

SPAIN TO-DAY



TO THE MEMORY OF MY  
DEAR FRIEND AND COMRADE  
JOAQUIN MAURIN

*"It is preferable to stand and die than  
live forever on our knees."*

# SPAIN TODAY

REVOLUTION AND  
COUNTER-REVOLUTION

BY  
EDWARD CONZE

SECOND EDITION, REVISED,  
WITH A POSTSCRIPT

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## PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

THIS book is the result of several visits to Spain—the last one in May, 1936. During the month I spent in Spain, I saw both the rank and file and many of the leaders of the Spanish working-class movement. I have to thank the many comrades and friends who sacrificed their time in showing and explaining events to me.

Originally I intended to translate Joaquin Maurin's book, "Hacia la segunda revolución." It soon became clear, however, that Maurin's book takes much for granted which needs explaining in England. Nevertheless, my book is deeply indebted to Maurin's work. I found most illuminating the conversations with Araquistáin, Caballero's right-hand man; Preteceille, editor of *Claridad*; Juan Andrade, and Gorkin, editor of *Batalla*.

I have to thank Mr. J. P. M. Millar and Dr. C. A. Smith for permission to use material which appeared in *Plebs* and *Controversy* respectively.

For the benefit of readers who are not conversant with Spanish events, I have added a map, a chronology and a survey of persons, and a list of abbreviations.

E. C.

August, 1936.

## NOTE TO SECOND EDITION

IN this edition I have corrected some minor oversights, and added a new chapter which brings the account up to date. I want to thank many friends for their kind assistance.

E. C.

October, 1936.

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## CHRONOLOGY

1898.		Loss of Cuba and Philippines.
1909		Insurrection in Barcelona.
1923.		Primo de Rivera becomes dictator.
1930.		Primo de Rivera dismissed.
1931.	April 14.	The Republic established.
	August.	Religious orders dissolved. 20 years' imprisonment for Berenguer.
	October.	Cabinet Azaña. Law for Protec- tion of Republic.
	November.	Alfonso XIII found guilty of high treason.
1932.	January.	Jesuit order dissolved. Partial autonomy of Catalonia.
	September.	Law for agrarian reform.
1933.	March.	Fascist propaganda declared illegal.
	June.	Azaña resigns.
	August.	Law for protection of Republic repealed. U.S.S.R. recognized.
	September.	Lerroux Government.
	December.	Right Wing Cortes.
1934.	January.	The establishment of Concentra- tion Camps announced.
	April.	Samper Government.—Amnesty for Right Wing offenders.
	October.	Insurrection in Asturias and Barcelona.

## CHRONOLOGY

1935. July. New law for agrarian reform.
1936. February 16. Popular Front wins elections.
- „ 19. Cabinet Azaña.
- „ 22. Amnesty for 35,000 Left Wing prisoners.
- „ 29. The "readmission" decree.
- May. Azaña, President of the Republic. Casares Quiroga Premier.
- July 18. Army rebellion in Morocco. Civil War throughout Spain. Giral Government.
- „ 20. Revolt crushed in Madrid.
- August 2. French neutrality proposals.
- „ 6. U.S.S.R. agrees to French proposals.
- „ 9. Badajoz falls.
- „ 22. Gijon captured by Government troops.
- September 2. Irun falls.
- „ 4. Caballero Government.
- „ 9. Mutiny in Portuguese Navy.
- „ 14. San Sebastian evacuated.
- „ 27. Toledo falls.

## PERSONS

- Juan ANDRADE. Trotskyite, and author of valuable Marxist books.
- AZAÑA. President of the Republic. Republican for many years and twice Premier of Spain.
- Largo CABALLERO. Leader of the Left Wing Socialists. President of the U.G.T.—Socialist unions.
- LERROUX. Former Socialist, then Republican and head of the Government at the time of Republican reaction.
- MAURA. Statesman under Alfonso XIII, representing the feudal landowners.
- Joaquin MAURIN. Founder of the P.O.U.M., a marxist party composed mainly of former communists. Deputy, and one of the most brilliant young Spanish politicians. Killed in September, 1936.
- Gonzalez PEÑA. Chairman of the Socialist party Centrist. Prominent in the Rebellion of Asturias.
- Indalecio PRIETO. Leader of the Centre of the Socialist party.
- Gil ROBLES. Leader of the Acción Popular, a form of Roman Catholic fascism.

