

INTERNATIONAL

COUNCIL

CORRESPONDENCE

For Theory and Discussion

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By the Groups of Council Communists of America

The period of progressive capitalist development is historically closed. The decline period of capital, a permanent condition of crisis, compels to ever greater convulsions of economy, to new imperialistic and military conflicts, to ever increasing unemployment and to general and absolute impoverishment of the workers. Thus is given the objective situation for the communist revolution in the capitalist countries. For the working class, there is only the revolutionary way out, which leads to the communist society. No one can deprive the workers of this task, which must be carried out by the class itself.

The publishers of Council Correspondence see in the acting self-initiative of the workers and in the growth of their self-consciousness the essential advance of the labor movement. We therefore combat the leadership policy of the old labor movement, and call upon the workers to take their fate in their own hands, to set aside the capitalist mode of production and themselves to administer and direct production and distribution in accordance with social rules having universal validity. As a fighting slogan and statement of goal we propose:

All power to the workers' councils! The means of production in the hands of the Workers!

THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN

I

To obtain an adequate idea of the present situation in Spain, one must take into account the previous development. Regarded from the capitalist standpoint, Spain has remained a backward country. The semi-feudal conditions still prevailing are due to a number of factors, among which might be mentioned: the geographical position which almost makes the peninsula rather a part of Africa than of Europe; the hot climate which hinders the development of agricultural productivity; and the mountainous character of the country which stands in the way of communication and has maintained provincialism. The final causes of the spanish backwardness, however, are to be found less in these natural impediments than in others of a social and political nature.

It would be necessary to go far back into the history of Spain in order to point out how the feudal property relations were capable of impeding her capitalist development. In spite of the wars by which the country was ravaged thru-out the centuries, the christian rulers, after the expulsion of the Moors, came into a rich inheritance. In the Middle Ages, christian-feudal

Spain ranked as the wealthiest and most powerful country of Europe. This wealth was still further increased thru the colonial expeditions to Central and South America enabling the formation of a great parasitical ruler class whose luxurious living was not bound up with the development of the productive forces in Spain, but whose interests were rather best secured thru the suppression of new upward-struggling classes which are formed thru the increasing social forces of production. The holding down of all progressive forces in Spain by way of the feudal nobility and the Church constitutes one of the bloodiest chapters of human history.

The elements interested in a bourgeois revolution were unable to oppose successfully the vast power of feudalism, even when, with the development of capitalism in the rest of Europe, spanish pre-eminence was superseded and the economic and political decline set in. Central and South America freed themselves from spanish rule; finally the United States appropriated Cuba and the Philippines; and Spain was now left with only her home territory and sank to a second-rate power.

But the development of the productive forces can at most be restricted, not completely prevented. Feudalism itself must become "progressive" if it suppresses the progressive classes. The partial capitalization of Spain could be opposed only under pain of her disappearance as an independent nation; and so, in spite of the feudalistic political rule, Spain could not close herself off against the development of capitalism. But this capitalization, bearing the marks of feudal restrictions, brought with it a number of economic and political contradictions which signified for the great masses of the population an immoderate poverty, and which furthermore stood in the way of capitalist profitability and determined the revolutionary uprisings and class conflicts of the last hundred years. The weakness of spanish capital forced upon it a policy of compromise with the landed proprietors and the Church: a condition by which Spain has been characterized down to the present time and which, altho it secured the exploiting society against the exploited people, at the same time formed the basis of continual social friction which more and more irresistibly pressed for violent solutions.

For the last forty years the industrial bourgeoisie, with the development of its strength thus impeded, has been attempting in its own interest to drive back the feudal-conservative forces. Capital importation, by which more than ten percent of all spanish industry was brought into the hands of foreign capitalists,

supported on the one hand the capitalist struggle against feudalism, while on the other it was prejudicial to the interests of spanish capital. This union of foreign capital to the trinitarian exploiting group of domestic origin brought further complications into the already highly complicated class and group interests. The country's output, agricultural as well as industrial, continued far behind the demands of the exploiters. Tho it slowly increased, it did not suffice; and the struggle for the division of the surplus value was often conducted with great vigor, but had always ended, owing to the unbroken power of the spanish junkers, in new compromises marked by the tariff policy so that the spanish population became the most impoverished and thereby also the most unproductive of Western Europe. High custom duties on farm products assure their incomes to the landlords and dispense them from putting agriculture on a capitalist basis. The high prices of farm products make necessary, in turn, industrial tariffs in order just to maintain the profitability of capital. Both policies impede the development of the domestic market and, because of the slight productivity, preclude capacity to compete on the world market. In the long run, this state of affairs is untenable; still, the constellation of the class forces has hitherto not permitted anything other than this situation of general relative stagnation.

