reasons (to make up for his betrayal of Catalonia) and by reason of Communist pressure. (It is significant fact that Uribe and Del Vayo, both pro-Communist, also returned.)

All parties (including the Communists) were consulted by the comrades of the CNT, in an effort to form a new government which would be representative of all parties and organizations. The proposals were rejected by the Communists whilst other parties remained neutral. However the Socialist Group of Madrid and the Republicans (except for Sanandrez and other individuals) accepted the proposals. They then got together with Besteiro, Carillo and others and agreed to proclaim the National Defence Council on the Sunday. On the Monday morning the Council received the official support of the UGT through its secretary, R. Vega and a representative, Perez, was sent to the headquarters of the Council. In the end, all parties and organisations were represented except the Communists.

What followed the formation of the Defence Council?

THAT day, the Communists who had refused to join the Council started to withdraw their troops from the front so as to offer armed resistance in Madrid. These included the 40th, 41st, 42nd Brigades, part of the 12th and the 5th Carabineers. To counteract this attack

In this interview with one of our Spanish comrades who was amongst the last to leave Madrid, we bring to the English-speaking workers the first facts about Central Spain. It is an answer to those political parties who have attempted to portray these men as traitors and agents of England and France.

Also, for the first time the world proletariat will know the true facts about the fall of Cartagena and the so called "desertion" of the Republican Fleet.

Our work of exposure has only begun. The world must know that the Spanish workers had to fight not only against Fascism but a rearguard of political opportunists as well. We begin the story in this issue of Revolt!

the CNT called on the 70th Confederal Brigade which, it must be emphasized, was at the time in reserve and not at the front as were the Communist Brigades which were withdrawn to take part in the street fighting. Later other reserve brigades such as the 35th and the 1st artillery corps were called up. Two military chiefs, with known Communist sympathies offered their services to the Council. Actually they were preparing a coup in order to be later proclaimed military chiefs of the Centre. Col. Bueno, chief of the 2nd Army Corps was one. He was arrested and sentenced to 30 years imprisonment.

The fighting lasted for eight days (5th-12th March). It is estimated that 1,000 men of all parties were killed in Madrid alone.

On the 13th the Council spoke over the radio and stated that they desired to open negotiations with the Fascists. They declared that there should be no foreign intervention in the discussion. All they asked was the respect of life and permission for all who wished to leave the country to do so. The Fascists answered making demands which could not be accepted. It was then decided to have personal conversations. Two representatives from Madrid (Ortega and Garijo) left for Burgos. During the interview the Fascists demanded unconditional surrender and guaranteed merciful treatment for all anti-Fascists. They required that white flags should be hoisted on all the fronts as well as in the five ports still in our hands. Our represen-

tatives then returned to Madrid. The conditions imposed could not be accepted, but nevertheless it was deemed essential that the results of the conversations should be put into writing and signed by the Fascist chiefs. It should be mentioned here that one of the conditions was the "symbolical surrender" of our aviation. This was impossible owing to the fact that the lives of our aviators were imperilled if we accepted.

Our representatives again left for Burgos and an agreement had almost been arrived at, so much so that Franco's agents suggested that Barijo should draft out the basis of the agreement, when Franco called his agents to the phone to inform them that as the aviation had not been handed over, all ne-

gotiations should be broken off. Our representatives were obliged to return. In order to gain time the Council continued to communicate with Franco's agents and even promised to hand over the aviation that day, but were informed that it was too late as they had received instructions to start the attack on all fronts and could not postpone it. However, they suggested that during the lull between the first Fascist artillery bombardment and the advance, our forces were to leave the trenches and come into no-man's land holding white flags aloft.

These suggestions were not heeded and the same evening over the radio we informed the people the nature of our proposals and Franco's counter-proposals.

The first attack was launched by the Fascist forces in Estremadura and Guana, and the troops (all under the control of the Communists) withdrew without firing a single shot. On the Madrid front the Communist Brigades which had previously taken part in the Communist rising in Madrid either went over to the enemy or abandoned the fronts and retreated into the capital, so that almost the whole front was open to the enemy. This made it necessary for the Council to leave Madrid on the 28th March. The last militants to leave the city were members of the National Committee of the CNT (Anarcho-Syndicalists).

In Valencia the Communists again opened the way to the Fascist advance and thus we were only able to stay in Valencia for one day owing to Fascist risings. Again the Anarchists were the last to leave for Alicante, which they never reached as by that time Fascist risings had taken place outside Gandia.

How was the evacuation of Madrid effected? Is there any political significance (as the Communist Press would have us believe) in the fact that the members of the Defence Council were taken off by a British warship?

IN view of the situation at the fronts, the Defence Council in agreement with the Federation of Syndicates as well as the Transport Syndicate drew up a list of the militants who should be sent to Valencia. Lorries were accordingly sent to the various syndicates. At the same time all the military leaders were called by telephone in order to keep them informed of the arrangements and the time for their evacuation. Our aim was to concentrate all the most compromised militants in Alicante for, besides being an important port, it was situated 250 kilometres from the nearest front and would thus allow for normal evacuation. I estimate that there must have been at least 10,000 militants in Alicante after the surrender of Madrid. Our plans were ruined by the armed Fascist rising in Valencia and throughout the territory still unoccupied by Franco's troops.

I should make it quite clear, in view of the lying campaign carried on by the Communist Press, that

(Continued on page 4)

Big Capital at work in Spain

NO SOONER had Franco entered Barcelona than the World Capitalist Press began to interest itself as to the disposal of the booty. Whilst the Italian and German Press expressed confidence in Franco's "independence," France and England began worrying themselves as to whether the markets which they controlled before the war would still be theirs. The "democracies" felt guilty at not having sufficiently helped Franco and they hurried to make up for lost time by sending ambassadors and food supplies for the civil population, so as to establish once more their "traditional ties of friendship."

But English and French capitalists were not less active than the diplomats. It was thus, that the "Juan March Company" was formed in London, whose role, according to the French paper *Paris-Midi*, is of utmost importance in the economic reconstruction of Spain, and at the same time it will serve to counteract the commercial hegemony which Rome and Berlin were hoping to establish in Spain.