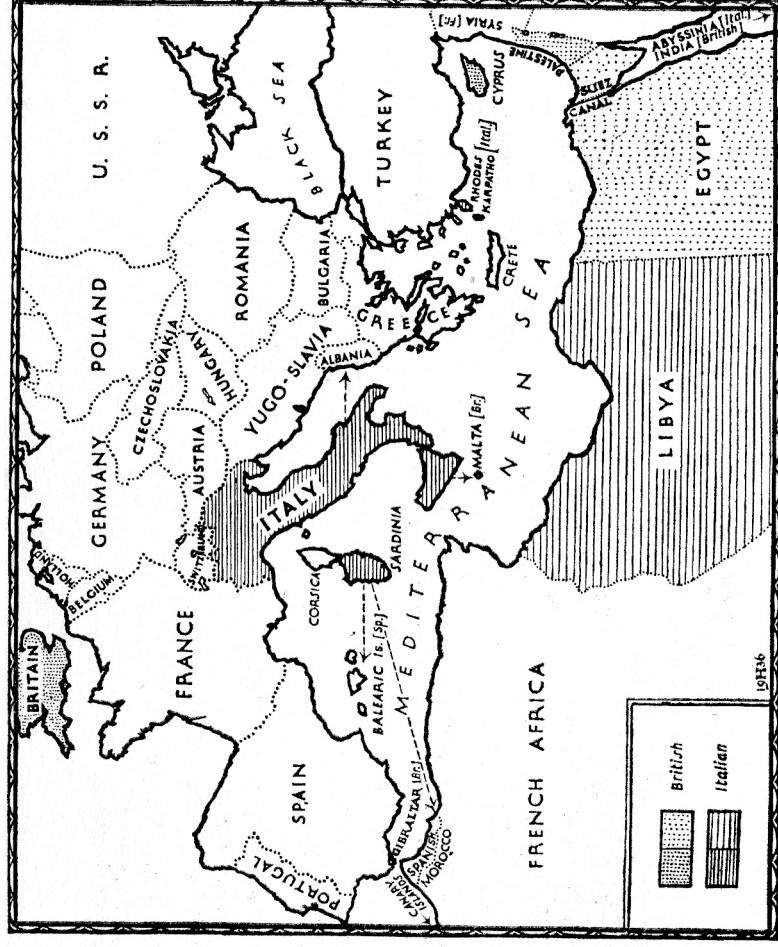
## ABBREVIATIONS

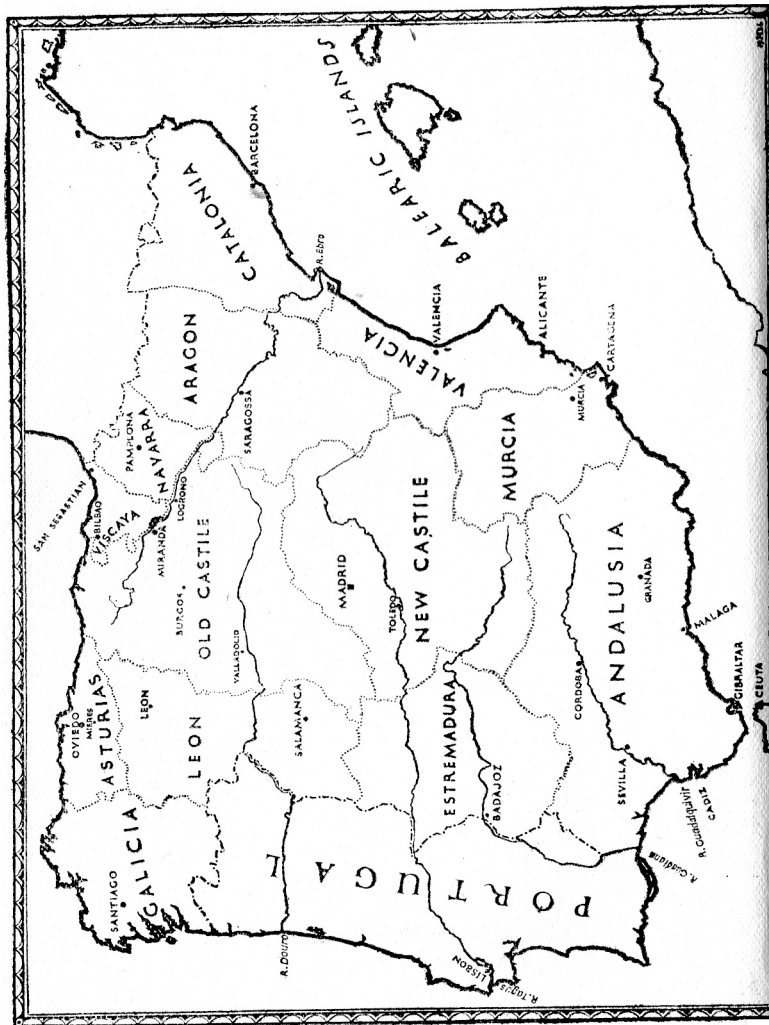
F.A.I.	Federación anarquista iberica. Anarchist organization which controls the C.N.T.
C.N.T.	Confederación Nacional de Trabajo. Anarchist Trade Union.
P.O.U.M.	Partido obrero de unificación Marxista. Founded by Joaquín Maurin. Centre in Barcelona.
U.G.T.	Unión General de Trabajadores. Socialist Trade Union.
U.H.P.	Unión de hermanos proletarios. Symbol of United Front in October, 1934.
U.R.	Union de Rabaissaires. Corporate union of Catalonian small peasantry.
E.R.C.	Esquerra Republicana Catalana. Left party of Republican middle classes of Catalonia which controlled the Generalidad (see p. 43) from 1931 to 1936.

One *peseta* is worth approximately sixpence.

## THE POLITICAL FORCES

LEFT	CENTRE	RIGHT
<p><b>SOCIALISTS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Socialist Party, 65,000 members.</li> <li>2. Socialist Unions (U.G.T.), 1,400,000 members. <i>Secretary</i> : Largo Caballero.</li> <li>3. Socialist Youth, Socialists and Communists united.</li> </ol> <p><b>ANARCHISTS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. F.A.I., 10,000 members.</li> <li>2. Trade Unions (C.N.T.), 600,000 members.</li> </ol> <p><b>COMMUNISTS</b></p> <p>50,000 members. <i>Leader</i> : Jose Díaz.</p> <p><b>MARXISTS (P.O.U.M.)</b></p> <p>50,000 members. <i>Founder</i> : Joaquín Maurin.</p>	<p><b>LEFT REPUBLICAN PARTY</b></p> <p>200,000 members. <i>Leader</i> : Azaña.</p> <p><b>ESQUERRA</b></p> <p><b>SHOCK POLICE</b> founded by Republic. 30,000.</p>	<p>Numerous Political PARTIES and GROUPINGS</p> <p><b>ARMY OFFICERS</b> ca. 20,000.</p> <p><b>CHURCH</b></p> <p><b>CIVIL GUARDS</b> 30,000.</p> <p><b>ARMY</b> 130,000 men.</p>





## INTRODUCTION

TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY years ago the British seized Gibraltar, even without the customary excuse. There was nobody who needed civilizing—herds of monkeys being the only inhabitants of the rock. The British tourist who visits Spain is taught by his guide book that nine times has Gibraltar changed hands but “the rock will undoubtedly remain unmolested from now on, for ever a proud possession of Britain.”\* But the rock alone does not safeguard the sea route to India, threatened recently by the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. The British Empire needs a weak and docile Spain. The sea way to India could be cut off not only at Gibraltar but also at Ceuta and from the Balearic Isles. Spain’s geographical position may indeed make that country decisive in the next war. The Balearic Isles are being fortified, ever since the British-Italian tension began. The “mad-dog of Europe” might seize them. The policy of King Alfonso XIII had been considerably influenced by his marriage with an English Princess. For thirty years he ruled almost despotically. Spain, during that

\* S. A. Clark: “Spain on £10.” 1934. p. 143.



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time, was a part of the British Empire. Maurin\* says about Alfonso XIII:

"He was an agent of England. His policy always met the desires of Great Britain. His policy, which the middle classes considered to be arbitrary and capricious, had one fundamental basis, that of serving British interests. He was as much subject to London as was King Fuad of Egypt or the Emir of Afghanistan. He was Liberal or Conservative when England was. The policy pursued in Morocco, personally imposed and directed by him, followed the indications of British Imperialism. Alfonso XIII was the Gibraltar in Madrid."

Considerations of imperial safety explain why Conservative opinion, after the fall of Alfonso XIII, is exceedingly touchy about Spanish affairs. The Tory papers do not even conceal their animosity and bias.

As long as the Right and Left are engaged in civil war, Spain remains weak. But if one of the two sides should win, British control of the Western Mediterranean may be endangered just at the time when it is most needed. If the Fascists win, they will naturally sympathise with the other fascist powers, Italy and Germany—incidentally also the "unsatisfied" nations which want to expand directly or indirectly at the expense of the British Empire. Italian Imperialism has gained considerable strength from its recent victory and intends to expand further. It may be useful to insert here an extract from the Anarchist paper, *Solidaridad Obrera*, June 13th, 1936, which shows

\* *La Revolución Española*, 89-90.

## INTRODUCTION

how the average Spaniard views the problem:

"After the problem of Abyssinia is liquidated, another and more dangerous problem arises for Europe and for Spain in particular. Italy, which so easily broke the formidable wall raised by Britain in the Suez Canal, has cast her eyes upon the Straits of Gibraltar.

Fascism seeks a safe way for its great commerce with North and South America. That is the reason for their anxiety to impose their sovereignty over what the Italians call *Mare Nostro*.

Here lies the danger for us. In the famous Straits will be decided the battle between Italy and England and the naval battle will have as its theatre the coast of the province of Levante and the waters of the Balearic Isles.