Spain has about 23 million inhabitants. The density of population is very slight. The contrast between poor and rich is incredibly great. Landed proprietors with enormous domains are offset by a mass of land-poor or quite propertyless peasants and farm workers. Tho more than half the population is engaged in farming, still the productivity is so slight that the importation of foodstuffs remains a necessity. Only 40 percent of the soil is cultivated, and even that is poorly utilized. The means of production are shockingly primitive, the wooden plow drawn by oxen being still the rule. The land owners lease the soil on terms which scarcely permit the tenants, notwithstanding the hardest labor, to eke out more than a bare existence. Under the prevailing conditions, the improvement of the productivity of the soil is neither desired nor possible. The shortness of the lease agreement and the hardness of the terms cannot produce in the tenants any initiative directed to increase of production. The proprietors themselves have no great interest in the promotion of productivity since it is only the scarcity of farm products by which their monopolistic position can be secured. They are most keenly interested in preventing the penetration of capitalist competition in agriculture, and foreign

competition is warded off by means of the protective tariff policy. The independent farmers suffer from lack of land and capital; they are not in a position to equip themselves with modern means of production nor to employ them. For the most part, they are wretched self-providers to whom the market is of no concern and whose situation is not much better than that of the two million agricultural wage workers. Only a radical agrarian revolution could solve the problems of the agricultural elements, just as it would also provide the necessary impetus for the further capitalist development. But that requires more courage and strength than is yet possessed by the spanish bourgeoisie.

To the 20 to 30 thousand landed proprietors belong two-thirds of all the soil. Some of them are at the same time industrial owners, just as many industrialists, inversely, are at the same time large land owners: a circumstance which partially wipes out the distinctions between the bourgeois and the feudal interests. The Catholic Church is not only the largest land owner of Spain, but also has influence in industry and upon the banks; and this likewise weakens the position of the authentic modern bourgeoisie. The struggle against the Church in Spain is for this reason essentially a struggle against an owning and directly exploiting institution, and must be conducted the more bitterly as the Church has hitherto possessed a monopoly in the nursing of ideologies. Deducting further from the spanish account the part represented by foreign ownership, no more is required to explain the relative weakness of the progressive bourgeoisie with respect to the forces interested in the maintenance of the present conditions.

The difficulties which the feudal forces have set in the path of capitalist development, together with the relative backwardness of capital and the slow development of the domestic market, are manifested also in a general overproduction. An actual lack of capital and an actual shortage of industrial workers assumes in these bizarre conditions, just as in countries with overaccumulation, the form of a superfluity of capital and a great lack of employment. The world crisis, and here especially with reference to agriculture, has added still other difficulties to those of a purely domestic origin, and for the last five years has brought with it a permanent condition of political crisis. The thing that the bourgeoisie would have to do--namely, set aside the semi-feudal conditions--it cannot yet, and at the same time, no longer accomplish. Since the land-owning class is in control of the State and has in its hands the instruments of power, the bourgeoisie

rinds itself in this respect also dependent on the spanish junkers. It is only thru the complete setting aside of the present military apparatus of suppression --and that is possible only by revolutionary means-- that the progressive bourgeoisie could impose its will upon the feudal nobility. Hitherto, the actions of the various governments have rather been determined by the army and the bureaucracy, the actual wielders of power, and the governments were hardly capable of viewing them as their own instrument. The large class of petty-bourgeoisie is in part bound up economically with the semi-feudal conditions; in smaller part it is progressively minded tho in the sense of safeguarding its bourgeois-capitalist interests against the feudal obstacles in their way. It is probably only under the pressure of the workers that the progressive wing of the petty bourgeoisie could be reconciled to more than mild reformist measures.

In addition to the feeble bourgeoisie, the vacillating and divided middle class, the land-hungry peasant mass and the farm workers, there is also directed against the present conditions the approximately two millions embraced in the industrial proletariat. The bourgeoisie does not dare, however, to make use of all these elements in a decisive thrust against feudalism. Like the impoverished farm workers, the industrial proletariat also is forced by its poverty to be revolutionary. In the matter of revolutionary initiative and insight into its real needs, the spanish proletariat is quite on a level with that of the other capitalist countries. It is true that, owing to spanish peculiarities, this working population has also its special characteristics and problems, but the general backwardness of the country has no more been able to prevent the development of a revolutionary proletariat than the establishment of modern industrial enterprises and capitalist methods of exploitation. The spanish industrial workers no longer see salvation in capitalism; the conscious part of them is looking for truly proletarian, communist solutions.

