

# REVOLT!

INCORPORATING SPAIN and the WORLD

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FROM THE MOMENT  
A PEOPLE GIVES  
ITSELF REPRESENT-  
ATIVES IT IS NO  
LONGER FREE.

—ROUSSEAU.

## Conscription : Cannon Fodder to Safeguard Capitalist Interests and British Imperialism

Those who have followed the policy of the Government during the last few months cannot be surprised at the calling up of all able-bodied men between the ages of 20-21. Behind the scenes, in the various departments responsible for the organisation of A.R.P. and recruiting, chaos and inefficiency reign supreme; in the country at large, complete indifference.

Conscription is not the result of "public opinion" in this country as the "Evening Standard" would have us believe, but it is a fact that the Government knew quite well that no effective opposition would come from the workers. The workers were "tried out" over National Service. They offered no resistance. In fact only the Pacifists, the I.L.P. and the Anarchists, representing but a minority of the workers, opposed National Service. The Labour Party, the Trades Unions and the Communist Party just refused to support National Service under Chamberlain's Government. None of the organisations pointed to the peril of Conscription as the next step in the Government's war programme.

Furthermore, by their very pro-war attitude ("democracy" versus Fascism attitude) the Communist and Labour Parties can offer very little resistance to Chamberlain's measures. Only those of Britain's Youth who will be required to join up will be able to do this.

Our position in face of the new situation should not be far to seek. We are opposed to

conscription in peace time for exactly the same reasons as we are opposed to "war to safeguard our national independence and the freedom of the Empire" and other such justifications for war. Wars between Capitalist nations are fought to safeguard illegal conquests from being conquered by other marauders. The next war, we repeat, and will repeat until our voice is stifled by the forces of law and order, will not be a war for "democracy against Fascism," for democracy does not exist under Capitalism. We have "democracy" so long as the workers' movement, as in this country, is impotent to use that tremendous force, both moral and economic which in essence is theirs.

Fascism springs to life when the working class movement begins to show that it is conscious of its strength, but as in Germany, is not strong enough to wrest political and economic control from the grip of the capitalists (the former "democrats"! ). True democracy—Free Socialism—can only exist when the workers are strong enough (and we speak internationally) to control their own economic and social lives.

These definitions were essential if only to show that in practice there exist very little difference between "Capitalist democracy" and Fascism, and this is more especially true as far as

the colonial workers are concerned. Yet war fever is being worked up by every means possible and the slogan this time will be "save democracy," because the champions of democracy are to be found amongst the working class.

But in case you, comrade worker, are tempted to fight

for "democracy" because your bosses tell you that the next war will be fought out on this issue just pause to think of the fate of Spain where the only real resistance to Fascism in Europe was offered. Then your "save democracy" propagandists denied the victory of the workers over International Fascism.

Why? The answer lies in the clear distinction between Capitalist democracy and true democracy (Free Socialism).

If we are to defeat Fascism we must crush the system and its exponents, and not the working masses who happen to be unwilling but important tools of the system. Exactly the same applies in our struggle against the capitalist system in general. We must destroy the system and its exponents and not the rank and file. V.R.

## The International Brigades In Spain

It is time that the part played by the International Brigades in Spain should be known.

To the world they have been presented as having saved Republican Spain from many a defeat, as anti-fascist, heroic Legionaries, and, above all, as the creation of the Communist Party and the 3rd International. Obviously, the 3rd International itself undertook the task of spreading the impression, making use of its established propaganda machine for the purpose.

Everywhere and in Spain at the outset, the Communist Press was supported by special funds from Moscow, and scribblers, sold to the highest bidders, undertook to carry on propaganda exclusively on behalf of communist units and the International Brigades controlled by them. Further, when non-Spanish Anarchists, Socialists or Trotskyists died in action, they were given in the published accounts of Communist doings, as members of that party.

But all that glitters is not gold. The illusions of the Spanish people and the valiant militiamen were regarding the International Brigades came to light.

We should note that, at first, these Brigades, organised hurriedly, with the aid of sincere and self-sacrificing anti-fascists; coming from all parts of the world, and of various political tendencies, behaved magnificently in Madrid, where many a good man and true amongst them fell. In Aragon as well, international bodies were organised, particularly Italian and German, who took part in the fight-along with the Spanish forces. But though they were reckoned as International, they were not of the International Brigade nor under their control, being composed of Socialists and Anarchists who had no wish to be included among those units which had gradually passed under the control of the Communists.

As we have observed, apart from the organisation and spontaneous gathering at the beginning in Mad-

rid and Aragon of the most enthusiastic anti-fascists who gave true results, the International Brigade came under the control of the Communists, and from that moment ceased to be a serviceable force to the Spanish Republic and the Revolution and became an obstacle and a nightmare to anti-fascist Spaniards. It may, perhaps, be worth while to describe the methods used by the Communist Party for putting their plans into practice.

It is well known to everybody that the Spanish Communist Party represents no opinion of importance in Spanish politics. It would be well worth while to analyse the factors that have contributed to make them a determining force in the Spanish War, but this is not the proper place in which to do so. It is enough to know that the Communists and Russian "technicians" played an important part in the control of the headquarters staffs, aviation, navy, etc. And they achieved this by dint of blackmailing us on the strength of the arms they sold to the Spanish Republic. The Third International managed to get control of the International Brigade, by working the line of sympathy for the struggle against fascism.

The Government gave them economic facilities, barracks, provisions and arms.

The standard of foreign recruits was lowered in the hands of the Third International. They no longer took any trouble to test the anti-fascist ideals of the fighting men and simply went in for getting as many as possible. Volunteers were recruited from all over the world; and mixed up with true militant revolutionaries were to be found adventurers, degenerates and out-of-works, attracted by good pay. Accordingly, the International Brigade became a refuge for doubtful characters, who were not particularly interested in the war against

fascism, and whose main object was to get on the right side of the communist leaders, and snatch what they could in the way of favours, promotions and personal benefits.

In France (Paris, Marseilles, Perpignan, Carbere, etc.) delegates of the International Brigade were actively engaged in arranging the transfer of those who presented themselves. New documents in the form of safe conducts were given to them and they were placed at the disposal of the International Brigade Controls. It is superfluous to remark that the functionaries involved in this operation were responsible to nobody but the Communist Party. The Spanish Government itself had not the least idea of the methods employed. Those who brought foreign monies were thoroughly done over the exchange, as in the case of Marcelino Fernandez, whose 300 francs were changed at a flat peseta rate, at a time when the franc was 3 or 4 to one against the Spanish paper rate.

Once arrived in Spanish territory, the volunteers were completely isolated and put at the disposal of the Communist leaders. The documents which had been given to them were useless for getting out of the country. The Communists in charge of them, as well as the Cheka, took good care to arrest and accuse of spying all those who wanted to turn back or fight with other units. Special barracks, under the sole control of the communists, were used for this purpose, in Figueras, Barcelona, Valencia, Albacete, etc. The Albacete barracks acquired special notoriety, on account of the foul behaviour of the communists there against real militant revolutionaries.

The administration was also under the exclusive control of the communists, the intervention of the Spanish Government being limited to the settlement of accounts presented to them by the Brigade leaders. In this fashion the Communist Party got away with hundreds of millions of pesetas, both

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# The Problems of Unofficial Strikes

**T**HE defeat of the Siemens strike raises sharply the almost weekly problem of unofficial strikes. Almost all strikes are now unofficial and they will certainly be so in the fast approaching war conditions. That is, the workers, in order to defend their wages and conditions, find themselves in conflict with not only the employers and the State but also the trade union bureaucrats who control the unions.

It is often said that the 1927 anti trade union act is responsible. This is quite untrue. Strikes were generally unofficial from 1922.

One of the most bitter was the struggle of the Southampton marine engineering workers in 1924. Being employed at the sweated rate of £2-7-0 per week (that is for skilled workers, highest rate) they saw an opportunity of a lightning victory.

Of course they were opposed by the executives of the A.E.U. and other unions. Yet in spite of having to fight the union leaders and the employers they succeeded in raising wages by seven shillings per

week in marine shops and sixteen shillings in aircraft.

In the long record of such strikes which followed, the workers are found successful only in so far as they have been able to discredit and disown the union bureaucracy and create, even temporarily, an alternative organisation and ideological leadership.