The worst is that England is doing her best to drag Spain into the war, since she needs our coast in order to establish naval bases for her navy."

That is why British Conservatives are so concerned about Spain. A victory of the Spanish Fascists may mean a new ally for Mussolini. It has not been forgotten that in 1926 Primo de Rivera concluded a treaty of friendship with Italy. On the other hand, a victory of the Socialists would mean Spain's rebirth as a new, strong and vigorous nation. A Socialist Spain would not tolerate any interference from the British government. For 400 years Spanish weakness has been a corner-stone of British foreign policy. Now Spain is beginning to awaken. The aspirations of the workers clash with the interests of British Imperialism. On my recent visit many workers assured me that the majority of the people of the earth, Spaniards

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included, were not likely to liberate themselves before British Imperialism was destroyed.

In spite of the national divisions between the workers, their fight in many respects is an international fight. Each success in Russia strengthens their self-confidence all over the world. Each defeat of Russia, and each concession to capitalist customs, weakens it. That is why it is at once broadcast by the entire capitalist press throughout the world. The defeat of the socialist movement in Germany meant defeat for the workers in each country. The workers' stubborn resistance in Austria again showed that it was not always so easy to get rid of the organised working class movement. The insurrection in Vienna was worth far more to the English workers than the £10,000 which the Trades Union Congress sent to the Austrian workers. By the same mechanism a victory of the socialists and anarchist workers in Spain may have considerable repercussions all over Europe. The stay-in strikes showed a clear tendency to move across the French frontier into Belgium and England. Socialists in this and other countries will study with the utmost care the methods employed by the fighting workers in Spain. In Spain, for the first time, the Socialist party of a Western country has learned from experience and has adopted new tactics. Socialism is as near in Spain as it was in Russia in 1915.

The press may reconcile itself to a Revolution with a beard. Russia recently is accorded the fair treatment she is likely to expect from a nation that

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plays cricket. The Spanish revolution, being so young still, has no claim yet to an either fair or adequate treatment. We can, perhaps, be impartial in our attitude to the great convulsions of human history only after the passing of one hundred or two hundred years and after the passions they aroused have ebbed away. The outcome of the Spanish revolution will influence vitally both the British Empire and the future of the socialist movement. Nobody can study it and remain indifferent. Everybody must be drawn inevitably to either of the contending parties. A writer will be fair if he makes clear where he stands, but he cannot be expected to stand nowhere.

## *Chapter I*

### PERMANENT CAUSES OF SOCIAL UNREST

#### SPAIN AS A BACKWARD AND SEMI-FEUDAL COUNTRY

THOUGH twice the size of Britain, Spain has just half its population. The density per square kilometre is 44 as compared with 182 in Britain, 132 in Italy, 96 in Portugal, and 70 in Poland. About 1600 A.D. Spain had 8,200,000 inhabitants, compared with Britain's 4,800,000. Now it has 23 million, as compared with 46 million in Britain. In comparison with other European countries, Spain has failed to grow.

A nice old lady went into a tourist office and said, "I do not want to go for my holiday to any country where there is a war on, or a revolution, or political quarrels, but to a place where people know that we English want to be nice to everybody." The assistant suggested, "What about the Isle of Wight, Madam?" Indeed, even the most superficial observer is aware of the contrast between the social stability in England and the, sometimes latent, sometimes open, civil war in Spain. The average Englishman is so unaccustomed to this atmosphere of violence and unrest that as a tourist he avoids Spain. Before I left Spain, I met in the

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train an English tourist, who, an isolated specimen, had tramped the churches, as so many did in former years. He was startled by events in Spain, and he summed up his view of the situation in the typically English remark, "All this will do them no good as a nation. They are bound to lose a lot of money."

Now there were times when English social life was rather turbulent too. A difference in national temperament, this modern asylum of ignorance, is not likely to explain the difference in political manners between two nations. There may be some truth in the picture of the solid and quiet Englishman as compared with the excited, restless and turbulent Southerner. But, as a matter of fact, English history is not entirely devoid of periods of excitement and civil war. Whenever a deep social crisis occurs, people in all countries behave remarkably alike. England is a socially and politically stable country at the moment because the majority of the population are satisfied to the extent of keeping reasonably quiet. This satisfaction has been achieved partly with the aid of the Empire, and partly with the help of a fairly modern and efficient system of producing and distributing goods.

In Spain, social unrest is due to the almost mediæval methods of production and distribution, for no Cromwell has yet put an end to Feudalism. The tributes of Empire are absent. In addition there are some plagues still in existence which for the last two centuries have ceased to play a prominent

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part in English history—I speak of a standing and politically minded army and of a belligerent clergy, decisive political forces in present-day Spain. Finally, Spain is not one nation as Britain is now. Here the Welsh and the Scotch, after centuries of wars, have been successfully bought off by participation in English prosperity, and regional nationalism is nothing more than a mild and ineffectual hobby. Spain has never achieved national unity. The discontent of suppressed nationalities is one of the major causes of social unrest.

If we want to build a house, we should begin with the foundations and the ground floor. If we want to understand a country, speculations about its national character, its art and its leading personalities may be quite useful, but they should be based on a study of the economic system. The precarious situation of Spanish agriculture and industry is so much at the root of the political unrest that we will do well to start our analysis with a short description of the basic economic facts.

### THE AGRARIAN QUESTION.

About 57 per cent. of all employed persons do agricultural work. Spain is not a specially fertile country. The soil is arid. In many districts it rains only a few days in the year, and the average rainfall in those districts is between 10 and 12 inches. Much of the surface is barren and of little use. Much of it could be used; inefficiency and incompetence leave it unused. The latest available figures

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for 1932, show the following distribution of Spanish land :—

Total area	...	...	50,510 million hectares.
Barren land	...	5,097	
Mountains and meadows	...	23,642	
Towns and roads	...	1,441	
			30,180 million hectares.
Tilled area	...	20,330	
Fallow land	...	5,019	
			15,311 million hectares actually in use.

(International Press Correspondence, Vol. 16, No. 26, p. 689.)

(Hectare = 2.471 acres.)

The lack of rain would make dry farming an ideal system of cultivation, but this American method is only gradually being introduced. For the rest, an efficient irrigation system could double the production in many areas. The Moors had left behind a well developed and efficient irrigation system. The Spaniards, preoccupied with plundering America and keeping the Low Countries within the Catholic faith, allowed it to decay. The irrigation system could easily be extended so as to cover double the present area. In addition, in districts where water is scarce, it is distributed very unequally. "The privileged get enough, but the poor people have to go in the night and fetch their water from the public fountains, which only work for a few hours."\* The absence of water in many places strangely contrasts with its abundance in other districts. This year in the north, for instance, the Ebro caused vast inundations,

\* H. Baerlein: "Spain Yesterday and Tomorrow," p. 192.

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and a loss of many millions of pesetas to farmers who just live on the edge of starvation.