Thus the spanish bourgeoisie is faced with a dilemma: it fears the reaction as well as the revolution, and dreams of an improvement in the speed of its railway trains, which are the slowest in Europe. It is compelled to defend not only the interests of capitalism, but of property in general, and will oppose any movement which would be liable to forge beyond the ideals of the bourgeois-democratic exploitation society. The proletariat, which already has its own revolutionary goals, will perhaps, in case of a radical agrarian revolution occurring simultaneously, combine with the expropriation of the land-owners that of the capital-

ists. Hence also the fear of the agrarian revolution on the part of the bourgeoisie; its reforms in this particular were not so much intended to further that revolution as to hold it up. A workers' and peasants' revolution may lead to a state capitalism which will do away also with present-day private property. However necessary for the bourgeoisie the struggle against feudalism really is, the danger is equally great that such a struggle, if conducted seriously, would lead to a state capitalism of the Russian type in which the old owners are displaced in the interest of a new, collective exploiting class in the guise of the State. In such circumstances, the sharing of the rulership with feudalism is for the bourgeoisie a lesser evil; but this "sharing" makes it necessary for the bourgeoisie to be drawn along in the wake of the large landed proprietorship which is its fortune and misfortune at the same time.

Even tho the parliamentary labor parties today renounce the struggle for state capitalism and content themselves with the government positions at the disposal of the bourgeoisie, the question already arises whether it will be possible for them to divert the workers' and peasants' revolution into a mere change of exploiters. Just as under the present conditions a movement aiming at the democratic republic is capable of ending up in the proletarian revolution, so it is also possible that the labor organizations which come out for the democratic republic or even for state capitalism will be overrun by the revolutionary masses. In such circumstances the bourgeoisie is not inclined to fight feudalism unless the latter leaves it no choice, and is accordingly ever ready to break off the conflict with the most favorable compromise. In such conditions, the proletariat cannot take up for the interests of the bourgeoisie, or subordinate itself to bourgeois leadership, except under certain pain of being struck down later on.

II

The Spanish class conflicts led, in 1931, to the fall of the monarchy and to the establishment of a bourgeois-democratic regime. The "agrarian reform" bound up with this political change was inadequate, and incapable of meeting the needs of the country population. The indemnities to be paid to the land-owners for relinquished domains were set so high that the burden upon the peasants was not at all mitigated. In many localities the peasants took possession of the large estates; but even tho these expropriations were in part later legalized by the government, still at the same time the peasants were subjected to new burdens

which were no more bearable than the old lease obligations. The Zamora republic was not inclined to proceed against the interests of the land owners, as also in the political field it did not dare to suppress the reaction. The reactionary forces assembled again and organized further advances. The fascist "Accion Popular" of Gil Robles unfolded a far-flung propaganda which, by way of skillful demagoguery, was able to win influence even among the impoverished and deluded peasants. In view of the continuing social unrest, brought about thru the isolated but ever recurring manifestations of the workers and of a part of the farm population, the bourgeoisie once more formed a closer union with the reactionary forces. The elections of 1933 had again put the reactionaries in charge of the government, which now proceeded more harshly against the workers and the rebellious peasants. The restless humor of the country was reflected in the rapid alternation of the governments: from Azana to Lerroux and Martinez Barrio, and then to Lerroux and Gil Robles. The uprising in Asturias in October 1934 formed the climax of the proletarian endeavors to make use of the revolutionary currents for proletarian ends and to strike the decisive blow at the reaction. The uprising remained isolated and was suppressed, tho the attempt to establish social peace was still by no means successful. The acutely revolutionary situation led to a number of government crises in conformity with the reorientations of the different classes and groups, and which pointed to new and greater conflicts to come. The elections at the beginning of this year witnessed a new coalition of the liberal bourgeoisie with the parliamentary labor parties and led to the forming of the "Popular Front Government."

This new government promised to put thru a series of reforms, such as are advocated by liberalism in general, and a better agrarian reform with partial land distribution. Azana declared on February 20th that "the government wants to govern in accordance with the laws, desires no dangerous innovations and comes out as a government of the moderates in favor of social peace and order". Even tho the parliamentary labor parties were in sympathy with this moderation, it was not very tasteful to the workers and peasants. These latter, taking their stand on the promise of the new government, wanted to put them into effect. The peasants arbitrarily expropriated some of the land; the strike struggles of the workers for higher wages and better working conditions no longer ceased; on the streets, workers and fascists engaged in bloody conflicts; the social peace and the capitalist order continued to be endangered.