It is necessary for us seriously to consider the cause of this failure of the old trades unionism and recreate the organs of working-class struggle.

It is not sufficient to blame the leadership. Children and savages usually attribute all unpleasant phenomena to malevolent persons. The child bumping his head blames the furniture as it would a person. The savage experiencing thunder and lightning believes he witnesses the anger of a god.

Lacking knowledge they can only explain their misfortunes by blaming (if necessary creating) a person who is the cause of their discomfort.

Unfortunately many persons rea-

son in exactly the same manner when considering social affairs.

Unemployment increases; "We must change the members of the Cabinet." Prices rise; "such and such a minister has caused this." Capitalism travels its inevitable and oft predicted road — then "Chamberlain must go!"

But a change of person does not mean a change of system. Cabinets and ministers change and the new act exactly like the old. Monarchs abdicate and new kings are appointed but the social system remains.

Yet many trade unionists explain the misfortunes of the industrial workers by referring to the ill will and wicked conspiracies of the "leaders."

We do not excuse the incompetence, cowardice and self-satisfaction of trade union bureaucrats, but we seek to study their rise as a social phenomenon as a biologist studies the development of certain forms of life.

There have been many successful attacks on right wing leaders and their replacement by "lefts" and communists. Shortly afterwards the lefts have usually been bitterly attacked by their previous supporters for being even more reactionary than their predecessors.

We must consider more factors than individuals. We must examine the structure and ideas of Trades Unionism.

The leadership is but the natural fruit of the movement and "men do not gather figs of thorns or grapes of thistles."

One of the greatest causes of trade union defeat is the out-of-date method of organisation to which the only effective alternative is anarcho-syndicalism.

The older trade unions, the craft organisations, are based on an almost medieval conception of the importance of craft, yet the development of machinery is rapidly destroying the special social significance of craftsmanship.

In a factory where men and women are united in the production of a single commodity trades unionism divides men into carpenters, smiths, plumbers and fifty other sects.

Even worse is the refusal to organise women. While trade unionism inscribes on its banners 100% organisation it bars from membership 50% of the population.

Syndicalism expresses the modern need of industrial workers, one industry, one union. All in one factory should be in one union, clerks, labourers, draughtsmen, all crafts, and even the youth and women.

Even worse than craft unionism is general unionism. General unions organise a few here, a member there, shop assistants, seamen, land

workers all in one vast disorganised mob, because of their clumsiness, unable to move, because of lack of relationship to one another the easy prey of union dictators. Instead of about a score of industrial unions there are over a thousand craft and general unions.

Trade unionism suffers too from its association with the state. At first the state opposed unions then sought to win them over. Now every state committee from unemployment assistance to Royal Commissions have trade union "representatives."

In the hour of crisis they are faced by two loyalties, the state or the workers, the state usually wins. Syndicalism would be free of political parties, unhampered by state loyalty.

Unofficial strikes threaten too the vast accumulation of funds, usually invested in capitalist concerns or war loan.

On top of their other tasks the unions undertake to pay, old age pensions, dole, sick and death bene-

fits. The possession of the funds to pay these makes them lame and conservative. In Germany this led to the unions not resisting Fascism for fear of losing their treasure.

Without paying such benefits unions could be run on a subscription of threepence per week.

All this is but a brief survey of a few of the differences between the out-moded organisation, trades unionism and the newer, syndicalism or revolutionary industrial unionism.

The outbreaks of unofficial strikes make it possible for us to build in every factory, pit or mill, workers' committees linked by industry to one national solid whole, but such a movement can only develop in so far as it has a well-thought out strategy. Syndicalism supplies that.

Such a movement must not be controlled from above but from below, by the workers assembled at their place of work. They must decide what is official and what is unofficial. TOM BROWN

## SHAKING HANDS

Mr. James Maxton and Mr. John McGovern, I.L.P. leaders, shook hands with Mr. Chamberlain, Prime Minister, and—"ee, wot a to doo" there has been about it. Mr. Chamberlain had just returned from Munich after his now famous interview with Herr Hitler, carrying with him a scrap of paper which was to bring peace to a world on the brink of a universal "Donnybrook."

If Messrs. Maxton and McGovern had any faith in that document they are, or should be disillusioned now, after subsequent world events. Faith or no faith, this fraternity with the enemy (Mr. Chamberlain not Herr Hitler) has roused the wrath of the followers behind the I.L.P. banner and there is now bitter recrimination and strife within the camp. Mr. Maxton "explains" and Mr. McGovern demands to be informed by the rank and file "What the hell they do want."

But there was nothing illogical in the conduct of Maxton and McGovern. They can argue on precedent if they choose to argue at all on the correctness or otherwise of the gesture which has caused all the rumpus—on sacred, inviolable precedent.

Years ago Mr. Fenner Brockway of the I.L.P., when a member of the Royal family was indisposed, called at the Royal residence and left his card.

The I.L.P. is alleged to stand for a Socialist society, yet in its official organ it accepts and publishes an advertisement of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, inviting its readers to "drink the best tea this Coronation Year and keep these lovely canisters as souvenirs." Here the office of kingship gets a boost. We know the excuse beforehand. "The ad. brings in funds to the party treasure chest." To which we reply that in working with tar one is apt to get tarry fingers. Socialism is to advance by boosting monarchy. When a socialist journal prints this sort of thing for my consumption it insults my intelligence.

I am further fortified in my conviction and feel that it is not just mean prejudice and wilful cussedness on my part when I read in the capitalist press that a motion calling for the abolition of the Monarchy and the House of Lords was heavily defeated at a meeting of a Divisional Council of the I.L.P. at Leeds. And Leeds I.L.P.'ers would be furious if they were to be compared politically with Mr. Muddelcombe's Parish of Nether Backwash.

A Glasgow daily, under the heading "Fascism and the Church" reports Mr. John McGovern, M.P., as saying that one of his findings is that the Fascist movement had its birth in the Church.

Fascism is one of the foulest things that crawls on the face of the earth today. But McGovern said he was prepared to accept the Church, in which this foul thing Fascism, had its birth, when the clergy confined themselves to spiritual and moral teachings. Here then, is a professing socialist prepared to accept as moral teacher an institution destitute of morality. Dealing with McGovern's speech in the Glasgow City Hall, the "New Leader" says: "To emphasise how Christianity was being outraged in Spain, he showed a photograph of a rifle taken from a Moorish prisoner which had fixed on it the badge of the Sacred Heart, and a cartridge carrier which had sewn on it in beads a picture of the Sacred Host."

Are the Sacred Heart and Host of any interest to a socialist or a socialist newspaper who subscribe to "Religion is the opium of the people"—except as emblems of priestly lies and human credulity and ignorance?

Are McGovern and the "N.L." sore about what they describe as an outrage on Christianity? An outrage on what has been and is an outrage on the twisted and fettered intellect of countless millions.

McGovern accepts the clergy on conditions. No socialist can accept the clergy, as the clergy, upon any condi-

tions whatsoever, nor permit them without protest to teach and inject their poisonous creeds and dogmas into the life stream of the community. McGovern is a Catholic socialist, whatever that may mean.

The Pope gave Franco his blessing after the Christian Gentleman's butcheries of the working class in Spain. McGovern, in accepting the Pope as moral teacher, has virtually shaken hands with the Parent of Fascism and the Fascist perpetrator of murder. Born in the Church, as McGovern asserts, the British section of Fascism had its charter granted to it by a Labour Government. General Blakeney, President of the British Fascists says so, and he ought to know. And at the same period a Labour Government was sentencing to long periods of penal servitude Indian leaders for advocating national freedom and working class rights. And I.L.P. Parliamentary leaders are now sheltering within the Labour fold at Westminster. There, if he is still about the premises, they may meet Mr. Tom Griffiths, one-time Lord Treasurer of the Royal Household. Thomas Johnston, M.P., a Labour colleague, sickened at the antics of this creature, gave a thumbnail sketch of him in "Forward." Here it is in brief but losing none of its cutting satire:

"Tommy, it seems, had a great time with the King. If you had seen us there chatting informally with the King, you would have thought this sort of thing had been going on for centuries. A more delightful half hour I have never spent. The King gripped my hand. He looked on us as friends. He told us frankly that Court dress would be required for our new duties."