Whilst the struggle for the conquest of the Spanish market goes on, Franco returns to the international companies all their property and interests, and one will see from the following information that French and English interests in Spain are of great importance.

The Anglo-French group of Rothschild is interested in:

a) *Banks and Insurances; l'Union et Phoenix Espagnol*, an Anglo-French Assurance Society, is an affiliate of the Rothschild-Pereire

group and of the *Banque Espagnol de Credit* whose president was Jules Cambon, one time ambassador and representative of the Rothschilds.

The *Banque Espagnol de Credit* is thus intimately connected, if not affiliated, with the Rothschild group. It is the Spanish bank with the most extensive international dealings (with the Morgan, Krupp, Empain groups, the Bank of Eng-

c) *Railways*: The Madrid-Saragossa-Alicante line is controlled by an administrative council, which includes many members of the Rothschild group who compose the Paris Committee (*Comité de Paris*).

d) *Chemical Products*: The Saint-Gobin, Kuhlman, Pechinery and Central de Dynamite trusts have important holdings in Spain. The Rothschilds were represented by M. Leverve in the St. Gobin Trust, M. Ledoux of Pennaroya in the Kuhlmann, and the late M. Leval in the Pechinery and Central de Dynamite.

e) *Electricity*: The Rothschild group has indirect interests in the Spanish electricity companies, through the *Banque Espagnol de Credit*, the *Sofina-Chade-Sidro* groups, and the *Banque de Paris*. Further, the *Banque de l'Union Parisienne* and the Pechinery group have recuperated the Spanish potash mines; the Solvay group of Belgium the potash mines of Suria.

These details may make tedious reading, but their importance lies in the fact that they show that it is useless to-day to speak of democracy and the defence of democracy against Fascism. Democracies are controlled by capitalist interests, which make sure that they hold political control in their hands. Whereas Fascist countries can be guided by political interests, democracies remain unmoved unless their economic interests are at stake. And when that day comes, millions of workers will be told to go and be killed in the name of peace and liberty!

When you have finished reading your copy of "REVOLT" pass it on!

land, Midland Bank, Comte Volpi, the Sofina, Wagon Lits, Siemens groups, etc.).

b) *Mines*: The two powerful groups *Rio Tinto*, and *Pennaroya*, are under the influence of Rothschild (London, Paris). M. du Castel, their representative, is the vice-president of Pennaroya and administrator of Rio Tinto.

Unemployment is Hell!

AMONG the slaves of the ancient east there was popularised the orthodox idea of hell as a place where tormented souls worked without cease — capitalism has evolved the modern hell of torment by idleness — the Hell of Unemployment.

One who lacks the unhappy experience of enforced idleness and its poverty cannot realise the grey horror of it. Denied the little pleasures and culture which make tolerable a life of labour, denied even sufficient food for health and life, oppressed by care, often without even the slender hope which seeking work might give, one-fifth of the population of prosperous Britain decays in the midst of plenty.

Unemployment exists in all areas but this flower of capitalism may be seen in its fullest development in the distressed areas.

Localities such as Jarrow and the coalfields were, a few years ago, buzzing hives of industry. Most of the wealth was taken to the South of England or the more pleasant scenery of the Mediterranean coast. Now, unwanted by the absentee owning class the silent factories and mines seem like the blackened, poisoned stumps of a senile giant,—but the population remains.

It well recalls the "special areas" of the North American Indians. When American capitalism robbed the Indians of their land it sought to exterminate them by military means, unsuccessfully. It then "gave" them reservations and sent them regular doles of food and blankets. Since then the Indians have been a vanishing race.

Unless they act, that may be the fate of the miners of Wales and Durham, the shipbuilders of Clyde and Tyne, the millions of Britain's "reservations."

Many schemes have been conceived for their relief, most bearing a remarkable likeness to one another. The building of roads is brightly suggested by the Liberal, Labour and Conservative parties, usually when out of office. After painful thought and laborious study the Communist Party and N.U.W.M. produce a scheme—to build roads.

Such public works cannot solve unemployment. The sum total of them must be small compared with the enormous problem.

Even the small possible effect of them is further limited, for much of the money goes not in wages, but to land owners. Then the money must be raised by taxation, so in many cases the taxpayer spends

less on cars, theatres or clothes, which increases unemployment in other industries. Taxation often only changes from one industry to another.

The building of roads may even eventually increase unemployment, the new highways have brought about a rationalisation of transport, buses now carry almost twice the number of passengers, lorries twice and even thrice the loads of a few years ago, but the bigger vehicles carry no increase in crew. The shadow of unemployment falls on road drivers and railwaymen.

Such a test may be applied to all the schemes of reformism. To increase employment any scheme must be designed to produce goods which the unemployed may consume, food, clothing and shelter rather than increase capital without any increase in consumption. After all the hungry out-of-work cannot eat roads.

Trading estates are urged to meet the needs of millions, yet on the huge, expensive estates already established a few scores or hundreds are employed at low wages, producing ice cream, fruit pies and shirt buttons. Such industries are to take the place of building Atlantic liners and the coal export trade.

Occasionally we have outbursts of charity. A few pounds are distributed, much in the manner of the prizes of a sweep draw, a few old clothes given away. Then the disturbed bourgeois conscience feels a warm glow and resumes its long hibernation to be only tickled by an occasional hunger march.

Such patronage can only touch a thin fringe of the unemployed masses and in any case is deeply resented and scorned by most workers.

Even less useful is the carrying of begging petitions to the King. Modern monarchs, unlike King Wenceslas, have no power to dispense doles, or do much else but lay foundation stones, but are the prisoners of the bourgeoisie, without even the power to order their own households.

The unemployed will not find a solution of their problems in sympathy of monarchs, the charity of an overfed bourgeoisie or the cribbed "schemes" of intellectually bankrupt politicians. Their own arms, though weakened by hunger, yet have the means to shape their own destinies.

They languish in the midst of po-

tential wealth because the employ-why should they not weave covering for themselves? This recalls the post-war story of the Scottish crofters. The crofters of West Scotland live by their labour applied to the soil, consuming most of their produce, building their own cottages, even spinning and weaving their own famous tweeds, they live hard but independent lives.