The reaction was far from regarding itself as beaten by the electoral victory of the liberal forces. The less so as, notwithstanding the fact that the elections had given the popular-front parties most of the seats in Parliament, the majority of the votes had been cast for the rightist organizations. That is to say, that while the Spanish electoral procedure had made it possible for the "leftists" to obtain 265 out of the 473 seats in Parliament, over against the 4,356,559 votes cast for them were the 5,051,955 of the rightists. The popular-front "government", which of course was made up only of bourgeois-liberalistic elements, was unable to govern, as would have been necessary, either against the workers or against the reaction; for the state machinery had remained in the hands of the rightists. The workers attempted to broaden the movement against the reaction into one against exploitation in general: a situation which left the government no choice but to look for new compromise solutions, which, however, were neither able to restrain the workers nor to prevent the fascist movement from assembling its forces for a new thrust. Down to the fascist uprising of the army in July 1936, there was one workers' strike after another. The government was not in a position, even with the aid of the labor parties, to put an end to this movement. At the same time it did not dare to purge the administrative system and the military apparatus of the reactionary elements, for in the first place it might have to bring this apparatus into action against the workers, and secondly, it was afraid of offering the reaction any provocation. The procrastination of the liberal bourgeoisie was at the same time the strengthening of the reactionary elements: fascism was making ready for the decisive blow. Shortly before the outbreak of the military uprising, La Battalla (Barcelona) wrote: "After three months of life, the present Cortes is done for. The Cortes continues to discuss juridical problems, pensions, trifles, while down below are hunger, want, anxiety, intense uneasiness and the fever of revolution. Our government is sterile and artificial. Sterile because it is incapable of producing anything useful, because it performs fancy tricks on a loose rope in its desire to avoid revolution, tho it owes its existence precisely to a revolutionary movement. The State apparatus does what it pleases. Its decisions are not determined in any way whatsoever by the government. The State machinery is in permanent insurrection against the government. The Popular Front, finds itself facing a revolt of the laboring masses, who categorically refuse its order to mark time at the moment when it is plainly necessary to move fast. And enfolding all is the formidable economic crisis, which is getting worse every

day. The reactionary forces of the country have recovered their voices and are attacking energetically. They are attacking in the Parliament, on the streets, in the Councils of the Administration, in the pulpits, in the national and foreign press, in the very organization of the State."

Shortly thereafter occurred, in alliance with the fascist formations and the Church, the uprising of the army against the government. The government's fear of taking vigorous steps against the old governing apparatus, its efforts to hold back the workers, the restriction of its own actions to that of a moderate democratic-capitalist policy, and the support of this temporizing policy at the hands of the parliamentary labor parties,--all that had provided the reactionaries with time and opportunity to prepare the rebellion thoroly. The condition of permanent social tension and the lack of clarity with respect to the actual constellation of the class forces was to be ended by way of the fascist dictatorship. All of which is an indication that the time for a well-ordered, nicely democratic, liberal and progressive capitalism is past. The incapacity of Spanish capitalism to set up its own dictatorship and impose its own will upon the other classes, and, notwithstanding the aid of the parliamentary labor parties, its inability to guarantee that the masses would continue to submit to being suppressed and exploited; the danger that the bourgeoisie, in its own interest and for the sake of maintaining the exploitation society generally, would sacrifice, half willingly or from force of circumstances, a part of the feudal interests: these considerations furnished occasion for the reaction, even before the population had been subjected to an adequate dose of demagoguery, to attempt to establish by force its "law and order". Spanish capital was unable to being about this "order" quick enough for the reaction which took the temporizing as a sign of weakness. And if the government was not in a position to create order against the workers, it was also not in a position to proceed against the bringers of order on the side of the reaction. The fascist attack is as little directed against capitalism as capital was interested in the abolition of the land owners' privileges. The reaction simply realized that any concession which the bourgeois government made to the workers had to be made at the expense of the reactionary elements. What was given to the poor peasants and to the workers had to be taken away from the land owners and the Church, if capital itself was not to be prejudiced. The reaction, however is of the opinion that neither the peasants nor the workers need to be given anything but hunger and bullets, and so it set about to create the necessary

"order" for itself and for capitalism. It further acted by order of that part of capital which is more interested in the maintenance of the existing conditions than in a general progressive further development of capitalism. In Spain, also, a part of big capital is not disinclined to make common cause with the junkers against all other strata of the population and against smaller capitals. And if the feudal reaction makes "order" for the entire exploiting society, it can thereby also, within this order, retain the preeminence which it has hitherto enjoyed and which was already in danger of crumbling, or at least share the power with capital under much more favorable conditions for itself.

The liberalistic government was given no opportunity to capitulate. The fascist attack, by reason of its extent and fierceness, precluded any seeking after compromise solutions. It was not directed against Capital, but only against a governmental tendency and against a government which by its previous policy seemed liable to become the prisoner of the labor movement and which was left with no choice but to defend itself against the fascist opposition. The fascists, considering the weakness of the government, counted upon a quick victory; they underestimated the power of resistance of the workers, who joined together for a decisive counter-attack.