"Note it wasn't Tommy's throat or his ankle that was gripped; just his hand, the hand of an honest son of

(Continued at foot of Col. 5)

## MANIFESTO OF THE ANARCHIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN

**M**AY DAY was inaugurated in 1887 during the Chicago strike for the eighth hour day, a strike led by Anarchists, a number of whom were framed up and executed for their heroic stand.

The Anarchists address the workers once again, and urge the only revolutionary road, anarcho-syndicalism, in the spirit of '87.

Magnified a thousandfold, that spirit has been shown by the Anarchist workers in Spain. The struggle there goes on, and the same struggle is continued by Anarchists all over the world.

In Britain the ruling class drive towards fascism intensifies. The official Labour Party does nothing. The Communist Party, loud in its attacks on fascism through Peace Blocs and United Fronts, plays into the hands of reaction. But the Fascist drive—rooted in the tyrannical requirements of decaying capitalism—continues at home and abroad. In the colonies of the British Empire fascism is already established. The subject peoples of the British Empire experience even worse tyranny than the subject peoples of Central Europe.

Seeing foreign fascism only as the evil, the Left is swung into the War Front in the belief that it will be fighting fascism, and sees democracy undermined and sabotaged by the same ruling class with whom it would ally itself for fighting fascism—abroad.

Naval ratings at the command of the Admiralty are used in strikes. A.R.P. is supported, despite its potential use as a strike-breaking organisation. Youth is conscripted. Behind the cloak of "National Service" National Servitude advances, and is the same tyranny as the fascism against which the Left declares war.

The politicians continue with their policies of open treachery or false manoeuvring against aggression. The industrial boycott and the embargo, all forms of Direct Action against the advance of fascism, are conveniently ignored.

The Anarchist movement warns the workers that it is they who are the object of the ruling class's attack. They are its enemy because as the decay of capitalism advances

and their conditions inevitably worsen, they will rise against the rule of their exploiters.

The militarisation of the people will not be used to weaken fascism abroad; it will be used to strengthen it at home.

Between the ruling class and the workers there must always be enmity. Nationalism, whatever its form, is a diversion of the struggle and a betrayal of its principles.

We urge the workers to organise themselves at the point of production, to prepare to take over the machinery of production and distribution from the capitalists, and to defend themselves against the intervention of the State. The State opposes the working-class whatever may be its pretensions and claims.

Anarcho-Syndicalism must supersede bankrupt State Socialism and Reformism. Workers' Committees in shops and in factories—Direct Action by the workers themselves—strikes which will fight towards Workers' Control. These are the working-class needs of the day.

## The "Black Coated" Worker

The Marxist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat (which in practice has meant, of course, the dictatorship of a bureaucracy) has succeeded in alienating from socialism the peasantry of those countries where there was no anarchist movement with strong influence, and driving them into the reactionary camp.

In the Western countries there is industrial capitalism, and a majority of the proletariat, or wage-earning, class. The Marxists nevertheless make the same sort of blunder by confusing the term "proletarian" with "industrial worker" and by eliminating the so-called "black-coated" workers from that class. The result is the same, of course: reactionary movements appeal to these workers on a class basis. One finds Fascist leaflets, for instance, declaring: "Ground between the upper stone of the Banks and the lower stone of the Trade Unions, his (the Blackcoat's) position grows steadily worse," despite the Fascist "boast" that Fascism is against "class war."

No-one will confuse Marxism with the latest line of the Communist Party. The C.P. now recruits such workers, and the idea of a "Popular Front" is calculated to bring in both the clerical and profession classes. Nevertheless, this is no solution to the problem, as this method of recruitment is simply copying the method of the reactionary movements. The lower

middle class pretends not to be working class, and considers its interests apart from the workers. To recruit them to socialism *as such*, means that they will only be unreliable.

The anarchist attitude is to consider everyone who fights for a wage as a worker, and to unite everyone prepared to fight against the wages system for workers' control. To bring the clerical workers into revolutionary unity with the rest of the workers, the anarchist proposes industrial unionism: one union for every industry, without consideration of craft, and opposes the attitude (held by many of these workers) that there is a strong line of difference between clerical and manual workers, or between workers at all.

The trade union leader opposes industrial unionism because it would mean both an opportunity for general strike action and also a lessening of the numerous official positions rendered necessary by craft unionism. The Anarchist, opposing such positions and all bureaucracy in the unions, propagates industrial unionism since it unites the workers according to industry, and renders it possible for all workers, of whatever trade, to join in the same struggle.

Under the present system of union organisation, the clerical worker is an ineffectual unit, and has little opportunity for successful strike action. The class-conscious are in a minority, and unable to insist on the need for strike action amongst predominant conservative elements. They are unable to wage a strike with the same strength as the factory workers, for instance, as they are not at the point of production. Their form of organisation precludes them from most of the ways of striking for better conditions and certainly for control. Their only means of forming themselves into a powerful body is by the methods of anarcho-syndicalism.

A.M.

SHAKING HANDS (cont. from col. 1) toil. He looked on them not as snobs but as friends. Chums in fact. Oh brothers, give us air and loosen our collars for we are like to choke."

Hovering somewhere in the shades they may encounter and shake hands with "doormat" Arthur Henderson, a Labour member of the Cabinet that executed our class comrade James Connolly in 1916 for loyalty to the cause upon which Henderson had batted to lift himself from obscurity to high office in the State.

The I.L.P. "New Leader" shed tears at the death of Lord Asquith. "At his passing," said this paper, "Socialists join in expressing sincere regret at the death of a great man who gave honest service to his country. The loss of such a one is a matter for universal regret."

Our tribute to Asquith is that he was true to his class and served it faithfully. That is more than can be said of some socialists.

During the miners' dispute with the master class in 1893, the military was used against the miners and two were shot at Featherstone. Asquith at that time was Home Secretary.

H. T. DERRETT.

# The Problem of Nutrition in the Colonies

It is not without irony that the science of nutrition is one of the youngest sciences. Whereas man has been striving to develop the science of destruction throughout the ages, yet as recently as one hundred years ago nothing was known scientifically of the composition of food-stuffs and the part played by food in maintaining the human organism. Perhaps the former explains the latter! A valuable contribution to the available information on nutrition is Professor Gangulee's latest book\* which not only deals with the science but more especially with the conditions and problems of nutrition which exist to-day in India.

The problem of nutrition is not a small one. In the case of nutrition the difficulties are not due to scientific ignorance as is so often the case, but to the economic system under which we live, which admits hunger and poverty amidst plenty. Professor Gangulee enumerates a few examples of the barbarity of the capitalist system:

"Owing to the restrictions imposed on the export of meat by the Ottawa Agreement in 1932," he writes, "the Government of Chile considered it expedient to kill half a million sheep for the manufacture of tallow on condition that the carcasses should be burnt. In Denmark the Government created a special destruction fund to kill and burn about 5,000 cattle per week. . . In America the farmers of Kansas and Nebraska were subsidised for burning their grain. . . For the sake of 'National Prosperity' the Federal Government ordered the slaughter of some five million pigs and some 200,000 prospective mother sows. Brazil burnt its coffee crop; herrings were dumped into the sea in English ports."

Yet at this very period it was estimated that there were more than 25 million unemployed in Europe and America, the majority of whom were suffering from under-nourishment and malnutrition.

The problem of malnutrition is a universal one. In Britain, the food expenditure of 8 million people is below the minimum standard of the British Medical Association. In India the problem is even more serious.

"Agricultural production is low, not merely because of the primitive methods adopted in cultivation or of limitations imposed by climatic conditions but particularly on account of the circumstances under which the peasant works."

The land is distributed in such a way that five-sevenths of the cultivable land is in the hands of less than one-third of the land-owners. The cultivators are financially embarrassed, and to quote the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture, "for land he must plead before a creditor to whom he probably already owes more than the total value of his assets."

One is forcibly reminded of the lot of the Spanish peasant, liberated from his chains during the past

\* "Health and Nutrition in India," by N. Gangulee, C.I.E., Ph.D., with a foreword by Sir John Orr. (Faber, 15s.).

three years and who has again fallen under the domination of the large landowners.