There is no incentive to introduce scientific methods into agriculture, and to improve the productivity of the soil that way. An ingenious system prevents the tenants from doing so. Their tenancy lasts only for a short time, and any improvement becomes the property of the landowner immediately after the lease expires. A system of very high agricultural tariffs makes the landowners disinterested in improvements, for these tariffs drive up the prices of agricultural products, and restrict their sale almost entirely to the home market. Castilian wheat is the most expensive in the world. One hectolitre of wheat costs 15 pesetas in the Argentine, and 40 pesetas in Castile. In view of the low purchasing power of the Spanish people, any increase in production at once creates a surplus, which presses upon the prices. In addition, the *grandees* insist on using vast areas as hunting grounds. They have not even the excuse of their English friends, that the Englishman does not need to cultivate his land.

In consequence, the productivity of agriculture is very low. The Spaniard produces about 9 quintals of wheat per hectare, as compared with 20.8 in Britain, and 24.7 in Belgium. The average for Europe was 15.1 in 1933. Spanish agriculture manages to suffer at the same time from the two evils of under-production and over-production. Wheat production usually does not even meet the moderate requirements of the Spanish people, who

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per head consume one-third less wheat than the French. As regards other products, the world agrarian crisis and the competition of other countries have created a crisis of over-production. Spanish oil loses its markets in Asia and France. The wine from Algiers competes with Spanish wine. Italy has ruined the Spanish export of rice. Oranges from Palestine, South Africa and Italy restrict the markets for Spanish oranges, and transform the orange groves of Valencia into a hotbed of anarchism.

In their distribution of the land, Spanish agriculture also succeeds in combining two evils: on the one hand too large and on the other hand too small undertakings. It is estimated that one million owners own six million hectares, and one hundred thousand owners 12 million hectares. In other words, 95 per cent. of the undertakings have five million hectares, and 35 per cent. nine million hectares. These estimates show that the distribution of the land is exceedingly unequal. More exact facts are available only for some provinces (Castile, Levantia, Andalusia, and Estremadura), which cover together 19.6 million hectares. Statistics for the other provinces have never been worked out. In these provinces, one-third of the land belongs to undertakings from less than one hundred hectares, and two-thirds of the land to undertakings above 100 hectares. The 1,444 biggest farms with more than one thousand hectares each cover 2.8 million hectares. But side by side with them there are 500,000 farms extending only one hectare or less. Especially in the south, the *latifundia* cover between



50 and 70 per cent. of the provinces. When the Arabs were driven out of Spain, the victorious aristocrats who led the Spanish armies seized the latifundia. They have kept them ever since—until quite recently.

The landowner who owns an estate of any considerable size, usually takes no interest in it, is never seen there, and placidly consumes the fruits of the estate in the villas and cafés of Barcelona or Madrid or one of the provincial towns. These "absentee landlords" usually keep a manager on the spot. He is called the Cacique, the most hated man in a Spanish village. The land passes through the hands of a series of middlemen before it reaches the tenant. But even peasants who own their land are not outside the sphere of influence of the big landowner and his Cacique. They have to pay a number of feudal dues, based on "customary rights." The recent very mild rebellion of the English countryside against the tithes, can give us some idea of the indignation felt by Spanish peasants against those feudal dues.

Many latifundia are not worked through tenants, but through land-workers whose wages are exceedingly low. The poverty of the countryside naturally reacts upon industry by restricting its market. Maurin explains the failure of Primo de Rivera by his self-contradictory attempt to industrialise Spain, while leaving the agrarian system intact. Gorkin, editor of *La Batalla*, told me in Barcelona that before 1930 the average wage of the land-worker was about 3 pesetas a day. In Andalusia it oscillated between

2 and 4.50 pesetas. The administration of Caballero in 1932 brought the average wage up to 8 to 10 pesetas. In Barcelona, all factories were busy to satisfy the countryside's demand for industrial products. Under pressure from the landlords, the Lerroux administration brought the average wage down to 1.25 to 2 pesetas, with the result that famine broke out in many parts of the countryside and unemployment grew in Barcelona. The common interest in the purchasing power of the countryside is the basis for a political alliance between industrial workers and land-workers, which is gradually beginning to take shape. Every student of history knows that without an alliance between countryside and town, neither of them can win. The peasants had this experience in the peasant revolts at the close of the Middle Ages, and recently in the Zapata movement in Mexico; the workers in the Commune and in Germany in 1933. On the other hand, the French Revolution of 1789 and the Russian Revolution of 1917 were based on a collaboration between countryside and town. Neither can succeed without the other. It is a hopeful sign that the events in Andalusia and Barcelona are more and more attuned to each other, the land workers in Andalusia, 500 miles away, being emotionally nearer to the workers in Barcelona than the peasant farmers who live 10 or 20 miles away from that town. Socialists have seen the importance of this problem, and the anarchists in Barcelona recently decided to diminish their propaganda in the towns—since they were sufficiently converted to

anarchism—and to send all available propagandists into the countryside.

In order to give an idea of how the peasants live, I take at random a report from the right wing paper *Cronica* (31.5.36). The report deals with the village Navas de Estena in the province of Ciudad Real, 150 kilometres from Madrid, with 700 inhabitants. Like many other villages, it is almost entirely cut off from urban civilisation. A car arrives perhaps every three or four years. In many respects, the inhabitants live as they did in the Stone Age. Beds are unknown, and they sleep on rectangles made of stones which are bleached with lime, with a cork peg as pillow and some blankets as cover. In almost all Spanish villages, a large proportion of the inhabitants have to walk for hours in the early morning in order to reach their working place. Only the richer farmers ride on a donkey, while the wife walks at the side. For Navas de Estena, the cultivation of cork and the fabrication of charcoal (carbon vegetal) is the basis of economic life. The daily wages, before the republic, were 2.53 pesetas. Now they are higher, but most inhabitants of the village are unemployed. Flour must be fetched on a narrow footpath from a mill 20 kilometres away, and the bags often arrive soaked with rain. The smoke of the firewood in the kitchen can escape only through the small door. This is the reason why so many Spanish peasants have inflamed eyes. Meat is exceedingly rare, and only used for festivals. (When in May we visited a collective farm, we noticed that a sheep had

been specially killed for us.) The usual dish is the gazpacho, a mixture of bread, oil, vinegar, and salt. The municipality has a budget of 22,400 pesetas a year. The watchmen received 30 centimos a day before and 50 centimos under the republic. One-tenth of the budget is spent for the unemployed, but the amount of 2,240 pesetas does not go very far. Electric light and telephone are absent. Then there is the problem of drinking-water. Springs in the neighbourhood of the village contain very pure water which could easily be conducted to the village. But this has not been done, and the water is now taken from a rivulet which dries up in the summer. In the summer the water must therefore be fetched from a distance of six kilometres. Medicines must be fetched from 25 kilometres away—on foot. There are 200 school-children, but the school-building is intended for 30 only. Ninety are crammed into it, under unhygienic conditions, and 110 get no instruction at all.

This short account may give a faint impression of the gigantic tasks before the republican government. There are thousands of villages like Navas de Estena, and hunger is not very patient. There are hundreds of thousands of unemployed in the countryside, for which almost no provision is being made. At the beginning of the republic, in order to avoid the almost inevitable explosion, even the biggest proprietors, like Count de Romanones, demanded agrarian reform. In a later chapter we shall see what has been done in that direction.