The army, to which the fascist organizations were linked, rebelled in almost all parts of the peninsula, but with few exceptions was quickly suppressed in those areas having a strong labor movement. From Morocco, the Spanish Foreign Legion and the Moors were set in motion. In those areas which were not forthwith taken over by the fascists, the Shock Police and the Civil Guard remained in large part loyal to the government of Madrid. The legal government retained the loyalty also of the larger part of the fleet and of the air forces. The government was compelled to form a workers' militia. In this connection it hesitated, and still for a long while sought to prevent the preeminence of the militia over the regular soldiery; but the initiative of the workers placed it before the accomplished fact that the militia had become the principal military formation. During the first few weeks of the struggle, the government, speculating upon further compromises, sought to restrict the workers as far as possible to bourgeois-military measures, and in those localities which were temporarily secured against fascism, it tried to continue the bourgeois order unchanged. This attitude, which was designed to prevent the defensive struggle from turning into a radical workers' revolution, greatly impeded the anti-

fascist counter-attack and promoted the military successes of the officer caste. It was not until all hopes of compromise were recognized as an illusion, and the workers began to relax their union with the government as well as to get out more and more from under the control of the parliamentary labor parties, --it was only then that the defense was pushed with greater vigor from the side of the government also.

As moderate as was the popular-front government prior to the uprising, with equal moderation it wanted the uprising suppressed. And the labor parties belonging to the Popular-Front declared themselves in sympathy with this moderation. The fighting workers, however, who felt all too keenly on their own bodies, the lack of moderation among the fascists, could not acquire much taste for this harmonistic "anti-fascism". They were obliged, under pain of being struck dead, themselves to become immoderate. It is one thing to be shot, and another to issue directives from a distance. A news reporter of the Communist Party, engaged in glorifying Azana, wrote in the Rundschau of August 13th: "Azana takes us to the window of his private office. It is in the former royal palace. The chain of the Sierra Guadarrama stands forth blue in the distance. 'There is the front', he says and adds, laughing, 'and one can often see from here the smoke of the cannon'."

Even tho the popular-front parties were agreed that the policies should continue to be shaped by people who only see the smoke of the cannon in the distance, and for whom the workers are now to die just as previously they had worked for them, still the self-initiative of the workers soon created a quite different situation and made of the political defensive struggle against fascism the beginning of a real social revolution.

Like the Social Democracy thruout the world, so also that of Spain is not interested in socialism. It is true that fascism means its death, but then, too, it would be strangled by communism. And so the social democrats are obliged either to restrict themselves to performing valet services for the democratic bourgeoisie, so long as this latter can afford democracy, or else to become bolshevists and take up for a kind of state capitalism. Otherwise there only remains for them to go the way of Severing and Doriot. Still, in the present conditions, the Spanish Social Democracy, even with the support of the Spanish Stalinists, is lacking in strength and will to release and put over a movement having its goal in state capitalism. The reasons for this are of an international as well as national nature. It is questionable, for instance,

whether the international bourgeoisie would not, thru intervention, help to put a speedy end to a spanish state capitalism, since the thoro state capitalism is bound up with complete expropriation of the present capitalists and so, even tho not for the workers, yet for the present bourgeoisie, is the same as communism. As things now stand in Spain, there is a possibility that, thru the self-initiative of the workers in the course of a revolution aiming at state capitalism, the expropriation of private capital will be thoroly accomplished. A state capitalism in the italian sense (which doesn't really deserve the name), by which the interests of private property are not abolished but coordinated and which would be at the service of the economically strongest elements of Spain, is certainly aimed at by the fascists themselves; and here the Social Democracy, even with the best will in the world, would surely be left out of the competition. In view of the inner spanish situation, a state capitalism controlled by the Socialist-Stalinists is unlikely as so for the simple reason that the anarcho-syndicalist labor movement would itself probably seize the power rather than bow to the social-democratic dictatorship. And so the Social Democracy remains true to its traditions and continues to restrict itself to forming the left wing of the bourgeoisie. Every step to the left which the socialists made later on was forced by the manifestations of the armed workers; the "partial socialization" which the socialists began, or which rather they did not dare to prevent, were temporary concessions to the workers in order to avoid the crumbling of the front against fascism; for the striking down of fascism is also a condition precedent to the bare existence of the social democrats. And since a victorious fascism would cut their throats as well, they will also, in case the workers should succeed in expropriating the whole of capital, be reconciled to a form of state capitalism, and later place themselves at the head of such a movement in order to make it as mild as possible. So long, however, as the workers refrain from taking up the expropriation of capital on their own initiative, the Social Democracy will stick to the maintenance of capitalist democracy, or perhaps even, in the interest of this democracy, undertake a pseudo-socialization, as was done by the german social democrats after the collapse of the empire and after the Kapp Putsch. If the fascists should fail to win the power, and if for any reason the capitalist intervention should not materialize, there is also the possibility that the Social Democracy, in the name of the spanish and of world capitalism and by means of the government power, if such should come into its hands, will itself create that "order" which today is the concern of the fascists.