Many of these men fought in the war of 1914-18 and some of them returning found the land they had rented, in new ownership, sold by the old landowning class to new capitalist owners.

Living in enforced idleness they finally in desperation seized possession of patches of earth (yet offering to pay rent) built new crofts and tilled the soil. Defying orders to quit they were finally arrested and imprisoned with unemployment to face on their release.

They solved the problem of unemployment only to be frustrated by the laws of private property.

Any solution of the problem must attack private property. Between the unemployed worker and the

means of production which he needs to live, stands the landowning and capitalist class, it is their ownership of these things which creates the problem.

Let the unemployed be no longer content with doles and charity and take the means of production, land, mills, factories and mines and working co-operatively, produce food, clothes and houses for distribution among themselves.

The existence of organisations like the trade unions and co-operatives, the workers' control of factories in Spain in 1936 and Italy in 1920 proves the ability of the workers to manage industry.

Of course the first attempt would be beyond the power of authority to suppress.

It may be said it is better to press for a slight increase of dole. Doles are increased for political expediency, they are cut for the same purpose. But faced by the revolutionary direct action of the class conscious unemployed, the rulers would shower doles on them.

The ruling class is moved by fear—not pity—let them fear the unemployed.

TOM BROWN.

International Solidarity

LAST week, at a moment's notice we were confronted with a tremendous problem. Of the 180 odd refugees from Spain nearly fifty were our comrades of the three organizations, the CNT, FAI and Youth EIJL. Most of them were sent to the Salvation Army hostel. It was obviously our duty to see that they did not stay there longer than necessary. Added to our difficulties was the fact that the Easter holidays hampered us in our work on their behalf. However, with enthusiasm the few comrades who were in London set about the task of feeding them and finding hospitality wherever we could with comrades. Up to the time of writing we have found hospitality for several of our Spanish comrades and have provided two meals a

day for at least twenty in the large room at our offices. Thanks to the co-operation of a comrade and a Spanish friend who have provided us with much food, our expenses have been kept down to a minimum. But of course we cannot expect the impossible and in future must depend on our own resources.

Many Spanish comrades arrived without any change of clothing, others with very little clothing on their backs, and in spite of the statement of a French Trotskyist newspaper, with no money at all.

These men were the last to leave Madrid and Valencia. They first attended to the evacuation of the others and then thought about their own safety. By a coincidence, they are alive. It is our duty whilst they remain in London to see that everyone of them has proper attention.

Already the response has been encouraging. Our indefatigable friends in Whiteway at a moment's notice organised an affair in which the Whiteway League of Youth took an active part, and raised the magnificent sum of £5. And another £5 from Whiteway comes from our faithful friend Lillian Wolfe.

Now what about our other readers? Some may be able to afford £5. Others may be able to afford only 1/-. ALL

contributions, large and small, are gratefully received. But please do not WAIT before sending your contribution; SEND IT NOW! to:

Spain and the World Refugee Fund, 21 FRITH STREET, LONDON, W.1.
N.B. Any clothing in good condition and cleaned will be welcome. Also any comrades who can manage to take a Spanish comrade in his house should get in touch with us at once as there are still a few in the Salvation Army hostel.

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| No. | |
| 396. | Stroud: Lillian Wolfe 10/-. |
| 397. | Detroit: International Libertarian Committee Against Fascism in Spain (per E. Vivas) £21/5/6. |
| 398. | Bronx, N.Y.: Proceeds Social per L. Monitto £6/5/0. |
| 399. | Stroud: Lillian Wolfe £5. |
| 400. | Bristol: L. Richfield 3/-. |
| 401. | Stroud: Social organised by the Whiteway League of Youth per M. Morand £5. |
| 402. | London: Tab. £1. |
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Some Thoughts on Defeatist Imperialism

Chamberlain and a British "Franco"

AT Munich in September 1938 the British ruling class adopted, under the political leadership of Neville Chamberlain, a new political line in relation to the outside world. This policy may be summarised as *defeatist imperialism*. That is, in future, British imperialism is conscious rather of its class character than of its international rivalries. Henceforth, its primary enemy is to be found in the subject classes: the working class at home and the oppressed colonial peoples of the British Empire. In order to combat these more effectually, the British ruling class needs peace abroad, and to purchase it, is prepared to make concessions. Abyssinia, Spain, Czechoslovakia, in the past; colonial concessions in the future; in the end—the British Empire itself sacrificed to ensure the maintenance of the British ruling class in the metropolis, Britain herself.

Defeatist imperialism is not a new thing in the history of empires. In fact, we have before us in the contemporary world the classic example of this policy worked out to the bitter end. I refer to Spain; Imperial Spain, which, in the sixteenth century was as much the mistress of the world as was Imperial Britain in the nineteenth. The Spanish Empire, aggrandised by the conquest of the Americas by Cortez and Pizarro, master of Europe, supreme over the Atlantic, "the Spanish main" of the Tudor Age, was, indeed, the original empire, of which it was said that over its world-wide expanse "the sun never sets."

To-day, we witness the descendants of the Spanish conquerors opening the gates of their country to foreign fascist armies, so as to preserve their rule over the metropolis, Spain herself. The Spanish Colonial Empire has perished of what Marx so aptly termed "Spain's slow and inglorious decay." To preserve its standards of colonial exploitation when deprived of colonies, the Spanish ruling

class is forced to put on the screw so tightly in its one remaining possession, the metropolis, that the Spanish workers and peasants have been goaded into fighting their exploiters with that ardour and heroism which has today become proverbial. Colonial exploitation, forced back onto its last ditch, has exploited Spain itself so ruthlessly that the Spanish people has risen with such vehemence that only foreign armies can save the Spanish aristocracy from its wrath. Hence the tragedy today played out in Spain, where armies of African Moors and German pagans are enrolled by General Franco in defence of "Christ and Spain." Truly it is a far cry from the conquest of Moorish Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella and of Germany by Charles V.!