But there is also the factor of British Imperialism which plays its role.

"From the point of view of the metropolis, the fundamental purpose of a colonial empire is to supply a source of raw materials as well as to provide a market for manufactured goods. It is not therefore to the advantage of the imperialist country to foster the growth of either agriculture or industry in the countries under its control deliberately for the benefit of the indigenous peoples. . . . Agriculture in India is . . . essentially dominated by the motive of producing cheap raw produce for the benefit of British commerce and the Indian bourgeoisie."

As a result, "no matter where one looks in India one sees chronic starvation, ill-health and premature death." According to the 1938 report of the Director General of the Indian Medical Service, there were two million cases of tuberculosis in India and only 77 clinics and 39 sanatoria to deal with them. Infant mortality is high, being anything between 137.8 per 1,000 in Bihar to 329 in Lucknow. Rickets cripples Indian children by the thousand, whilst malnutrition is again responsible for eye diseases. "The in-



cidence of eye diseases — writes Prof. Gangulee—varies in different parts of India according to the state of nutrition and to the acuteness of poverty of the masses." It is estimated that there are about one and a half million totally and over 4 million partially blind persons in India.

In spite of what the apologists of British Imperialism may say in defence of exploitation in India, the fact remains that the native population is suffering from diseases which could be stamped out if more attention were paid to the needs of the Indian worker than of the Indi-

an raw materials, cheap labour and profitable investments. 80% of the rural population suffers from hook-worm, a particularly pernicious tropical disease. It was demonstrated by Dubini as far back as 1883 that "its incidence can be prevented by taking adequate measures to stop the pollution of the soil."

In certain countries its incidence has been greatly reduced by proper sanitary arrangements for the disposal of human excreta. But in British India proper sanitation is unknown. As Professor Gangulee remarks "the sanitary conditions in rural areas...it is not an exaggeration to say that they bear no evidence of an advanced state claiming to be 'enlightened custodians of the health of the natives'."

In the industrial towns, conditions are hardly better. "Over 95 per cent. of the houses occupied by our organised labour in industrial centres are unfit, even by an elementary standard of sanitation, for healthy human habitation." In Bombay, it is estimated that one third of the population of 1,116,383 live in rooms occupied by five persons at a time and 15,490 in rooms occupied by 20 or more persons. Space permitting we could continue to quote at length from Professor

Gangulee's figures. It is to be hoped however that the reader will be sufficiently interested to buy or borrow from his public library a copy of this invaluable book which exposes British Imperialism in its true colours.

The problems of underfeeding and malnutrition have assumed gigantic proportions under the present system. It is because so many diseases, including those of a psychological nature, can be directly attributed to malnutrition, that it should occupy first place in society. There is no real shortage of nutritive food in the world, so that there is no ground for the age-old argument of the "survival of the fittest." All that is needed is a world of illuminated, conscious individuals who are prepared to break with a system which has been proved rotten to the core. In this country as Sir John Orr writes in his foreword "the legislation of the last five or six years, dealing with the production and trade in food, has been directed, not to ensuring that a sufficient amount of food is available to meet national needs for health and physical fitness, but to controlling the supply in the financial interests of existing producers and traders." He believes that "so soon as people realise the extent to which ill-health and all the accompanying human misery can be prevented by better feeding, the old idea of the supreme importance of trade as an end in itself will be replaced . . . by the more modern ideal of the promotion of human welfare" which as far as we can see will not be the work of any Government, Conservative or Labour, but through the control by the people of the wealth of the land. Then, and then only will the revolutionary changes demanded by the research workers in the science of nutrition be possible. And in India, so long as that vast country remains at the mercy of the white speculators and exploiters, the picture of misery and disease so convincingly painted by Professor Gangulee, will remain, at the expense of Indian culture and progress.

We conclude this review with the following challenging statement, one of many in Professor Gangulee's book:

"The question, 'Can deficiency diseases be wiped out?' is no longer medical but social and economic.\* Doubtless much remains to be learnt about the relation of diet to disease, but already medical science is in a position not merely to cure but to prevent a whole series of fatal or debilitating maladies which spring directly or indirectly from malnutrition. . . . Tuberculosis, dental caries, the common form of anaemia, could be radically reduced if not stamped out. It is not the medical knowledge that is lacking; it is the economic system which tolerates widespread poverty that is largely at fault."

V.R.

\* Emphasis ours.

## THE "ADVANTAGES" OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM

NOT only is our "democracy" as autocratic as a fascist state in its dealings with the vast majority of those subjected to its rule: it is also as brutal and as barbarous. Hitler and Mussolini have suppressed the freedom of the press. So does our Government in India and the colonies, the moment the press endangers British rule by telling unpleasant truths.

Freedom of Association is denied in the fascist countries. So it is also in many parts of the British Empire. In Kenya, for example, legislation forbids more than five "natives" to meet together except for religious purposes! And when the people, very naturally, formed "religious" societies to get over this difficulty a ruling was given which meant, in effect, that a meeting was not religious unless a white man was present.

We read of imprisonment in Germany and Italy, often without trial or after sentence by a secret tribunal. In India, under the Labour Government of 1929-31 some 60,000 persons were imprisoned within a period of about eight months for political "offences," and of these many were condemned by secret tribunals whilst hundreds were not tried at all but imprisoned or put in concentration camps for an indefinite period with no charge brought against them. Many of these "detenues," as they were called, were sent to the Andaman Isles—our Indian equivalent of the French "Devil's Island"—an unhealthy spot where many died of disease.

The laws that restrict the liberty of the African Negro are unequalled in any part of the world. They vary in different parts of Africa, but everywhere they are to be found. In South Africa and certain East African colonies the following "passes" must be carried on occasion by every Negro:

- Identification Pass.
- Travelling Pass.
- Six Days Special Pass.
- Monthly Pass.
- Daily Labourer's Pass.
- Day Special Pass.
- Night Special Pass.
- Trek Pass.
- Location Visitor's Pass.
- Lodger's Permit.
- Poll Tax Receipt Pass.
- Exemption Pass.

Unless he is carrying the appropriate passes, the native is liable to summary imprisonment. Forced labour is still common in many of the colonies. In Kenya the law prohibits the making to present any organisation being built up by the Government—that is to prevent any organisation being built up (though secret organisations still continue in spite of all such legislation).

\* \* \*

Hitler imposes a "collective fine" on the Jews. He learnt it from the British, who have used this method for years in India and are now using it in Palestine. When an Arab village is "collectively fined" the military and police impound all the livestock. Those who can afford to, buy back their beasts from the Government. Those who have no money lose them—that is to say, they lose their only source of livelihood, though they may be completely innocent of the "crime" for which they are being punished. Nobody knows or cares. But the children deprived of their food, are left to starve and the parents become beggars or bandits.

\* \* \*

The case of Palestine is an up-to-date instance of imperialism and its

# WHAT IS A PROLETARIAT?

## A Study of Contemporary Imperialism

THE doctrine of social revolution is not a new thing. In the world of antiquity the conception of servile war of the revolutionary action of the oppressed masses was also to be found. As Havelock Ellis has recently pointed out, victory frequently hung in the balance in the course of these wars: not infrequently, indeed, it inclined to the side of the servile masses. Yet, one and all, the slave risings of ancient and medieval times ended in dire and abject failures; and their leaders perished miserably at the treacherous and brutal hands of their class oppressors. Nabis, Spartacus, Tyler, Cade, Munzer, Jan of Seyden, these and other nameless hosts that they led, alike repose in obscure graves, the cemeteries wherein the aspirations of the masses lie interred.

Why was it that these heroic risings of the slaves ended in common disaster overtaking them all? The historic explanation of this recurring tragedy would appear to be the same: the failure of the subject

class to attain a common unity of action. The Romans, the classic slave-holders of antiquity, first coined the phrase "divide and rule." By providing "bread and games"—in modern speech, "the dole"—they bribed the "poor whites," the free unemployed, to side with the masters against the slaves thus procuring the eventual downfall of the latter. This classic example has been faithfully followed by the exploiting classes of later ages.