The spanish Communist Party, which as late as 1934 had about 6,000 members but which in the meanwhile has multiplied somewhat, has given up every policy of its own, other than that of further attenuating the workers' struggle. Like the Social Democracy, it wants nothing more than to defend capitalist democracy against fascism. On July 29, Dolores Ibarruri broadcast in Madrid for the Communist Party of Spain the declaration that "the struggle is only for a democratic, liberal and republican Spain. Spain is now passing thru her bourgeois-democratic revolution, and we communists are its vanguard." The general secretary of the Communist Party, Jose Diaz, declared, as reported by the Rundschau of August 27: "It is not a question here of setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the soviets. Anyone who thinks he sees the social revolution on every street corner is no revolutionist. A revolutionist must know what he is fighting for at the given historical moment."

III

In Spain, as thruout the world, the weakness of the present-day labor movement is manifested among other things in its organizational and ideological fragmentation. Class unity and unity of action cannot be brought about merely by way of ideology, but only thru the force of circumstances, which drives the workers, regardless of all diversity of ideas and organizations, into a unified front against the common enemy. This is being conclusively demonstrated today in Spain. The fascist assailant does not and cannot make a distinction as to which of the existing labor organizations is the more radical, which of them is to be treated with greater regard or greater brutality, but he fights against the workers and their class aspirations from an instinctive realization that these latter, and not the policy of the separate organizations, are in the last instance determining. The workers, on their part, are compelled by their instinct of self-preservation, in spite of all organizational and ideological differences, into a unified front against fascism as the direct and nearest enemy. Neither the groups of fascists nor those of the workers are allowed the time or opportunity to go their own special ways, and it is idle to ask whether the spanish workers under the present conditions should fight against fascism and for bourgeois democracy or not. So far as the workers are concerned, regardless of the organization to which they belong or of their ideological position, regardless of whether they take up for bourgeois-democratic, state-capitalist, anarcho-syndicalist or communist goals, they are obliged to

fight against fascism if they want not only to ward off the further worsening of their wretched position, but even to remain alive. The differences among the fascists also must be forced into the background until the common enemy, the workers and rebellious peasants, with their momentary bourgeois comrades of the coalition, are struck down. The circumstance that this unity is not a hundred-percent affair on either side does not affect the fact that it has nevertheless been brought about so far as possible in the present conditions. The force of circumstances has greater weight than the will of the various organizational talents; the general necessities overtop the specific. Still, after the close of the present struggle, no matter which side loses or wins, or even in case the civil war is long drawn out, the present unity will again fall apart. And even tho a fascist dictatorship in Spain may make unreal the fragmentation among the workers, yet in case of a victory of the leftists, the struggle of the various ideologies, with their material basis in the organizations, will come back upon the order of the day; unless--though this is not at all probable--in the course of the struggle against fascism, and thru the power of circumstances, the present labor organizations are broken up and give place to new class formations. This, the most favorable perspective, appears to be precluded by the power of tradition and the industrial backwardness, which permit at most of compromise solutions which later on may possibly constitute the basis for the formation of the unified class movement.

No doubt the struggle for the power in Spain is between three different tendencies; practically, however, the struggle has as yet been confined to the one between Fascism and Anti-Fascism, even tho there was no lack of endeavors to bring other factors into the reckoning. The reactionary forces taking up for Fascism are confronted by those of a bourgeois-democratic and social-reformist cast, tho at the same time by a movement aiming at socialism, so that each individual group is fighting against two tendencies: Fascism against Democracy "and Revolution, this Democracy" against Fascism and Revolution, the Revolution against Fascism and bourgeois democracy. In case the reaction should be struck down, then, as things now stand and unless prevented by the general exhaustion, the struggle of the bourgeois-democratic forces against those which are aiming to set aside the exploitation society must again come into the foreground. Even though the love-feast which would be a natural accompaniment of the general exhaustion and a victory of the leftists should postpone this conflict for a time, still this quarrel is bound to become once more the

dominant note in spanish politics; for neither bourgeois society nor a spanish state capitalism is in the long run capable of any progressive improvement in the position of the workers; This situation is already anticipated in the frictions within the anti-fascist front, in the mutual sabotage of socialist stalinist and anarcho-syndicalist formations, and which must become the greater the longer the civil war is drawn out, since in such conditions the real socialization is bound to spread and the social-reformist forces challenged to greater resistance.