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### INDUSTRY

Spanish industry owes its development to the boom of the war years, when it had to satisfy not only the requirements of Spain itself, but also attempted to profit by selling goods to the belligerents. The effects of Feudalism have, however, crippled Spanish industry which has remained quite an insignificant factor in the industrial production of the world. The world crisis hit it with special severity and it has declined heavily. As Maurin sums up the situation: "The fundamental features of monarchist Spain were these: A country endowed by nature with great possibilities, with a magnificent geographical position, rotting in misery because of the management from which it suffers. Europe had already traversed the historical phase of its capitalist splendour and Spain found itself still everywhere enchained by the survivals of Feudalism. There was a sharp contrast between Spain and the rest of the world. Metaphorically, one could say that Africa began at the Pyrenees." ("Hacia la Segunda Revolución," p. 199.)

Let us look at the heavy industries. The production of iron ore (in thousands of tons) has declined steadily:

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Production.</i>		<i>Home consumption.</i>	
1912	...	9,554	...	—
1924	...	4,612	...	994
1929	...	6,546	...	1,413
1932	...	1,760	...	592
1933	...	1,815	...	680
1934	...	2,000	...	700

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We notice that about three-quarters of the ore is exported, and only one-quarter used at home. At the same time, in Vizcaya, the centre of the iron industry, only 1,500 out of 6,500 mines are at work, and 19,000 out of 29,000 workers are unemployed. The production of ingots reaches only  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the world production. With 350 thousands of tons it is even smaller than that of Italy, a country notorious for absence of industrial raw materials. Spain produces only  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the world's steel, 540,000 tons as compared with England's 9,300,000, and even Italy's 1,800,000. During the world crisis, the production of steel decreased from 1,000,000 tons in 1929 to 540,000 in 1934. Little use is made of the numerous coal mines. The production of coal was:

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	
1913	...	9,000,000
1924	...	6,539,000
1929	...	7,547,000
1932	...	7,190,000
1933	...	6,300,000
1934	...	5,800,000

The production of 1934 is almost one-fortieth of the English production. In the north, water power might be used for hydro-electrical plants, but very little has been done in that respect. In 1850, according to Maurin, England had proportionately a bigger rail net-work than Spain has to-day. The Spanish figure for railway kilometres



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per 100 square kilometres is exceedingly low :

Belgium	...	...	...	36.5
Switzerland	...	...	...	14.6
England	...	...	...	14.2
France	...	...	...	9.2
Italy	...	...	...	6.8
Spain	...	...	...	3.3

The railway is centralised in Madrid. The railways are all built to go to and from Madrid, so as to serve the purposes of the bureaucratic and military administration. The routes of the trains take little or no notice of industrial necessities. The speed of the trains has been compared with that of a tortoise. The transport of goods is 3.5 times as expensive as in France. The Salamanca Chamber of Commerce once complained to the government that goods sometimes took longer to go from Salamanca to Barcelona than to Buenos Aires. The mercantile marine, in spite of the long coastline, is insignificant, partly, however, owing to the scarcity of good harbours. Ever since 1929 shipping companies have worked at a great loss.

In all this misery it is the Bank alone which flourishes. In feudal countries, the financier is merely a usurer. In a capitalist country, in addition to being a usurer, he has more and more acquired a function in the organisation of production. The shares of the Banco de España are owned by 16,000 persons, mostly landowners, who each year collect enormous tributes. The capital of the Bank after 1921 is 177 million pesetas. The profits

## SOCIAL UNREST

between 1924 and 1933 were 1,028 million pesetas, or six times the capital. It makes no difference to the usurer whether more or less goods are produced. His share remains the same, and is in fact, unaffected by a crisis. While Spanish production was going down, the profits of the Bank were going up. They were :

1928	...	...	...	83	million pesetas.
1929	...	...	...	97	„ „
1930	...	...	...	100	„ „
1931	...	...	...	120	„ „
1932	...	...	...	132	„ „
1933	...	...	...	115	„ „
1934	...	...	...	115	„ „

We see that the establishment of the republic has made little difference to the profits of the Bank.

A feudal and inefficient agriculture, a crippled industry and a prosperous moneylender—that was the picture of France in 1789. It is repeated in the Spain of to-day.

## THE ABSENCE OF EMPIRE

In Germany, a combination of clever propaganda, and of fierce and inhuman terror have managed to obsess the public mind with problems of foreign policy. In England, the astuteness of the ruling class and the suicidal tendencies of the parliamentary Opposition have obtained a similar result, and concentrated public attention, even inside the Labour movement, upon the questions of imperial policy to the exclusion of everything else. For

Spaniards, however, problems of internal policy completely dominate the political scene. Situated in a back alley of Europe, Spain lies *comparatively* outside the spheres of international tension. To be sure, Gil Robles and his Fascists attempted to climb to power by means of the familiar cry that the fatherland is in danger. They point to the Mediterranean conflict between England and Italy, and claim that a Spanish possession, the Balearic isles, lie in the danger zone. They maintain that these Spanish islands may prove to be of decisive strategical importance in the future struggle between the rival Italian and English imperialists. Like their spiritual friends all over the world they clamour for higher armaments for the security of the country. Gil Robles, at the last election, promised to spend 300,000,000 pesetas on the air force. The people turned him down.

For all practical purposes, Spain has no Empire. It possesses some settlements in and islands round the coast of Africa. Spain's colonial population, according to Whittaker, does not exceed 950,000 people. This is the scanty remnant of the first modern Empire on which the sun never set. Built up rapidly in one hundred years, between 1500 and 1600, it soon crumbled away. First the European possessions were lost—the Netherlands, Southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia. In the beginning of the 19th century, Spanish America became independent, and in 1898 the United States seized Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines. The Spaniards accepted the decline of their Imperial greatness with lethargy.

The pride of possessing so vast an Empire had dulled their minds so much as to render them incapable of making the decision to change from feudalism to modern industry. What remains of this Empire is just big enough to remind patriotic Spaniards of their former imperial greatness, and just small enough not to matter at all.

On the whole, the possession of Morocco weakens more than it strengthens the Spanish ruling classes. The mere enumeration of the reverses the Spanish army suffered in Morocco would fill an entire page. Each new ignominious defeat undermined the prestige of the army, exposed the rotten state of its organisation, and added fuel to the propaganda for reforms. In addition, Morocco acts as a continual drain on the national finance. In 1926, 176,000,000 pesetas were spent on the Moroccan war. In 1927, after Morocco was "pacified," Primo de Rivera had to keep 90,000 soldiers there at an expense of 74,000,000 pesetas. The republic still keeps there 1,500 officers and 35,000 men, of whom 9,000 are Moors and 6,000 foreign Legionaries. Only once in recent years, in October 1934, did Morocco come in handy, because it supplied soldiers reliable enough to be entrusted with butchering the miners of Asturias. Even this measure proved in the long run detrimental to the Spanish ruling class.

The absence of an Empire and of Imperial aggressiveness is one of the main factors in Spanish politics, as compared with that of almost any other big country. In the absence of an external enemy—hereditary or otherwise—the ruling classes cannot

enforce peace at home by frightening people out of their wits about dangers from abroad.