The British Empire may be aptly styled the "Roman" Empire of modern times, and in nothing more than in its faithful adherence to the slogan "Divide and Rule." For in relation to the British Empire the classic statements of Marxian philosophy require modification. While in England, it is no doubt true that there are "two classes in society," the rich and the poor," capitalists and proletarians, throughout at

least 80% of the British Empire there are three: the British capitalists, the senior partners in the exploitation of the Empire, the white working-class—particularly in the metropolis and in South Africa—the junior partners, and the enslaved colonial masses, the real slave classes, the "proletariat" of the Empire, who "carry" the white exploiters, "labour" as well as capital, upon their bent backs.

Hence it is evident that the question advanced at the head of this article: viz., what is a proletariat—takes in relation to the British Empire, at least, a different form and requires an answer of a different nature to that posited by the classical Marxian doctrine of the class-structure of a modern capitalist society. Expressed in a negative form, the question: When is a proletariat not a proletariat?—the answer can only be when it shares in the imperialist exploitation of

its own capitalist class.

And from this it follows that the proletariat of certain imperialist countries—e.g. Holland, South Africa, above all, Great Britain—occupy a dual role: proletarians in relation to their own countries, they are, simultaneously, capitalists in relation to the coloured proletariat of the Empire.

What in fact, "bread and circuses" were to the old Roman proletariat, that are the insurance acts ("the dole" etc.) to the working classes of modern Britain and, since a little profit, — i.e. necessities — mean more to its possessors rather than a lot—implying luxuries—we arrive at the current situation in British Imperial politics where "labour" the junior partner of British Imperialism is more fanatically imperialist than is "capital," the senior partner, e.g. capital can migrate but labour must stagnate. For it, the equation holds good:

no Empire, no imperial tribute; no tribute, no social services.

It cannot be repeated too often, that there is no party in contemporary British politics so "interested" in the preservation of the Empire as is the British Labour Party. Its essential political methodology, the Fabian tactic of the "inevitability of gradualness," implies necessarily that the wheels of the political engine will be well oiled by imperialist tribute during the transition from Capitalism to "Socialism," a la Sydney Webb (otherwise, how carry through the non-revolutionary transition envisaged by the Fabian pundits?) How could "revolution" proceed smoothly in the parasitic metropolis if a revolution meanwhile could evolve out of existence its economic basis in the colonies?

It is, of course, obvious to anyone not incapable of five minutes' sustained thought that British "Socialism," even more than British Capitalism, presupposes the exist-

(Continued on page 5)

# What is Franco's Position in Spain To-day?

THE red and gold flag of Nationalism is hoisted all over Spain, where the anti-Fascists have been conquered: but Franco has not been victorious. Military and political victories are quite different things, and may even be totally opposite things. This applies to Franco, who made war for political ends which have escaped him at the very gates of peace.

To grasp this point one must regard Franco as he himself wanted, as a symbol. Let us take him as representing the Spanish army which made an armed rising in July, 1936, of the bourgeoisie, of the Catholic Church and of the political parties hostile to the republic, and his failure will be evident, when we see that he has been unable to and cannot satisfy the desires of these social groups.

## SACRIFICE OF THE PRIDE OF THE ARMY

ON account of its peculiar geographical position, Spain is the wonderful stage on which a magnificent people plays out the heroic drama of the struggle for independence. Strong or weak, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, now as in the 16th century, the Spanish people have preserved their ancestral pride of race: they are proud to be Spaniards.

This pride, whether well-founded or not, has always been strongest in the Army. And this army, whose cry was "Arriba España," has been made by Franco to fight under the leadership of Italy and Germany. Nothing worse could have happened to it.

The "nazis" have discreetly kept their intervention somewhat in the background: The "blackshirts," on the other hand, have shouted to high heaven of everything they have done and have often claimed credit for what they have not done. To judge by the Italian Press, practically all the triumphs of fascism in Spain, whether on land, or sea, or in the air have been Italian.

Compared with General Gambara or General Bergonzoli, Generals Yague or Garcia Valino are mere nobodies; alongside of the Legionari of the Littorio Division, the seasoned Carlist Tercios, the Navarera of Solehage are insignificant second-raters. For nearly three years, the leaders and officers of Franco's Army have been daily subjected to comparison of this and even more detestable descriptions.

And, during this period, the conviction has been forced upon them, and will later be plain enough, that they have been acting as catspaws to the Powers who were supposed to be helping them, and—they finish up the war with their pride badly hurt: their patriotic and professional dignity has had a slap in the face. It was about as bad a thing as could happen to the army, involving its complete political and moral defeat, and in the face of such a break, promotions are the mere leavings of the table, and decorations so much scrap metal.

## PEACE WILL ALSO BE BAD BUSINESS

The Spanish landowner, economic heir of feudalism, is almost illiterate: he is lacking in real capitalist sense and enterprise. Fundamentally his outlook permits him to understand nothing more than hunger wages, with the Civil Guard in the background. During the war his lands have remained abandoned and unproductive, and the State has stuck its hand in his pocket. He has done absolutely no business, on the contrary he has lost money and sees not much hope of making it in the future, however much his ambition may goad him on to this end.

Now that the war is over, with prospects of another, production will be governed by strict state control, which will stop all speculation. While the Falangist syndicates—by political necessity—will oppose low wages. The big landowners, therefore, though they live by exploiting the small ones, will get nothing out of the military victory of fascism.

And what of the financial bourgeoisie? This class, though of no great importance, will feel itself safer in company with the pound than with the mark, and better off with the franc than the lira. Fascism talks a lot, is restless, over active in a somewhat senseless manner, and does not inspire the kind of confidence which is essential for business on a large scale.

And here it may very naturally be asked if the writer of this article has the necessary knowledge

for giving his opinion about financial affairs. No, he has not; but who would deny it to Don Juan March y Ordinas, the famous Majorcan banker? Very well, then, that gentleman who knows at least as much about the Spanish war as Franco, and who, according to all indications, wants to have a hand in Spanish foreign trade, has set up his principal office in London. Just in case...

As far as the commercial and industrial capitalists are concerned, the majority of whom have been on the verge of ruin during the war, while many have become proletariats, economically speaking, what fair prospects can a country offer them which is ruined. Short of producers and of very limited consuming power and what have they to hope for from a foreign trade that is completely under the thumb of Italian and German interests?

Even if the consequences, which will be neither few nor trivial, of the revolutionary training of the proletariat, who will have to be used for production etc., are left out of account, the Spanish bourgeoisie has lost the war, economically speaking, and good business is hardly possible for them in peace.

asks

**J. Garcia Pradlas**  
Journalist and Author

The enormous number of bills of exchange already rejected, is a pretty clear indication of the way the wind is blowing.

## THE CHURCH THAT LOST ITS TRADITION

The problem of penetrating Morocco has been tackled by Spain, with great insistence on the one hand, and complete lack of political understanding on the other. Between the years 711 and 1492, the Cross and the Crescent faced each other in the Iberian Peninsula, and the struggle has continued up to our times, always with a religious flavour, on the other side of the straits. The cry of the Catholic Church for hundreds of years has been: "A Holy War against the infidel Moor." Santiago has been and still is the patron saint of the country, not as an apostle, but as a killer of Moors.

The Christian, Catholic fight against the "Moorish Dog" is so deeply imbedded in the Spanish tradition, that it runs in the most ancient songs and romances, it is a "way of thinking," and is in our very blood.

"Hallo, Hallo, whence cometh he the Moor on the highway the cavalier mounted on a chestnut mare..."

It is not known at what date the warning verses saw the light in Spain. But we remember that in the spring of 1936 the children of Madrid, in the Casa del Campo, were singing the tragic romance of the last war in Africa:

"In the Barranco del Lobo There is a spring from which Blood of the Spaniards Who died for the fatherland." gushes

The anti-Musulman tradition still existed at the outbreak of the war, and still had that flavour of the camp and the convent peculiar to a crusade. To oppose such a tradition was something akin to the most unimaginable blasphemies and this is what Franco did. The Spaniard, steeled in fighting the Moor, brought the Moor to the fight in Spain. If legend is to be believed, it has happened before: the Saracen invasion of the 8th century was possible, thanks to Count Julian, who has never been exactly "persona grata" in Spain.