Even though the "left" bourgeoisie may already regret having risked the struggle against the reaction, it has as yet no possibility of correcting this "mistake". It is the prisoner of a situation in which forces are operating which it is no longer capable of controlling. Even though the parliamentary labor parties may have the design of bringing the bourgeois exploitation society undamaged out of the present chaos, yet neither are they any longer capable of controlling adequately those forces whose strength has grown in the course of the struggle and which are striving for socialism. Even though the fascist assailant may prefer to spare the bourgeois interests to the full extent possible, still in order to win he is obliged to impair those interests more and more, both by reason of his own military and demagogical necessities and of what this naturally implies: the radicalizing of the workers. Even though the catalonian anarchists may still drive forward their socialization, regardless of the bourgeois-democratic limitations which Madrid would like to impose upon them, still after all they are unable to leave the Madrid Government in the lurch. And, conversely, the Socialists and Stalinists are as yet not able to take vigorous steps against the anarchists without breaking their own necks. In short, nothing remains to do at the moment, regardless of all desires to the contrary, but to bring all anti-fascist forces into action against Fascism. This situation is not sought, however, but forced, and it points with all clarity to the fact that history is determined by class struggles, and not by certain organizations, special interests, leaders or ideas.

It is necessary to take a glance at the labor organizations in Spain in order to understand the frictions within the anti-fascist front. Among these anti-fascist organizations there is, first, the Social Democracy which ranks as the strongest political organization of workers. It has 65,000 members and, as in other countries, is divided into factions. It has a right and a left wing and a so-called center; this latter, however, differs so little from the right wing that

one can afford to disregard it and to speak of Right and Left. The right wing, under the leadership of Indalecio Prieto, rules the organizational apparatus; the left wing and the youth organizations which have combined with the communist youth formations are led by Largo Caballero. The trade-union organization controlled by the Social Democracy, the U.G.T. (Union General de Trabajadores), sympathizes with the left wing and regards Caballero as its Lenin. The U.G.T. has about 1,400,000 members. The S.P. and its unions are no more revolutionary than is their leader. They are "leftists" only because a part of these organizations has gone so far to the right that their denomination as socialist is now nothing more than a joke. What has remained social-democratic in the pre-war sense rates today as "left."

This "leftism" has become necessary to the Social Democracy in order to evade convulsions that might be brought about by real oppositions. The "left" character of the Spanish Social Democracy is said to be manifested in the person of Caballero. Until recently, Caballero was nothing more nor less than a typical social-democratic trade-union bigwig. In the meanwhile, however,--to believe the current reports--he has been the seat of a miracle; the spirit of Marx and Lenin is thought to have seized him overnight with elemental force, so that he is now striving for radical solutions in the sense of the Russian prototype. An attempt is being made to wipe out the man's past, as well as the past of the social-democratic movement in general. It is sought to excuse his activity as minister under Primo de Rivera and his pitiful role as minister of labor in the first republican government on the ground that as a victim of capitalist intrigues and in view of the sabotage of unfaithful subordinates he is not responsible for the pettinesses of his parliamentary, labor-fakerish past. As a matter of fact, it has become necessary, after the wretched collapse of the Social Democracy in Germany and Austria, to overcome the oppositional sentiment in the socialist parties with a somewhat more radical phraseology. The new red color which the left wing has applied to itself does not affect in the least the character and construction of these organizations, which, in spite of the more radical phrases, maintain the dictatorship of the bureaucratic apparatus over the members, and which, thru a refined system of sick benefits and insurance, tie the members of the trade unions to their bureaucrats, however corrupt these latter may be. Bureaucrats who even today can conceive of socialism only as a mastery over the workers by the State.

The pseudo-radicalism of the left S.P. is forced upon it. Caballero is not leading the masses to take more radical steps, but he is running about behind the workers in order not to be left quite out of the running. Just as that part of the bourgeoisie which found itself ready for a coalition policy with the labor parties has become the prisoner of the present situation, so the left Social Democracy is being forced to a more radical policy thru the circumstances of the struggle of the armed workers; but the Social Democracy, like the left bourgeoisie, is ready to march backward again at the first opportunity. Caballero and the S.P. are not fighting for socialism; they are attempting, with social-democratic demagoguery, to maintain capitalist society in its present form, and in case this capitalist society nevertheless goes under, instead of a communist society to build up a state capitalism which would mean little more for the workers than the state capitalism of Stalin or Hitler.

The Communist Party of Spain (Third International) is no more than the tail-end of the S.P. It claims to have 50,000 members, which is certainly a gross exaggeration. The C.P. exercises its greatest influence in Madrid and Vizcaya. As in France, so also in Spain its policy is determined by the necessities of Russian foreign policy. Structure and character are the same as in all other communist parties. Like the S.P., also the C.P. has endeavored either to prevent the manifestations of the workers or, where they were not preventible, to stifle them as quickly as possible. Azana's liberal government was regarded by the C.P. as an ally of France, and since France was the ally of Russia, the Spanish communists felt called upon, in the interest of the Russian block policy for the coming war, to support the Spanish government insofar as possible and to protect it against the dangers from right and left. The influence of the C.P. in Spain, however, is slight. With its subordination to the S.P., it can hardly receive consideration any more as a special organization.