The contemporary "Tragedy of Spain" has, for us especially in England, an interest no less topical than tragic. For Chamberlain at Munich and in his recent visit to Rome is inaugurating for Britain the policy whose concluding chapter we witness today in Spain. Chamberlain has, in fact, made the eventual appearance of an English "Franco" not merely possible, but actually inevitable, unless his policy is speedily reversed. In biblical language, after the Betrayal comes the Crucifixion! At Munich, Chamberlain, the "Judas Iscariot" of modern times, demonstrated an unlimited ability to betray. But his betrayal was not merely negative, it had its positive side as well. Democracy and the British ruling class, always uneasily yoked in a common harness, have now parted company for good and all. Chamberlain does not regard his act primarily as a betrayal. Fundamentally, he is a class warrior, a crypto-fascist, who betrays the people in order to preserve his class. Viewed from this broad historic

standpoint, Munich, to employ another historic parallel, is the "Moscow," the "1812" of the British Empire. Therewith defeatist imperialism, the policy of which a General Franco represents the inevitable final stage, was officially adopted. In astrological language, we live today in the "house" of betrayal.

...A British "Franco" was born at Munich: one cannot over-emphasise the significance of this fact. One has only to cast the most cursory glance at the peculiar economy of Britain to observe that a pro-fascist policy abroad inevitably implies equally a pro-fascist policy at home. Briefly one can summarise it thus: a capitalist Britain cannot exist apart from its foreign trade; trade, internationally and nationally, no less than individually, depends on confidence. "Honesty is the best policy" is a mere statement of fact. Hence a policy such as Chamberlain's, a policy of political swindling, of deliberately manufactured war-scars, destructive of all confidence in the present or future, of continual lowering of British prestige, must inevitably, even as a mere matter of business routine, immeasurably worsen the economic position of this country; not to mention the physical dismemberment of the British Empire, to which such a policy must speedily lead. All business men know that swindlers always beat themselves in the long run. A capitalist Britain run by Chamberlain as a long-term fraud, will prove no exception! Capitalism, anywhere and everywhere, flourishes on confidence, not on confidence tricks!

Expressed in political terms this process can only mean a rapid decay in the economic status of Britain, with a resulting political swing towards the Left. 1931 will come again,

only permanently. Mass unemployment, ruthless cuts in wages and salaries, slashing attacks on social services, coupled with a drastic elimination of all popular rights, except the right to starve, all this, plus no hope of anything except an acceleration of the headlong process, is totally incomparable with democracy; a starving electorate does not, after all, carry credulity to the point of electing the government which starves it, at any rate, it does not re-elect it.

Therefore, pro-fascism abroad can only mean fascism at home. Once embarked on that slippery path Chamberlain (or his successors) will find themselves forced to travel faster and faster. Capitalism in its decay returns ever more openly to the customs of its brutal youth. As the Earl of Warwick, Chamberlain's spiritual ancestor, then leader of the rising English capitalists, suppressed Ket's rebellion in 1549 with German and Italian mercenaries, and drowned the last stand of the English peasants in blood, so the political era begun in Munich will end, unless we bestir ourselves, in German and Italian aeroplanes bombing London, and in foreign fascist armies similarly crushing the last stand of the British working class in the interest of a decadent ruling class too senile to defend itself, and which regards patriotism as only "the last refuge of a (socialist) scoundrel."

Already we are embarked upon the road which leads with inexorable logic to this ghastly conclusion. A new era was inaugurated at Munich. At the moment Chamberlain entered the fascist bloc, the shadow of a British "Franco" rose above the historic horizon.

F. A. RIDLEY.

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Did the Spanish Fleet "Desert"?



tion unbearable. The Navy rendered not a single useful purpose during a lengthy period till towards the end of 1937 things changed a little and communist influence declined.

Notwithstanding this change in establishment of the military hierarchy, the restrictions of the power of the Comissariat, the general trend of the government prevented the carrying out of the necessary work for an effective purge and to realise the general importance of the fleet in the struggle.

To this must be added the exaggerated powers given to the officers on the spot, which allowed them to ignore the anti-fascist organiza-

tions. This, in view of the special character of the Spanish War, was extremely dangerous. There were comrades who were deported from Cartagena for the mere fact of informing the Popular Front of that city their fears with regard to certain individuals, who being disloyal, still held many important posts at the base and in the fleet.

At the fall of Barcelona, the demoralisation which spread over the whole of the Centre-South zone increased enormously in Cartagena, as a result of the suspicious surrender of Minorca. In effect, all the sailors were perfectly acquainted with the defensive capacity of that island and could therefore only attribute to treachery the fall of so important, strong, and strategic, a base. Another factor of demoralisation existed in the civil population; formed in a great measure of hidden elements sympathetic to Franco, these spread all manner of alarming rumours. In spite of this, discipline was maintained and while they suffered the terrible bombings several times a day of the Fascist aviators no-one abandoned his post.

During those days, without any communication with the Government which was then in France, the Libertarian Movement worked to maintain the morale and the coordination of all ports and of Cartagena, sending special delegations to hearten the combatants and to make them understand the importance of keeping calm and firm. All this was destroyed by the arrival of Negrin and his blundering policy.

The indignation and lack of respect which the Government well merited found its most faithful reflection in Cartagena, where even the Commissar for the Navy, Bruno Alonso and the Chief of the Naval Base, General Bernal, were completely in disagreement with Negrin's lack of serious judgment.

The munitions and the anti-aircraft forces at the Base and the Fleet were rapidly drained away without the possibility of future replacements.

The Rising in Cartagena

On March 4th, certain Communist dailies published a list of orders from the Defence Ministry, orders arrived at by Negrin in conference with Alvarez del Vayo and Aribe, over the heads of the other Ministers. Among others they appointed as Chief of the Naval Base of Cartagena, Francisco Galan, of whose sectarian and criminal career enough was known; a Military Commandant for Murcia of a detached Communist element; Military Commander to Elvelino Vega, another Communist who in Catalonia had been in command of the 12th Army Corps, being responsible for the considerable enemy ad-

vances on this part, and who permitted infiltrations which finally determined the fall of the whole sector. For the rest they decreed various promotions and named in this connection Modesto, Lister, "El Campesino," and many other Chekist elements, of a sorry reputation among all the combatants. The promotion of Galan made a great impression in Cartagena. It must be remembered that only 15 days earlier General Bernal was put in charge of the Base and there were no valid reasons why he should be replaced.