There was also about that time a certain Bishop, Don Oppas, quite impossible in Catholic circles, but beloved by the Moors. Today, the Church, by joining the Moors with the Carlists and blessing both their flags at the same time, has lost the flower and beauty of its tradition, and the grace of its militancy, along with all its legendary content, which so strongly impresses the simple imagination of the people.

It is enough to note this, to realize that the Catholic Church in Spain has, during the war, suffered its most fatal blow. And that,

not only by reason of entrusting its defence to the Muslims, but further and without itself being conscious of it, because it has given exaggerated expression to its own Catholicity. The nationalist press is, to all appearances, an hundred times more ecclesiastical than that of any other deeply religious country, and in comparison with it the "Osservatore Romano" looks like the "Journal des Nations." We know that it was never wise to be more of a papist than the Pope.

## THE PARTIES HOSTILE TO THE REPUBLIC

"Accion Popular," the political party, of which Gil Robles was leader at the beginning of the war, has been subjected to every kind of harsh criticism, and, notwithstanding its close connection with the Jesuits and the big capitalists, has been relegated to the lowest rung of the ladder, by the Falangist policy of Franco. "Renovacion Espanola," with its monarchical Bourbon programme, finds itself obliged to abandon all its essential aspirations, and the aristocrats of which it is composed, have gone abroad to avoid the inopportune siege, and threats of the Falangists. The Duke of Alba and Berwick, circumspectly opposed to the Italo-German influence, and under British influence by blood and education, is a representative specimen, with variations according to taste, of the party in question.

And now, a word of explanation: We talk of "Accion Popular" and "Renovacion Espanola" as if they were going concerns in the public life of the country: But, like the Radical and the Agrarian parties, they have no real existence. All of them vanished when Franco created the Sole Political Party as right hand of the new state, the Spanish Falange and the J.O.N.S. Inside of this party the Carlists and the genuine Falangists continue their quarrel.

What is there in common between these two basic elements of fascist internal politics? Nothing but hatred of the reds, for this they have fought together and curbed their rivalry. But the war has finished and the time has come for people to decide where they stand, to justify their faith, to settle their mutual suspicions, and adjust the bitterness of compromises. Peace, as the Falangists say, is the second round. The Carlists think likewise when they talk of "Purification." "I accuse," as a longing repressed with difficulty, is seething in every heart.

There is a world of difference between the unctious of the altar and the dishevelled confusion of street chaos, between the mysticism of Communion and the hoarse, perspiring motley of the public meeting. Peace for the Carlists and Falangists is but the start of a fight, and there will be no lack of those who were but a short while ago friends, or at least not enemies, and fencing masters, to get their swords ready, mark out the ground and preside at the funeral. Before the war, there were but few Carlists and still fewer Falangists.

All the political parties upon whom Franco has leaned, without exception, have paid for their quarrels with their freedom. Now they are collected in the traditionalist Spanish Falange, which is charged with internal conflict of a magnitude which is alone sufficient to break it up, notwithstanding that it is faced with social and economic problems of the utmost gravity. One may talk of the Empire in times of slavery and nothing happens. But the one outstanding fact to be faced which all the chatter on earth cannot change, will be this: The hungry people will dream of bread.

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IN spite of the two centre pages this issue our finances are still in a critical position. Yet few will deny that now, more than ever before, must our voice be heard. We have been ambitious in printing this issue of Revolt! and have incurred debts which we are unable to meet at the moment. But we are confident that our readers and comrades will give us all their support so that future issues of Revolt! will appear regularly every fortnight. We must do all we can now that we are still able to put forward our ideas. Who knows how soon our fate will be similar to that of our Paris contemporary "S.L.A." WHOSE PUBLICATION HAS BEEN SUSPENDED BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNMENT?

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# The Farce of Democracy

(By Our Paris Correspondent)

As the result of attempts to reach internal equilibrium, it is plain that the moulting of the French capitalist regime, intensified and hastened by the universally felt proximity of an international conflict, is steadily advancing.

The distinctions between French democracy and the totalitarian states are vanishing one by one. The first problem that suggests itself, that of guaranteeing a certain stability to social life, by eliminating stratas of useless or decrepit people, and giving an official place to fresh and vigorous elements. The other problem consists in the necessity of mobilising the economic, military and moral forces in peace time, in order to reduce to a minimum the difficulty of taking them over to a war situation. Important modifications in the structure of democracy are called for. In this regard, the fundamental opposition between the liberal and fascist régimes have no more meaning, and outside of purely doctrinal conceptions it is merely a matter of similar measures adjusted to the necessities of internal reform and imperialist struggle. Shades of difference in procedure are but a matter of the wealth or poverty of a country. Of the revolutionary or reformist methods employed, of the degree of resistance encountered, lies the movement towards a type of nation that is in a permanent condition of mobilisation and is straining all its energies towards a life developed to its highest pitch, is now universal.

This development is a matter of a law, a decree, a project, or a plan, under one or another form. The elements of a dictatorial power are plainly evident, justified by a kind of vaguer ideology, and making their first bow to the public.

In the guise of national and imperial defence the parliamentary régime is being overshadowed by governmental power. In all their domineering arrogance the decree laws are becoming the basis of legislation. Social laws are a mere memory, and the working week reaches and sometimes goes beyond sixty hours in aeroplane factories; forced work for certain classes of

unemployed exists; workers in metallurgical war industries are forbidden to change their place of work; the first concentration camp is officially established at Riencros, and undesirable foreigners are forced to work in it under guard. Prohibition of non-approved propaganda meetings is the order of the day. Plans for censure of the press are in hand. Sentences for the crime of expression of opinion are common, and the corresponding penalties are becoming heavier and heavier. Thus, the march along the road to unity is being systematically followed to the blare of patriotic bugles and nationalist propaganda.

Big capital, which both initiates and profits by these measures, is steadily increasing in stature, while the lower middle classes and those with small savings are being systematically skinned.

All sections of the working-class movements are contributing their bricks to the dictatorial building. There is a strong tendency to search for ways and means of breathing fresh life into capitalism through the collaboration of fresh social strata, administrative, technical, bureaucratic, unionist, this latter putting forward, under the guise of a plan, what is neither more nor less than a justification of economic democracy. But, as is the case with political democracy, the working class would be represented by a social group whose instincts, way of living and mentality would be totally aloof from that of the proletariat. Accordingly, economy is planned on the basis of a series of pro-fascist corporative measures, such as the rational organisation of industry, regimentation of the professions, control of exchanges, collaboration and equality between the technician and bourgeois capitalist.

At the same time that the Socialist Party brings respect for the law, and the Communist Party reeks of the smell of the barracks, the contributions of the trade union planners is that of capitalist revival, free from any ideas about revolutionary upheaval or seizure of power.

Attempts on the part of intelligent capitalists and certain workers' leaders to come to an understanding are on the increase. Since the "Nouveaux Cahiers," a critical revue which united men like Detoeuf, delegate Administrator for the Alsthom and faithful servant of the Electricity Trust, and Laurat, C.G.T. intellectual; since the co-operative conference of Pontiguy, in which aggressive bosses and trade union leaders took part, since the numberless contacts between Munich Government Groups and pacifist syndical organisations, a tradition has been set up, and many are following the example of Dumoulin, Secretary of the Northern Departmental Union and former revolutionary, who is remodelling trade unionism along the lines of an approach to an organised and forced class collaboration.

These different tendencies can but continue to unify in proportion as the imperial problems become rarer—all of them loudly announce their respect for the nation and for the dominant interests of the Empire. The spiteful slogans of the authoritarian nations, thrown out by a sole state-controlled party, are opposed by other formulas, just as patriotic and just as absurd, of democratic nations, gathered together in defence of imperial piracy.

Situated in a period of retreat the revolutionary nuclei are necessarily in a defensive position, the only one possible to a proletariat permeated with patriotic anti-fascism.

The surest indication of the tameness of the working-class movement—notwithstanding the various crosscurrents—with reference to the fascism of the régime, is given by the attitude of the most important industrial group of employers, who have appointed the Parti Social Français of Colonel de la Rocque as their watch-dog, and have cut off the supplies of the Parti Populaire Français of Doriot.