The "right" and "left" oppositional groups which broke away some years ago from the official Communist Party, in order later to merge into the Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista (P.O.U.M.), and which are usually designated as "Trotskyists", represent within the Spanish movement the line of the "genuine" Bolshevik-Leninists. Their noise is greater than their influence; they have, according to their own data, about 8,000 members; their Lenins and Trotskys go by the names of Maurin and Andrade. The principal influence of the organization is in Barcelona, where it publishes two weekly papers: La Batalla in the Spanish language, and

Front in the catalonian. The struggle of the "false" Leninists and their social-democratic allies against the P.O.U.M. has compelled the latter to draw closer to the anarcho-syndicalist movement than can commonly be expected of Leninists. This friendliness is, of course, truly Leninist and in practice extremely childish, carried on with the idea of bringing the anarcho-syndicalist movement under the influence of the P.O.U.M. Thus Juan Andrade writes in the September number of Plebs: "In Catalonia, which has always been a stronghold of anarchism, it begins to lose influence to the Marxist parties and especially to the P.O.U.M.....The revolution can be victorious only if the Marxist parties are able to assimilate the numerous anarchist workers. This is the key to the future for Spain." The fact that the P.O.U.M. still speaks of other "Marxist" organizations is a sufficient indication that it still today regards the S.P. and C.P. as revolutionary movements to which it feels more closely bound than to the anarcho-syndicalist workers. This is equivalent to saying that the P.O.U.M. also is rather to be set down in the camp of the bourgeois-democratic (or state-capitalist) elements than to be embraced among the workers struggling for socialism, however hazy may be their programs. It is true that the P.O.U.M. takes a position against the coalition policy of the popular-front parties; but it will not take a position against a spanish state capitalism after the russian model, just as it also still today understands by the dictatorship of the proletariat only that of the bolshevist party.

Over against these "marxist" organizations, which have nothing more in common with Marxism than the name, stands the anarcho-syndicalist movement, which, even though it has not the organizational strength of the popular-front parties, can nevertheless be rated as their worthy adversary, capable of bringing into question the aspirations of the pseudo-marxist state capitalists.

Spanish anarchism has a long history. The labor organizations which were formed in 1869 and influenced by Bakunin soon won great influence both in the industrially more developed parts of the peninsula, mainly in Catalonia, as well as in the most backward parts among the farm workers of Andalusia. The socialist organizations arising later were never in a position to break the influence of the earlier anarchist movement. Later on, the anarchist organizations absorbed the ideas of the french syndicalists, and with the growing industrialization of Spain, which gave added importance to the struggle for day-to-day demands, the anarcho-syndicalist movement in Spain grew

very rapidly. In 1911 the syndicalists organized the Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo (C.N.T.), which first loosely combined the various trade unions and then the more recently formed industrial unions, the syndicatos unicos.

In 1914 the C.N.T. had 25,000 members; only four years later, 500,000; in 1923, a million; and in 1931, approximately 1,500,000. Though the C.N.T. is under the influence of the anarchists, it nevertheless accepts all workers without regard to their ideological position. Thru the influence of the russian revolution, the anarchists lost temporarily, in 1919, the control over the C.N.T. which even decided to become a member of the Third International and to come out for the dictatorship of the proletariat in the russian sense. This led to embittered inner struggles, and finally the influence of the anarchists in the C.N.T. was again asserted. In the years of Primo de Riviera's dictatorship --which, of course, did not strike the socialists so that they were enabled to grow at the expense of the anarchists--there arose the anarchist illegal organizations which in 1931, under the name of the Federacion Anarquista Iberica (F.A.I.) with a membership of about 10,000, obtained control over the C.N.T. In the fruitless uprisings of the years 1931-33 the anarchists sought to win the power in Spain. These rebellions, which were poorly organized and not very clear as to their aims, led to splits. A part of the unions left the C.N.T. and organized the "Libertarian Syndicalist Federation" which has a membership of about 40,000. In 1934 Angel Pestana began the formation of the Syndicalist Party, whose program is in large part copied from that of the parliamentary socialist labor movement.

Thru the defeats of the anarchists in the attempts at uprising and thru the resulting splits in the movement, as also by reason of the persecutions at the hands of the reaction as well as of liberalism and the reformist labor organizations connected with this latter, the anarchists lost further influence and their membership dwindled. Today the C.N.T. has a membership of about 600,000. During the October uprising (1934), the catalonian anarchists sabotaged the revolutionary movement. In Asturias, however, they fought together with the revolutionary workers, and in splendid manner. The attitude of the catalonian anarchists in October 1934, however much to be condemned, is explained by the fact that the "leftist" government of Catalonia had forced the C.N.T. to go underground, that it brutally persecuted the anarchists, that even upon the outbreak of the uprising which was supported by the catalonian government, it still failed to give up the struggle against the anarcho-syndicalists. The hatred which