The communist blow of the Government was obvious to all, a blow without any consideration of the delicacy of the position in the loyal zone and the catastrophic repercussions which it would occasion.

The indignation produced in Cartagena by all these measures broke all discipline and caused such confusion that profiting by it, certain fascist leaders endeavoured to provoke a rising. For that, they counted on the immediate collaboration of the leaders of and the forces of the Carabineros" (known as the "Sons of Negrin"), Assault Guards, almost all the coastal artillery, a regiment of Marines, and the fascist prisoners whom they had already liberated.

On the loyalist side were the 7th Battalion of the Rearguard, the fleet in its entirety, and the aviation.

The struggle which ensued was in complete confusion. Firing was random and subsequently the two sides carried the same banner. It was impossible to distinguish them and the anti-aircraft batteries fired at both the Fascist and Republican machines without distinction.

The Fascist leaders took advantage of the ensuing confusion and the discontent brought about by the appointment of Galan, to make use of Republican troops for their own purpose. But the arrival of loyalist reinforcements, as

well as the consciousness of being used by the Fascists, caused the greater part of the rebels to lay down their arms.

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A Fascist Ship Sunk

The Fascists got reinforcements from Franco in response to a radio appeal. About 3 in the afternoon of the 8th, a large ship bearing the

By an Eye Witness

Republican Flag, hove in sight, and made for the port of Cartagena. She went straight to her objective, as the rebel Fascists had informed Franco that the coastal batteries were all in their hands, and close to the entrances of the port, hoisted the nationalist flag. She was carrying a very large cargo of war material, fuel and explosives, and a landing force of 4,000 men.

The lower battery, which alone was in the hands of the loyalists, opened fire on the Fascist ship with such good effect that its second shot caused an explosion which set the ship on fire and sunk it in less than an hour.

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(Continued on page 4, column 1)

It would be burdensome to detail at length the procedure of the Communists and the Maritime Authorities which since July 19th was calculated to undermine the influence of the rank and file which existed in the Navy.

A large number of naval units were saved for the anti-fascist cause, thanks to the decision and the heroism of the sailors and of the lower ranks, who knew how to finish off the most dangerous elements with dispatch. Having liquidated fascist influence in most of the ships, the sailors declared for their own organisations consisting of co-ordinated Ship Committees, which, comparable with the rise of the Militias, were a valuable factor taking the initiative in the organisation of revolutionary security. These committees, organised and co-ordinated, immediately commenced to put things in order at the naval base of Cartagena, offering to the Government suggestions and plans for rendering the work of the Navy more efficient and for the commencement of bold operations against various vulnerable positions of the enemy. Unfortunately, there existed on the part of the Ministry of Marine a strong bias against the Ship Committees, which were the expression of the will of the sailors. They devoted themselves to suffocating every vestige of popular intervention, to destroying the Committees, with the object of reorganising the Navy according to the classical conception of military hierarchy, and to eliminating all revolutionary influence.

Russian influence became apparent. The naval technicians coming from Russia, appeared to be propaganda agents or Cheka elements rather than men who had come to dedicate themselves to the War. Their principal job consisted of disorganising the people's navy in order to instal a reign of terror over delegates and subordinates. Almost all workers were obliged to hold a C.P. card. Whether their antecedents were fascist or republican was not taken into account. Those, who from dignity refused, were immediately accused of "disaffection to the regime," and imprisoned. For those sailors belonging to the Libertarian Movement, they formed units of marines and sent them to the fronts. There, our comrades suffered the vexations and persecutions which were the lot of all non-communists in units governed by the C.P.

In this manner Cartagena became the centre of a Communist feud. Here, there were concentrated some 13,000 men with the C.P. card, rendering no useful service to the struggle, having not the slightest notion of practical seamanship, and making the life of the civil popula-

Madrid of the Revolution

THE way the Madrilenos held back Franco's armies for nearly three years is an epic in the history of working class struggle. Yet, apart from sensational news which has appeared in the Capitalist Press (and more often than not, false) little is known of that heroic struggle in the first months of the Revolution.

Madrid Rojo y Negro* and I Helped to Build an Army† are books which deal with the defence of Madrid during the first six months. Both these books should be read if one wants to get a clear picture, so different are they in their outlook. Madrid Rojo y Negro is essentially a book on the struggle in the front line trenches where men fought and died for an ideal. I Helped to Build an Army is written by a professional soldier who followed Madrid's life and death struggle not even with his field glasses, but simply from reports and telegrams which arrived at the War Office in Madrid. He was one of the few officers not to go over to Franco in July 1936, but nevertheless his sympathies were certainly not with the workers struggle. Dr. Borkenau who translated the book describes him as "a partisan of the moderate wing of the Republican camp, an admirer of Manuel Azana and Indalecio Prieto, and a man imbued with a ferocious hatred of Fascism, revolutionary Socialism and Anarchism." And this fact dominates his critical faculties and consistency throughout the book.

Referring to the Anarchists in Mandaga's column he writes: "as usual these people showed themselves incapable of any real grit" whilst on another page he deplores the fact that the Anarchists dominated the Valencia Trade Unions and on "July 19th were masters of the streets of Valencia and of the villages of the province..." In the first case he considers them spineless and in the second case he reproaches them for being the only people with any grit!

But while hating all the revolutionary elements, he always had a tender spot for the Communists, who, as Dr. Borkenau said in his book Spanish Cockpit, more than once stated that there "is no revolution at all, it is simply the defence of the legal Government." While referring to Anarchism as being "so absurd that any attempt to put it into practice is bound to end in every conceivable crime," he has nothing but praise for the Communists who "must be granted the credit of having set the example in accepting discipline." This helped them with their membership for "innumerable men who wished to enlist and fight for their country joined the Communist Party." (A good suggestion for Harry Pollitt to increase party membership by a "King and Country" policy!)