There may still be a certain amount of pressure, manoeuvring and skirmishing between the classes, but the social struggle between the revolutionaries and the totalitarians is wound up for an indefinite period.

weighing heavily upon my mind are the terrible realities of 1939—those that stare at us from the headlines and those, even more appalling, which are more terrible because so few have realised them. Fascism over Europe, the imminence of war, the paralysis of democracy—these are the things that all have seen, the causes of fear and deep anxiety in millions of homes. Once more we hear the beat of the wings of the Angel of Death. The conquests of the past hundred years, wrested by working men and women in a continuous struggle from the ruling class, are doomed or already lost. The hopes of post-

# NO MORE ILLUSIONS

By Reg Reynolds

war Europe, begotten in an age that saw the fall of dynasties and the upheaval of nations, have withered and died.

Would that the story ended there. Its dark sequel brings it to an even more sinister conclusion. The Russian Revolution betrayed, and a totalitarian state masquerading as a socialist soviet republic. Social Democracy in full flight, indecent in its spiritual nakedness, its last disguises abandoned, preparing the way for National Unity. The

Stalinists, still successfully exploiting the memory of a Revolution they long since betrayed, heading off the militants, sabotaging the harassed forces of revolt. What fascism has done for Germany and Italy, fear, panic and treachery have done for England and France. Divided by the frontiers of nationalism, the masses prepare to defend their chains once more.

On one side they will fight for "justice," for "national socialism" and against "encirclement." On the other side they will fight for "democracy"; and they too, like Hitler will pollute the name of socialism. The ghost of Pilsudski will laugh among the marshes of the Vistula, where men will die for what they never possessed. The African conscripts of France will perish for liberty, equality and fraternity, the supposed privileges of a white skin, but certainly not for a black one. Desperate efforts will be made to obtain the "loyalty" of the Arabs, today the victims of systematic loot, plunder, torture and murder. And India? There, if resistance shows its head, the jack-boots of Democracy will give Goering a lesson in ruthlessness...

seen the bastions of progress re-taken one by one and stand today before their last stronghold.

Let us take courage from the undaunted spirit of those men and women who, having lost everything in Spain, are still ready to fight, and to fight on while life is in them. Let us not this May Day be overcome with despair or take refuge in illusions. If the houses of hope which we built were built upon the sand, there is no reason why we should, like ostriches, hide our heads in it. Realities must be faced, new plans made and carried out. It is not enough in this world to be right or even to be courageous. Virtuous circles are no less sterile than vicious ones. We can and must get our message to the masses.

Let us say to those who have not lost faith and turned back to the sophistries of reformism, the specious arguments of the Popular Front, let us say to all those who would join us but are waiting for someone else to do so first:

"Comrades, real progress does not consist in accepting

given alternatives but in creating some new ones. No movement ever began as a mass movement: the great movements that have made history, whether progressive or reactionary, became what they were because those who were tired of the choices that society offered them decided or were persuaded to reject them all.

"Had such people considered only what was immediately 'practicable' no new movements could ever have come into being; for practicability depends on support, and if support is to depend in turn upon practicability, there can be no development.

"The dynamic force in politics is the human will, which, having determined its objective, creates its own possibilities. In the game of politics we may often find that our opponents have cunningly devised the rules in such a way that, however we play our cards, we are bound to lose. In that case we must learn to devise new rules of play.

"You have the aces and you have the trumps. Comrades, what is wrong with the rules that you always lose? And what makes you keep to them when the game is yours if you will it?"

## What is a Proletariat?

(Continued from page 3)

ence of colonial exploitation, as its primary condition of political existence, Transport House, stands alongside the Nelson Column as one of the "great twin brethren" of British Imperialism. British Democracy is the obverse side of Colonial Fascism. The ruthless repression of India under the second Labour government, or Egypt under the first, would be amply sufficient to prove the truth of this hypothesis.

Today, therefore, the British proletariat is not a proletariat in the classical sense of the term as employed by Marx and his disciples. Contrarily, that proletariat is today a hybrid: it turns towards its masters in England the face of an exploited class; but towards the colonies that of a class of exploiters, one united front with its class brethren, the capitalist class of the metropolis. Hence, at home it will wage class struggles via the agency of a highly organised Trade Union movement. But when the Empire is in danger, it stands side by side on the imperial front with the very men whom at home it denounces as exploiters.

Indeed, today, we observe the very class organ of the British workers, the Trade Union Congress itself, converted into the most enthusiastic rearmament agency in the country. When the Empire is in jeopardy. And there is offered to gods and men the spectacle, rich in comedy, of the leader of the Labour Party sternly denouncing the existing Conservative Government for endangering the greatest engine of human exploitation that the world has ever known—viz. the British Empire—by the inadequacy of its war preparations against the Imperialist rivals.

Indeed, there is a growing body of evidence to support the contention that "socialism" (home-made brand!) may represent the last hope of British Imperialism in view of the defeatist tendencies of British Conservatism, crippled by its pro-Fascist sympathies in foreign

affairs from defending its Empire too resolutely against the Fascist powers.

What is the conclusion of this analysis? Surely the British Labour Movement is impotent to wage an anti-imperialist struggle against a system of exploitation, from the existence of which its own political existence is derived. The centre of the anti-Imperialist struggle is to be found today, in the colonies. There, in the South African Protectorates, among the oil and sugar workers of Trinidad and Jamaica, among the seething masses of India and China, among the cocoa planters of West Africa, among the Egyptian fellahs, there is the front-line, there the trenches of the world struggle against British Imperialism, there alone can be won that final and definitive victory, which, at one and the same time, will abolish the colonial proletariat and will restore to the British working-class its genuine proletarian status and its consciousness of its own revolutionary destiny, as it was in the great days of the Chartist movement, before Disraeli, by a stroke of reactionary genius, first perceived in the British Empire the most effective antidote to class-war in Britain.

If, as Disraeli himself said, "adventures are to the adventurous," so too is it true that only the proletariat can make the proletarian revolution. The proletariat of the British Empire is to be found predominantly in the colonies, and it is among the colonial peoples that revolution can first arise, which, by ending the British Empire, can effectively engender the British Revolution. Tomorrow, our turn! Today, the colonial peoples hold high the red flag of revolution. It is they who are the trustees of socialism, and, no less, of British Socialism also.

F. A. RIDLEY

(A further article on this subject will appear in the next issue of REVOLT!—Editors.)

Here, in a street in Soho, a remnant of heroes is gathered together.\* They are symbolic of our scattered forces all over the world, the defeated ones, those who since 1918 have seen the failure of one hope after another and have not lost faith or courage. Thermopylae was not more hopeless in its odds than the fight we are now facing—those few who still hold to that Good Old Cause which unites the toilers and the oppressed across the frontiers. Facing a situation incomparably brighter in its prospects (as history proved) of unqualified success, Tom Paine once wrote of the American Revolution: "There are times that try men's souls and into such times have we been born." The words bite harder today. They come as the challenge of our own past, of generations who have wrought for freedom, to those who have

(\*A reference to the Spanish comrades who are being cared for by us.—Editors.)

## Fight?

### What For?

I am "wanted to go in the army."  
Well, what would they give me to do?  
"You'll have to be killing your brothers  
If one of them doesn't kill you."

I am "wanted to go in the army."  
Say, what is there in it for me?  
"You'd help to be saving your country  
From brother men over the sea."

My country? Who says I've a country?  
I live in another man's flat  
That hasn't as much as a dooryard,  
And why should I battle for that?

I haven't a lot nor a building,  
No flower, no garden, nor tree.  
The landlords have gobbled the country—  
Let them do the fighting, not me.

CELIA BALDWIN WHITEHEAD  
(An Anthology of Revolutionary Poetry)

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# REVOLT!

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from the Spanish Government and the soldiers themselves. This was no very difficult matter, in view of the endless chaos brought about by the war, and the fact that these units were absolutely closed to all possible investigation. If the military detachment corresponding to each Brigade was of 3,000 men, funds were supplied accordingly, although there were actually no more than 1,800 to 2,000. Moreover, from the quota for each soldier, a deduction was made for meals, another for hospital contribution, another for the Communist Party, etc., the soldier being thus forcibly deprived of a great part of his earnings. To all this must be added robberies of food supplies, clothing, etc.