The Spanish Popular Front is often placed on the same line as the Popular Front in France. But whatever may be the personal intentions of the leaders of the French Popular Front, the final result of their policy can be one only—to make France more ready for war. Ever since Hitler's advent to power, Western nations have never ceased to keep an eye on war preparation, whatever else they may do. For an industrial country, the decisive factors in the next war are not so much the arms as the minds of the people who handle them. All governments are anxious, therefore, to convince the working man that he has something to fight for. Much in recent Russian and English politics can be understood only on these lines. The reforms of the French Popular Front, while leaving the capitalist system untouched, give to the workers, by contrast with Nazi Germany, the feeling that they have something to defend, and that France is their country and fatherland, and worth fighting for. After the government of the Popular Front will have succumbed to its innate contradictions—as explained in Chapter V—the improvement of the workers' standard will remain as a permanent incentive to fight the battles of French Imperialism with enthusiasm and patriotic loyalty.

The dynamics of the Spanish Popular Front are of a different nature. There are no spheres of influence, and there is almost no Empire to defend. The function of the Popular Front is not to make

the country ready for war, but to bring it up to date and to effect the long-delayed change from feudalism to capitalism.

#### THE FEUDAL LANDOWNERS

It is quite amusing for the members of a social group to be devoid of any social function. Nevertheless it has always become disastrous in the end. There is no case in history in which the ruling group did not contribute *something* positive to society for a considerable time. The feudal lords, for instance, were almost indispensable for early mediæval society. They defended the producer. The capitalists did much to develop and direct the productive resources of Europe. Their power declines in the degree in which paid directors take over the more useful of their functions. The Spanish aristocracy is devoid of any conceivable social task. Its disappearance would leave no gap anywhere, except in the luxurious cafés, etc. The Spanish landowners are consumers pure and simple, drones lacking even the social function of the drones. The vast majority of Spanish landowners take no interest in their estates. They are, as we saw, absentee landlords. The Spanish aristocrat also fails to serve the country in any other capacity. As an administrator or as a soldier he is corrupt and incompetent. He is, indeed, more parasitic than the members of any other ruling class.

Noblemen and sons of noblemen form the majority of army officers. Their patriotism was

revealed recently when, in Low's words, they attempted to save Spain by wiping out the Spanish people with their Moors and foreign legionaries. The Russian aristocrats had lost the game when they called on the foreign invader to protect their property from the people. The professional patriot of the Spanish aristocracy may be able to devastate Spain with Italian shells and foreign troops. They may be able to gamble away the Balearic Isles to Italy. But they will never be able to rule the country again and to dominate the burning hatred of the people of Spain. When unchallenged, they were a mere deadweight. When challenged, they first run away, and hope in the casinos of France and Italy that the priests and the English Dukes may give them back the good life which formerly was theirs. When they find that the country can do without them, they rather destroy it than allow the people to rule themselves. Now they will share the fate of the Russian noblemen, sooner or later, but inevitably.

#### THE CHURCH

Clericalism is an evil unknown in Protestant countries. In England and Germany, the clergy had their claws drawn 400 years ago. They have become comparatively insignificant spiritual shepherds, whose excursions into politics are academic and without much consequence. The Roman Catholic church, however, never ceased to be an important political institution. It has never ceased to invoke Jesus in political matters. The clergy is

the biggest reactionary political body in Spain. The Church is the biggest proprietor of land and buildings. For centuries it has not ceased to accumulate wealth. According to Buckle, the Cortes in 1616 observed "that not one day passes without laymen being deprived of their property for the benefit of the clergy." This process has gone on in all the years of clerical rule, checked only occasionally by anti-clerical rebellions. The Jesuits in particular, have invested heavily in industrial undertakings. The gigantic waste of public money in Morocco is frequently attributed to Jesuit investments in the mines there. The Church bases many business enterprises on its charity. Not that this is peculiar to Spain. But it is done there on a much larger scale than anywhere else. Orphanages, for instance, allow the Church to monopolise the laundry trade in many districts. The fear of purgatory provides them with an incessant flow of donations from rich people. In this way a certain amount of anti-clericalism has developed among the disinherited sons of the richer classes.

Historical observation shows a direct connection between misery and Church power. The tourist who goes to Spain for the purpose of admiring churches, occasionally might notice that the bigger the cathedral the filthier the slums. The Church is, perhaps, the only organisation in modern society which stands to lose by economic progress. The economic progress of a modern industrial society gives people far greater security than they ever had before, rids their minds of many of the fears which

form the soil of religion, and provides them with easy access to numerous amusements which are far more attractive than the church services. Finally, by furnishing the masses with at least a superficial knowledge of modern science, economic progress has proved disastrous to the Church's claim to infallibility. Roman Catholic countries are industrially backward compared with Protestant countries. The clergy cannot fail to notice that in an industrialised country like Britain indifference to religious matters has all but destroyed their power, that in the United States even the commercialism of the churches cannot avoid the rapid decline of religion,\* and that in Germany a rival nationalist religion, together with the after-effects of Marxist propaganda, have reduced the Church to insignificance. Only if they can manage to keep Spain as a semi-feudal country, do the priests have any chance of keeping their power. Republicans and socialists alike thus regard them as their most deadly enemies. If the different factions of the working-class movement get really angry with one another, they accuse each other of "Jesuitism," and their polemics are adorned with epithets like "la Jesuitica perfidia de los stalinianos," "the Jesuitism of *Claridad*," "la Jesuitica infamia de Prieto."

All Spanish movements, whether bourgeois or working class, must be anti-clerical if they want to get away from feudalism. The reader must bear in mind that the Spanish priest resembles his parish priest as one egg does another—but the one

\*For the facts see Calverton, "The Passing of the Gods."

egg is made of chalk and the other is real. The Spanish clergy made a mistake which at the moment the Russian Communists are anxious to repeat. Instead of refuting their opponents as best they could, they tried successfully for centuries to suppress their doctrines by force. In 1824, for instance, a Royal Order confiscated all books imported from abroad and all those printed in Spain between 1820 and 1823, a period of Liberal rule. In this way the priests have stagnated. They have plump and vulgar faces. I noticed that they did not look very emaciated and that their brow showed no mark of having been kissed by the sweet lips of thought. Thin fanatics are few and far between. The Spanish clergy have failed to acquire the new, more elastic and broad-minded methods the Roman Catholic Church has adopted in countries where they had to undergo the painful lesson of competition. The vast majority of the common people do not like the clergy—except for many women. The ordinary people greet one another in the street. Never did I see anybody give a friendly greeting to a priest. On the railways, in the third class compartments, the lively conversation ceases when a priest comes in. He is frozen out of the compartment, and prefers to stand in the corridor. Once the process of freezing took 23 minutes. But then the priest could stand the icy atmosphere no longer. But when the train stops at one of the innumerable Spanish stations, the priests lean out of the window and greet the Guardia Civil who is their real friend.