The Spanish Anarchists, besides be-

ing "used by the Fascists as pistoleros"—so writes Blazquez, had many "qualities" besides. "Whenever one explained something or gave some order to a militiaman and found oneself surprised at his dullness, one would be sure to discover later that he was an Anarcho-Syndicalist." Furthermore, "knowing this type of mentality, one can have nothing but the greatest pity for the pure type of Spanish Anarchist..." (Yet these dull anarchists were able to "dominate the Trade Unions" and be "masters of the streets of Valencia" and many other towns. A sad reflection on the dullness of the other Spaniards!) Blazquez, however, is alone with the Communists in holding this view of the Spanish Anarchists. Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell in a letter to the Times stated that among the Anarchists "I made the acquaintance of some of the most constructive idealists I have ever met"; or Count Romanones (hardly an Anarchist sympathiser Senor Blazquez) who in an interview stated that "the members of the FAI were the most intelligent men in Spain"; or Prof. Oltremares, who said that the Anarchists had "created" a social organization on a syndicalist basis, which inspires admiration in point of its order, intelligence and revolutionary spirit." And Carlo Roselli, who fought alongside the Anarchists "without grit": "Anarcho-Syndicalism, which has always been misrepresented and abused, displays formidable constructive powers... I remained 75 days at the front with Anarchists and I admire them..." It was necessary to quote at length from these eye-witnesses, none of whom were Anarchists, if only to expose either the deliberate unfairness or the crass ignorance of Senor Blazquez.

There is very little about the war in this book. The fact is that the War Office knew very little that went on at the fronts! The author writes "I knew no details of the battles raging before Madrid, and when I asked my colleagues, they proved to be as ill-informed as I." Yet these are the men who can leave Spain after a few years, and in the relative comfort of Paris, write a book, which is advertised by the publishers as "unique, in that it is a description of the Civil War by a Spaniard who himself played a very active part in it, yet who describes what happened with accuracy and impartiality."* Whilst the real actors in this human drama continue to sacrifice their lives by the thousand.

* * *

But what of these men who sacrifice their lives for an ideal: the militiamen? They do not find an expression in Blazquez's book. He may well talk of the victories of Guadalajara and Madrid, but they were victories of the militiamen, not of the War Office and its officer caste. And it is in Eduardo Guzman's brilliant piece of reportage "Madrid Rojo y Negro" that one really feels the intensity of the struggle which was being waged on all fronts against Fascism. Guzman's opinion of

the War Office is interesting: "In the War Office there are a few gentlemen with a great number of stripes and stars, with sumptuous offices and many telephones within their reach. Yet not knowing who to command nor who should obey them. They know of the danger threatening Madrid. They know that without water all is lost, and all they can do is to fold their arms, hopelessly lost and impotent."

Guzman describes in a few lines the enthusiasm of the comrades as they march to the front line. "They go forward, resolute, Red and Black handkerchiefs wave in the wind, workers overalls and rifles slung over their shoulders. All have happy hearts. In the minds of each one of them is the desire to win the battle as quickly as possible." They build fortifications—the first line of defences which will check the Fascist advance... "The water supply is saved. Madrid will not have to give in because of thirst. And it is entirely due to the Confederal (Anarchist) fighters..." But all Blazquez sees, are Anarcho-Syndicalists crowding the streets "flaunting the Anarchist colours everywhere" or driving about in "luxurious cars with stupid and absurd lettering on them."

The only arms the Anarchists possess are those captured from the Fascists "In four days—writes Guzman—the column (C.N.T.) has been organized. It is composed of 4,000 men. They carry rifles which they captured in the assault of the Montana barracks, machine guns captured in Toledo, Alcala and Guadalajara." The War Office gave no arms. Blazquez does not deny this fact. On the contrary, he states quite definitely that "we can only give rifles to those who are prepared to accept military discipline." But Guzman has the real reason. "These gentlemen fear the revolution." That eloquent answer can well be applied to all the democracies today. Fascism rather than the workers Revolution!

Blazquez, in one chapter writes: "I was particularly eager to solve the riddle of the tank. Could the tank be stopped, or was it irresistible? The answer to his question (though he does not say so in his book) was given by one of those Anarchists "with no real grit." His name was Ramos; a school-teacher by profession but who now commanded the 'Espana Libre' (Free Spain) column. Guzman vividly describes a Fascist attack led by tanks. "The first tank is only thirty yards away. Crawling along the ground, Ramos gets closer. A thousand men witness, with bated breath, his daring undertaking. When he is close to the tank Ramos rises, a bomb hurtles through space, an explosion deafens those in close proximity and the tank lurches heavily to one side... But at the same time as Ramos hurled his bomb, the tank fired its machine guns. Nine bullets entered his body... Electrified by his example, the men leap from the trenches advance on the tanks, attacking them with hand grenades. The tanks retreat in confusion. Ramos is dead... Madrid saved..."

In November Durruti arrived in Madrid with his column. They defend Madrid with courage. "Miaja," writes Guzman, "visits the front, sees the Anarchists fight and admires the indomitable courage of the men come from Aragon. In the evening he calls Durruti. 'Congratulate your men. This' (Continued on page 4, column 5)

*MADRID ROJO Y NEGRO (Madrid Red and Black) by Eduardo Guzman (Published by Frente Libertario, Madrid, for free distribution to the militiamen, and by ETYL, Barcelona, 1938. Price 6 pesetas).

†I HELPED TO BUILD AN ARMY, by Jose Martin Blazquez (Secker & Warburg, 15/-).

**Dr. Borkenau, in his introduction, does not seem to share the opinion of the publishers when he writes "Not that Senor Blazquez is 'impartial' in any sense of the word. From the first pages onwards the reader will realise that he has before him the work of a partisan of the moderate wing of the Republican camp."

Facts About Central Spain

(Continued from page 1)

not one single Communist remained in the Madrid prison when Franco's troops entered. After the Communist rising in Madrid, about 1,000 Communist Party members were arrested, but the majority were released after the rising had been suppressed. In all 52 Communists remained in the prisons, and these were transferred by lorry to Valencia long before Madrid was evacuated. Col. Bueno, who had been condemned to 30 years' imprisonment was taken by private car to Valencia two days before Madrid fell, and Ascano and Vares, the chiefs of the division which had revolted, were escorted to Valencia on the 27th. **THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TRUTH IN THE ACCUSATION THAT OUR PRISONERS WERE HANDED OVER TO FRANCO.** When our militants left Madrid the prison was empty (not even Fascist prisoners remained).