As the Third International wanted to do all in its power to make its units outstanding, large quantities of war material were given them. The best arms came into the hands of the International Brigade, who were always backed by artillery, aeroplanes and tanks. The plans of operation were so arranged that their successes were made to appear prominent. They were frequently relieved and rested, and their life in the field was not composed of hardships and long spells of fighting like that of the Spanish soldiers.

## The International Brigades in Spain

(continued from page 1)

Apart from these details, which show the privileged handling of the International Brigade by the Communist Party, there must be mentioned another loathsome and terrible aspect of its behaviour. We refer to the political persecution carried out against those who were of non-communist sympathies. Both as regards the International Brigades and Spaniards who were commanded by communists, there was murdering, torturing, and ill treatment of hundreds of militant revolutionaries, who came to Spain at the call of the ghastly struggle let loose by fascism. Men of all political ideas: liberals, Trotskyists, anarchists, socialists, etc., fully aware of the scope of the Spanish struggle, preferred to leave their homes and go to Spain, rather than tolerate the idea that fascism should be triumphant in circumstances that might enable it to spread all over Europe. These militants, after fighting with the utmost heroism and devotion in the International Brigade, were pushed on one side. Their real worth was not appreci-

ated, but they were humiliated because they would not join the Communist Party or lend themselves to certain disgraceful manoeuvres. How many brave men were murdered, or arrested and accused of all sorts of base crimes, for the mere fact of complaining, or wearing a red and black handkerchief or reading a socialist or anarchist paper. How many militant revolutionaries, after suffering in the prisons of reactionary capitalism, were shot as "spies," or on the pretext that they had attempted to go over to the enemy! It is impossible to calculate the numbers of those who took to flight to avoid being murdered. And all the while, the adventurers, and those without any particular ideas, who had joined up to get out of their own difficulties, were promoted and given responsible posts, where they had full play for their brutal instincts, simply because they blindly and slavishly swallowed the Communist Party dicta.

The contempt for human life shown by the leaders of the Com-

munist Party was also in evidence in the International Brigade. Military operations were carried out without any regard for the appropriate conditions for success; and if pure brutality failed, shootings and murders of the most ghastly description were the order of the day.

As remarked above, excepting Aragon and in November 1936 in Madrid where the International Battalions did well in company with the Spanish militia units, the International Brigade did nothing of outstanding merit. On the contrary, wherever they were engaged it was a bad day for the Republican arms. In the operations carried out in Aragon in September 1937, they were a dismal failure, and when the front gave way they were responsible for endless chaos by reason of their totally unnecessary retreats, which in Azaila, Higar, etc., compelled other units to follow suit in order to avoid being surrounded by the enemy.

Towards the end, before the

volunteers were retired, an increasing number of Spaniards joined the International Brigade and were subjected to the persecutions and oppression of the communist command. When the International Brigade could no longer count upon a supply of volunteers, and the internal unrest of the Spanish soldier was rapidly becoming dangerous, the Government ordered their dissolution and the evacuation of foreigners. The Communist Party went on scheming to the bitter end. They grouped the volunteers by nationalities and let loose a stream of Party propaganda at them, accompanied by abuse of all other anti-fascist ideas, particularly of the Anarchists, all those affiliated to libertarian organisations being subjected to arrest and ill-treatment...

And so the International Brigade came to an end. Notwithstanding all the noisy propaganda that has surrounded them, anti-fascist Spain reserves its gratitude only for the heroes of the early months of the war, and for the self-sacrificing militant revolutionaries who participated in the fight against fascism. It was a sad ending for them and for all those who fell under the loathsome fangs of the Communist Party rabble.



## Democratic Hospitality

The illustrations which we reproduce in this number, and those which recently received wide publicity in *Picture Post*, will bring home to people more vividly than any words can do, the conditions under which the Spanish refugees in France are living—and dying. The suffering which is being endured by hundreds of thousands of human beings distributed all over Europe and Asia begins to deaden the senses; like killing in war, persecution has become a normality which we accept without any qualms of conscience. Nevertheless, there are certain aspects of the Spanish tragedy which call for special comment.

If pity were inspired by anything but sentimental considerations—a weeping child, even a howling dog, is now more moving than a crucified man—the plight of the Spanish army which crossed into France early in March should have lit fires of indignation in every civilised land. Suffering from hunger and exhaustion, these men who for months had been fighting the rearguard action of European democracy, were received in a democratic country, not as heroes, but as criminals. Indeed, as worse than criminals, for these are given at least decent shelter and adequate food. Our Spanish comrades were

herded like animals in open compounds, surrounded by barbed-wire entanglements and armed guards, and deprived of the most elementary necessities of life. They were left to dig themselves holes in the sand, to dig futile shelters of sticks and rags, to scrounge for food like abandoned dogs. There was, at the

By Herbert Read

beginning, some excuse for the Democratic Governments (it is not fair to put the whole blame on the French Government, in view of the "close co-operation" which has marked the whole course of the non-interventionist policy of the democratic powers); they had not expected an invasion of such proportions and had no organisation ready to deal with it. But natural catastrophes like earthquakes and floods are even more unexpected, and yet they usually call into existence a prompt and efficient rescue service. In this case there was no sudden rush to help, only confusion and embarrassment. And meanwhile the refugees, many of them sick or wounded, perished by the hundreds—perished unnecessarily. A certain

amount of aid was provided by the French trade unions, and by voluntary organisations. But even now, many weeks after the event, these brave soldiers of the Spanish Republic exist in conditions far worse than the concentration camps of Germany and Russia.

Why, then, do we continue to treat them like outcasts and criminals? We have declared our purpose: to oppose aggression wherever it appears in Europe; and these men have no other purpose. France still retains the gold reserves and the arms which rightly belong to these men, and there can be no practical difficulty in giving effect to such a policy. The only factor working against it is our inhuman treatment of these men on whom our security may depend. Their hearts are filling with bitterness and despair, and they might with justice refuse to trust those who have so repeatedly betrayed them. Even without the experience of these last few weeks, they might well ask themselves what there is to make them choose between the hypocrisy of the so-called democracies and the realism of the fascists. It is a question we are all asking ourselves. We are being called on to fight to defend a bankrupt institution—that parliamentary democracy which

## International Solidarity for the Spanish Refugees



(Above) Visitors are only allowed to speak to the Refugees through wire fences. (Below) Primitive sanitary conditions in the camps.



everywhere—most of all in Russia—is powerless to prevent the breakdown of the economic basis upon which the whole of our industrial civilisation is built. The two forces which oppose each other in the world to-day are both negative forces—forces of despair and desperation. It was only in Spain that a new way of life, totally opposed to the economic assumptions

of the modern world, seemed possible of realisation. For the moment that hope is defeated. We should not despise our Spanish comrades, therefore, if they elect to leave this scene of deception, and in a new world, in Mexico for example, attempt once more to realise their great ideals. "Arms for Spain" used to be our slogan. Let it now be "Ships to Mexico."

## A Supreme Effort Now!

The photographs on this page are meant to remind our readers that Spain's refugees still need our help now more than ever. These photographs will also show them that the reports published in recent issues of *Revolt!* coming from our correspondents, were not exaggerated pictures of the conditions existing in the camps. Spain and the World for nearly two years has been doing all in its power, through its readers, to help alleviate suffering in Spain. Before the fall of Catalonia we were responsible for 70 Spanish children. Now we are responsible for several Spanish comrades who managed to escape from Central Spain.

Figures speak more eloquently than words; here are some figures. We are at the present moment directly responsible for over 20 comrades; we have served, during the past three weeks, over 700 meals. All the work entailed has been done voluntarily so that every penny that is received for our Fund is used exclusively for the Refugees.

We cannot content ourselves with taking charge of our Spanish comrades in England alone. We must do something for those in S. France. Who will help us? Through the readers of *Spain and the World* and *Revolt!* we have been able to raise the magnificent sum of £1,000 (\$5,000) for the Orphans and Refugees. Help us now to make a quick start on the second £1,000!

Send us your contributions now. The need is so urgent that it cannot admit delay and forgetfulness. We rely on you comrades and friends.

Spain and the World Refugees Fund,  
21 Frith Street, London, W.1.

REFUGEE FUND—3rd LIST

No.	
403.	London: per Tab 10/-.
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