As in Russia, the priests have associated themselves closely with a dying regime. The fall of reactionary governments always is accompanied by acts of violence against the Church. The Liberals of the 19th century, often profoundly religious, converted churches into stables. They sold the convents, some of them for 30 reales (6s.). In 1909, the anarchist workers burned churches and convents in Barcelona. Rafael Shaw who visited Spain in 1910, said at the time :

"Is there any previous instance in history of a mob, said to be composed of the lowest and most degraded of the community, firing monasteries, convents and churches, while they left public buildings, banks, and rich men's dwellings untouched?" ("Spain from Within," p. 185.)

Under Primo de Rivera the Church identified itself with the dictatorial regime. Primo de Rivera raised the salaries of the clergy and carried through their educational policy. A far-sighted Canon of Oviedo wrote in 1929 in *The Social Reform* that when

"this exceptional régime disappears, all the present and future adversaries of the dictatorship will fall like wild beasts upon the Church because we have supported and eulogized a régime which, as a matter of fact, does not have the approval of the Church."

The Canon proved right. At the moment the clergy are closely connected with the fascist terrorists. In about 150 cases an act of fascist terror has been avenged by burning a church. No British socialist, however radical he may be, would ever dream of

burning a church. Each national church receives the treatment it deserves.

#### THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION.

The clergy are chiefly responsible for the lack of literacy in Spain. To be sure, one might argue that in many respects it does not matter for the education and cultivation of a man's soul whether he can read or write, and that education and letters are two very different things. In fact, the acquisition of the art of reading, under the influence of the profit motive in the capitalist press, has led to a considerable spread of cheap and loud vulgarity among the masses, has deprived them of much of their natural dignity and naïvety, has made them dependent on the drug of the printed word, and caused them to lose sight of many of the essential aspects of life.

When returning from illiterate Spain, I acquired an English paper on the boat in Calais. The greater part of the front page was devoted to the picture of a cat, which was supposed to be the only living witness of a murder, and to a long story about a parson who had struck his wife with a wounded dog. That is the sort of spiritual food which a great proportion of the masses derive from their ability to read and to write. One might envy many a Spanish peasant who escapes this sort of literature, which, far from instructing, merely stimulates or stupefies.

But be that as it may, for the material welfare of a modern nation, literacy is a vitally important

factor. History shows that in the degree in which a country becomes industrialised, the working masses receive some sort of education, not so much from a desire to enlighten them, as from the necessity of training efficient servants of the machine. It is indeed technically almost impossible, or at least very expensive, to leave the modern instruments of production in the hands of illiterates. In all industrialised countries, compulsory education became a matter of course. It was only in semi-feudal countries like Russia and Spain that revolutions were necessary to win education. In Spain, as in Russia, it is in the main the church which has feared that the word of God might not be able to stand up successfully against the competition of books and newspapers, and which has done everything to prevent the masses from learning how to read and to write. As a result, 46 per cent. of the Spanish people above six years of age are illiterate, the highest percentage in Europe. Yet, in 1859 already education was made compulsory.

Analphabetism is, naturally, greatest in the agricultural districts of Spain, where it reaches up to 60 and 70 per cent., whereas in the industrial districts of Catalonia and Vizcaya, it is only 20 to 30 per cent. Under the monarchy, 50 per cent. of the population received no education at all, 25 per cent. were educated by the State, and 25 per cent. by the Church. The quality of Church education is very poor. However, the Church has always been opposed to lay schools, and the murder

of Ferrer, the Catalanian founder of lay schools, in 1909 created at the time a wave of indignation throughout Europe. Ferrer has remained a hero of European progressives, and when the *Daily Herald* (on May 7th) referred to the "notorious" Ferrer, a wholesome storm of protest arose among socialists.

For the Socialists, the education of the masses is just as much a vital matter as it is for the industrialists. When Prieto was asked why there was so much turbulence in Spain, he answered (15.5.36), "The ignorance of the masses has made possible these lamentable disturbances. But the Republic is not responsible for this ignorance. The fault lies with the monarchy, which did not want to educate the people." The branches of the Socialist Trade Unions and the Socialist Party run adult classes—especially in the provinces—in which they devote most of their time to teaching first letters and the elements of calculation to people who hardly know how to read and write. The Socialists even open children's schools, to supplement the inadequate municipal schools.

As regards the *political* education of the worker, the old reformist bureaucracy disapproves of theory. They are afraid that discussions and polemics might raise doubts in the minds of their members, and that the quietude of the party might be disturbed. They congratulate each other on their lack of theoretical interest, and are proud of "dealing with practical questions in a practical way." As one of them expressed it, they consider that "while

poor in books and ideas, they are sure of their social function, conscious in their action, and scientific in their tactics." The younger generation, however, shows a very marked curiosity about political and theoretical questions. They have witnessed the disasters created by merely muddling along, and in the Spanish Socialist Party, as in the British Labour Party, a fierce struggle of the generations is going on. In recent months I have frequently been annoyed when, after making a speech which disturbed the older elements, one of them took me aside, tapped me on the shoulder, and said in a paternal way, "My boy, when you become older, etc." To my surprise, I find that this situation is reproduced accurately in Spain. If one of the younger socialists shows some revolutionary zeal, they take him aside, tap him on the shoulder and say soothingly, "My boy, you must have read that in the books." And what is in the books naturally does not exist for people who are completely absorbed in their administrative routine. The older members of the Party just read their paper, and nothing else. They attempt to get the young people away from politics altogether, although they have not succeeded as well as in this country. It must be remembered that the Spanish bureaucrats are far more ignorant about issues lying outside their daily routine than their reformist brothers abroad, just as the ignorance of the Spanish ruling class has no parallel abroad. The erudition of the Spanish upper classes is usually illustrated by the story of an ex-minister who visited the Palace of the Popes

in Avignon. After his visit, he remarked to his secretary, "An interesting place, but as to that story of the guide that the popes lived here for many years, I can hardly believe it. If it were true it would be known." \*

As regards Socialist political education, the best Labour colleges were in the prisons. Prison life is a part of the regular experience of every militant socialist. One of the writers quoted in this book, Juan Andrade, has for instance been in prison no less than 24 times. In periods of reaction, just the most advanced elements are crowded together in the prisons. Under the Lerroux government, about four thousand prisoners were herded together in the prisons of Madrid alone. One of them, now editor of *Claridad*, told me how seven or eight of them were together in a cell, and how they used their leisure to hold classes, teaching Marxism, foreign languages and the principles of Trade Union organisation, how they listened to lectures which could not have been given outside, and how many of them emerged from prison as conscious Marxists and revolutionaries. Recently, the youth have prepared a scheme for political education and classes in Marxism, but the older people are bitterly opposed to this scheme and hamper it in all possible ways. Under the period of repression, the books in the party libraries were burned. Now libraries are recovering and some of them are again in existence.

At the same time, a sort of University Extension has been built up. Some years ago, the University

\* S. de Madariaga, "Spain," page 114.



students went on strike against Primo de Rivera and the Jesuits. In the course of this strike, a number of professors who were Republicans and therefore more or less to the Left, started lectures outside the University. In this way the University Extension movement began. It is very strong in Barcelona, where the Ateneu Enciclopedic Popular collects in the evening many students of a type similar to the W.E.A. students in this country. Further, in May and June, they gave a series of conferences on the problems of socialisation of agriculture, industry, etc.