As mentioned earlier, we were the last to leave Valencia for Alicante, but on reaching Gandia it was impossible to go further as armed Fascists had appeared on the scene. We sought refuge in the harbour, our only means of defence being our revolvers.

Three British warships had been at anchor outside the port for several days, and representatives of the International Commission attempted to obtain permission for us to be taken off by one of the warships. The naval authorities consented to take off all the members of the Defence Council and other officials but no one else. The Defence Council retorted that either ALL were taken on board or else they would all remain in the port. Only two Communist leaders who were there, Ciutat and Federico de la Iglesia, were prepared to board ship under these conditions. Another Communist leader, Duran, was the first to receive a permit from the English Consul in Valencia and was taken by the Consul's private car to the boat!

We spent the night in the port, taking it in turns to keep guard in case of Fascist attacks (which would have meant certain death for all of us). The next morning we were informed that the British warship "Galatea" would take all of us to Marseilles.

Did the Spanish Fleet 'Desert'?

(Continued from page 3)

than three minutes. About 500 of the crew were saved, all of them badly burnt.

Submarine C2 Sunk

In the meantime the park and the arsenal had surrendered. The disaster of the warship made it evident to the authors of the rising that it was time for them to run away from a lost cause. To this end about 30 of them took over submarine C2, which was undergoing repairs. The above-mentioned battery, taking advantage of the fact that C2 was unable to submerge, opened fire and sunk her with its first shot.

In consequence of this, the rebels began to surrender. Several batteries hoisted the Republican flag. At 6 in the afternoon everything was ready for an attack on the principal stronghold, but this was unnecessary in view of its speedy surrender. The end of the rebellion came with the surrender of the San Julian and Cenizas Forts.

Among those who were killed in the Cartagena rising, mention should be made of our comrade Cordon, who edited the daily *Cartagena Nueva*. Many other comrades, whom we have been unable to trace, also perished.

The leaders of the Communist Party and the irresponsible behaviour of Negrin must be held guilty of the above happenings and the loss of the Fleet. Regardless of the consequences, they sent Galan to take charge of the Naval Base, precisely at a moment when tact and moderation were vital. We, for our part, are firmly convinced that they had every intention of

Reader's Views on

THE STATE

To the Editors,

REVOLT!

Dear Comrades,

With reference to the article by Tom Brown on "The State." It sounds very much like Engels, but without his clarity. The State may mean a geographical area; it may mean the "holding together" of the people of that State who are called the Nation; it may mean the machinery of force—army, navy, police, law authority—of the ruling class in that State at any particular period of history. I know that Tom Brown refers to this last definition, but I suggest that there are thousands of workers who do not know. Further, he is incorrect when he says "The state is a private growth on society..." On the contrary it is a necessary outcome of an antagonistic class divided society; an instrument thereof, in the hands of the economic possessors. Lastly, and this is the point, he fails to carry his argument to its conclusion, which almost looks like an evasion, for he says, "by abolishing the capitalist class, will make political government unnecessary..." What does he mean by that statement? No realist would accept, that the "abolishing" will or can occur at once, at one blow! It follows then, the State being a weapon in the hands of the ruling class—that the class that overthrows the capitalist class—assuming that the latter is not annihilated—will use its State for the same purpose, until power and conditions are such that "the State may be placed in the museum..." The capitalist class is not gotten rid of by merely overpowering its "Executive Committee"; the recent tragedy of Spain is a terrible lesson from that fact. For the proletariat to obtain power and control over its enemy; force is essential—General Strike, seizure of arms—that is, active force. The Executive Committee of competent individuals in agreement with the armed proletariat manifesting power from below, will none the less be a State; what for? To suppress, control, render harmless the class who is to be robbed of its power and property in the means of production. Revolt on the part of that class, or counter-revolution, must and will be crushed decisively by the armed proletariat and this under Anarcho-Syndicalism as under any other; using all the necessary means to put an end to the capit-

alist class completely, that is, abolish it—and the proletarian State with it. But this implies the abolition of capitalism throughout the world.

There is an inference from this needing elucidation. It is true that the capitalist class has placed authority and armed power in the hands of its Executive Committee representing its dominant section, by which that class itself is controlled, ordered, yes, even to punishment. Only in extreme circumstances does that authority give way before a "rank and file" challenge. This means that only the State has power and authority even to violence, whilst the "rank and file" has only the power of petition through ideas.

Under Anarcho-Syndicalism or any other these conditions are or should be reversed or rather annihilated. On the basis of egoism, a competent Executive Committee will act as a Directorate upon social economic requirements in general, in agreement with the workers, who, in the last instance are the deciding might; both doing its job competently as reflecting the creations of intelligent thinking and acting individuals. Egoism will then be the natural basis of life, requiring neither religion nor morality nor law; but manifesting the sheer joy of living each for himself and therefore in union with his fellows.

Yours truly,

H.S.P.

TOM BROWN answers:

All serious socialist writers, Anarchist or Marxist (including Engels) have agreed that the state can no longer exist in a socialist society.

They agree that the state is a special force apart from and above the people and against the people, that it means a police force, a standing army, a high salaried bureaucracy, gaolers, etc., that it means disarming the people.

But Anarchists and Marxists do not agree on the strategy of revolution. Most Marxists (excluding the Socialist Labour Party) believe the workers should overthrow the bourgeois state and then hand power to a new state

which will guard against the counter-revolution. It is hoped that the new state will, unlike other states, kindly "wither away" and so save another revolution to overthrow it and bring liberty.

But revolutions are not made by a new state against an old, but by the general force of the majority of the people breaking the special force of the ruling class. The workers act not by a standing army and bureaucracy but by arming the people, forming workers' militias, workers' patrols and workers' committees. The Spanish Revolution was led by "the army in overalls". These class organisations have always efficiently guarded against counter-revolution as in France 1789 to 1792 and Russia 1917 to 1918. In Spain Durruti's columns everywhere suppressed the counter-revolution.

When the people allow a new state power to arise to "safeguard the revolution" they find themselves the prisoners of the new regime. The first task of the new state is, of course, to disarm the workers (as Barcelona, May 1937). When the people are disarmed counter-revolution succeeds.

Revolutionary terrorism is directed against the old regime alone while the police terrorism of the new state is directed against the revolutionaries.

In France the Girondins and such were sent to the guillotine. In Russia the "workers' state" massacred the Kronstadt sailors, the Left Social-Revolutionaries, the Anarchists, and then even the Bolsheviks, while Czarist officials are welcomed back.

In Republican Spain not the Fascists, but the members of the CNT-FAI, the POUM and left socialists of the UGT filled the new goals.

The revolting class will use force to suppress the old regime; yes, but the general force of the armed workers—not the special force of a new set of rulers.

TOM BROWN.

(The statement "the state is a private growth on society" contained a misprint. "Private" should have read "parasitic."—Ed.)

FOR A FREE PRESS

Yes, you have had to wait three weeks for this issue of Revolt! comrade reader! We need hardly tell you why. But if you have forgotten let us repeat it: Finances! There are no secret funds behind Revolt! Revolt! is not the organ of some party aspiring to Power; nor are we "bought" by national advertisers. These are the very reasons which contribute to make our paper the ONLY free paper in this country. We criticise others but we also criticise ourselves when necessary. Surely it should be the aim of every organization which will remain free from intrigue and corruption to speak the truth even if it hurts.

In the end it will be truth which will win through. Take these so-called Left papers. The Daily Worker for instance talks of the "gagging of the Press" and yet will not admit that The Daily Worker itself is gagged by the Communist Party, and that consequently its news is either biased or rewritten to suit its own political opportunism. Thus, it suited the political ends of the Communist Party to state that the POUM prisoners

were sentenced for being "Fascist spies" whereas the presiding judge in Barcelona stated that they were genuine anti-fascists. Similarly The Daily Worker stated that Franco had given special consideration to the POUM after the fall of Barcelona. As far as it has been able to verify this statement, there is not a grain of truth in it, and The Daily Worker has so far not answered a challenge on this point. Again you see the political manoeuvres behind this so-called "workers' paper" when discussing the Madrid Defence Council. There is not a word of truth in what has appeared in the Communist Press in regard to this, yet if the truth were told it would expose the Communist political machine in its true colours.

That is why we are renewing our appeal to all English-speaking men and women wherever they may be, who believe in the Truth and not in Political Opportunism which has split all working class organisations throughout the world, to rally round Revolt! It is the only revolutionary organ in this country whose aims are Free Socialism and not the various diluted forms as advo-

cated by the Attlees, Sinclairs, Cripps, Pollitts and others.

We have a tremendous task to accomplish during the coming months. The Capitalist Press has forgotten Spain yet the truth about Spain must be told in all its detail. At the same time we must make our voice heard above those of the pro-war maniacs at the head of the working class organisations, and prevent millions from being sent to their graves.

A tremendous task, but if all those comrades and sympathisers who now content themselves with just buying their own copy of Revolt! were to really get down to build a circulation in their own cities our burden would be shared and made much lighter.

A few comrades have answered our appeal for Revolt! guarantors. But not in sufficient numbers to guarantee the regular publication of Revolt! Will those who have not answered yet please do so now?

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"Ambition should be made of Sterner Stuff"

As for the Anarchists, one should not pay much attention to them. On the day of victory they will be liquidated.

—Hernandez, Communist Deputy to the foreign press in Madrid, August 1936, quoted in "Le Soir," Brussels.

The War Office and the Communists had often discussed an attack on the Anarchist Headquarters. The Communists apparently always opposed this. "It would be most impolitic" they said. "Many Anarcho-Syndicalists have fought and are still fighting well for liberty. Sooner or later all these will come over to us. Then we must kill their leaders to the last man."

—Page 215, "I Helped to Build an Army" by J. A. Blazquez.

The Communists apparently met their match at Madrid!

MADRID OF THE REVOLUTION

(Continued from page 3)

is the way to fight..." Blazquez in his book has exactly two references to Durruti which occupy three lines, yet he manages to fill pages with his attacks on the workers and revolutionists!

As to discipline, Guzman quotes from the manifesto of the Defence Committee (created by the CNT before July 1936 in order to counteract the Fascist revolt which the CNT had foreseen months before):

"We do not ask for barrack discipline. But we do demand a minimum of essential responsibility, due to the special characteristics assumed by the struggle." The Defence Committee represented all sections, and the leaders, the Cipriano Meras, the Sans, the Vals and a host of others actually led their men in all the battles fought, and did not establish their headquarters as did a certain Lt. Colonel Jimenez Orge "60 kilometres from the nearest front."

Much more could be written and quoted from Guzman's book, but sufficient has been written, it is hoped, to make the reader appreciate the important fact that to read Blazquez' book alone is to obtain a completely false picture of the defence of Madrid by the militiamen. His book is too prejudiced. He is too much concerned with attacking his class enemies, the workers, and of advertising his own infallibility.

Guzman's book is not complete. He records the struggle in the front lines in all its grim exciting detail, but does not lay sufficient stress on the counter-revolutionary activity of those "gentlemen" in the rearguard "who fear the revolution." Blazquez' book, written as it is by one of these "gentlemen" completes the story.

One should also mention that besides translating Blazquez' book, Dr. Borckenau has written an introduction to it. Surely not an easy or enviable task for the author of Spanish Cockpit, but as a professional writer and journalist it must be all in the day's work.

In Spanish Cockpit it was the workers who "were able to defend the large majority of the people against army, Church and large landowners." In his introduction to I Helped to Build an Army these workers are represented as "forces of military disintegration." In Spanish Cockpit the Anarchists were the builders of a new society and without Russian aid "would have won the war; and created a new order of things less dictatorial, more humane and more progressive, than the present Russian regime." In I Helped to Build an Army they are "the people willing to destroy but refusing to construct anything!"

Spain has succumbed to International Fascism. Yet the story of the sacrifice of thousands of workers must live for ever in working class history.

It is the irony of fate that Guzman's book—a narrative of struggle—will be publicly burned in the streets of Barcelona and Madrid in the name of Fascist or Catholic culture.

Blazquez' book—just a personal narrative—will still be available to the world.

Perhaps one day, the publishers of I Helped to Build an Army will also give the world Guzman's Madrid Rojo y Negro!

V.R.

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