Both industrialists and Socialists, from different motives, have an interest in educating the working masses. The industrialists need education in order to train the workers to fit into the factories, the Right Wing Socialists hope that it will make the masses less turbulent, and the Left Wing Socialists that it will train them into efficient and intelligent fighters for their emancipation. Naturally, the type of education demanded is different in each case. But what has, up to now, the Republic, under the influence of both industrialists and Reformist Socialists, done for education? It has done practically nothing at all.\* The school buildings are poor and completely inadequate, often without air and sun, and in many places the school is worse than any other building in the village. School teachers are underpaid; they are, indeed, the worst paid state officials. Whereas the average salary for

\* The following data are derived from "La escuela de hoy y la de mañana," by Gironella, in *La Nueva Era*, May, 1936.

officials in the post office and the finance ministry is about 5,000 pesetas a year, that of the school teacher is only 3,500 pesetas. 56 per cent. receive 3,000 pesetas, 31 per cent. receive 4,000, and the rest more. The worst paid policeman gets 355 pesetas a month, but half the school teachers get only 235 pesetas a month. According to the Constitution, the school is free, compulsory, and non-clerical (*laica*). As a matter of fact it is not compulsory, because 50 per cent. have no opportunity to go to school, since there are no schools. It is not free because the children's parents have to pay for books and material and because vacancies are usually found only in schools which demand a fee.

An article of the Constitution has abolished the right of religious bodies to run schools. This policy is called "laicism" by the Republicans, and "sectarianism" by the Roman Catholics. The Ministry of Public Instruction can seize the buildings which religious orders use for their schools. Nuns rarely obey written instructions. They insist on yielding only to force. The same scene occurs again and again. Police arrive, the nuns protest, but then leave the place "in the presence of many pupils with their families, and many working women, mothers of the pupils in gratuitous classes. Moving scenes took place when the nuns left the college of St. Isabel." (*La Vanguardia*, 21.5.36.) Frequently the socialist municipalities have evicted religious orders without authorisation from the Ministry, and they often proved strong enough to act against the law. Therefore, if we can believe

the Constitution, if we can believe the numerous accounts in the reactionary press of moving eviction scenes, we should conclude that education has been taken away from the religious orders, that the religious schools are closed, and that at least half the population now receives state education—an education which, to be sure, fosters the spirit of docility and discipline, but which at least is no longer purely mediæval in spirit. But the Republic is weak, and it has not managed to put much in the place of religious instruction. In Barcelona, for instance, 30,000 pupils are still instructed in religious schools, 33,000 in municipal schools, and 51,000 in “special” schools, which in many cases are directly dependent, financially, on Roman Catholic organisations, and the staff of which frequently belong to the religious orders. Primo de Rivera created one thousand new schools a year. The Republic has created six thousand schools in five years. These figures illustrate the difference between the actions of the Republic and its benevolent and progressive phraseology.

#### THE NATIONAL QUESTION.

A survey of the causes of social unrest in Spain would be incomplete without an account of the movements for national independence. Spain was the first country in Europe to establish national unity at the end of the 15th century. But the different regions remained separated from one another by high chains of mountains—natural obstacles to communication. For centuries Spain

remained a conglomeration of badly governed feudal provinces, with a nominal sovereign at the head. The separation of Catalonia and Vizcaya was largely at the bottom of the Carlist wars which consumed so much of Spanish energy in the 19th century. The nationalism of the provinces is the more important for the Spanish revolution because just the industrial centres\*—Catalonia and Vizcaya—are at the same time centres of anti-Spanish nationalism. In Russia, the rebellion of the suppressed nationalities had considerably aided the workers’ revolution. In Spain it performs a similar function. It turns a great number of middle class people against the central government, the separatist fight for de-centralisation threatens the State with pulverisation, and when successful, weakens the resistance the central government can put up against the revolutionary movement.

The nationalist movements of Vizcaya and Galicia are less important than the Catalanian movement for independence, and therefore here we deal only with the latter.

Public life in Barcelona clearly bears the imprint of the nationalist aspirations of the province of Catalonia. We find a distinct racial type which, as the remains of Catalanian art show, has preserved itself with remarkable uniformity ever since 1,000 A.D. Accustomed to life in the mountains, the Cata-

\* It is usually forgotten that not Madrid, but Barcelona is the biggest town in Spain. It is instructive to compare the relative growth of the two towns :—

	1877	1900	1925	1935
Barcelona ...	280,000	533,000	745,000	1,250,000
Madrid ...	400,000	539,000	790,000	1,000,000

lonians show an independence of mind and a craving for liberty which finds some expression in the kind of politics they like, and in the irregularities of Catalonian architecture. In all countries the fight for nationality has been the fight for the right to use one's own language. The Catalan language is used for all municipal signs and announcements in Barcelona, and on many shops. Numerous newspapers, both bourgeois and working-class, appear in Catalan. Catalan is in daily use among the workers. The Catalonian flag—red and yellow stripes—is seen far more frequently than the Spanish one. At the same time, there are evidences of a long cultural tradition. Many streets bear the names of great Catalonians. Many monuments commemorate events, mostly of an anti-Spanish nature, in Catalonian history. The literary output in Catalan is considerable. Many theatres use the Catalonian language. A distinct type of Catalan architecture has been developed. S. A. Clark gives a good description of it in "Spain on £10":

"One simply cannot *believe* such architecture until one sees it, for photographs soften the riotous monstrosities. It consists in wild undulations, in 'weeping plaster' effects like stalactites that have dripped for æons in a high wind. The grill work of the balconies undulates too, and iron streamers, ribbons and cupids' bows dart off at the oddest tangents. Ships jut out from the buildings in a violent attempt to add still more to the ornament. Frequently lurid paint (high reds, fighting blues, and insistent greens and oranges) add their climatic touch." (pp. 245-246.)

The most conspicuous building in the town is the church dedicated to the Sagrada Familia, the pride of Barcelona, modelled on Montserrat. Incredibly sumptuous museums collect Catalan art, which was at its best in the 15th century, when under the Kingdom of Aragon and Catalonia, Barcelona was one of the leading commercial towns in the Mediterranean.

Catalan nationalism is based, as everywhere, both on tradition and economic circumstances. Catalonia for centuries had enjoyed political independence, and although united at an early date with Aragon and Castile, she always retained much of her independence. In a twelve years war between 1640 and 1652, she defended her liberties against Philip IV, with French aid. In the 18th century a new rebellion aimed at an independent republic. Catalonia was defeated. In 1714 most of her institutions were suppressed, and most of her liberties were taken away. Between 1822 and 1845 the remainder of Catalonian law and administration was suppressed. But just at the moment when Catalonian nationalism seemed dead, its resurrection began. It is important that those who are used to regarding Catalonia as a part of Spain should remember that she has become so only at a very recent date, and only after fierce and violent struggles.

When in the 19th century the national spirit awoke all over Europe, Catalonia also experienced a renaissance. The revival began about 1860 as a romantic literary movement. The Catalan language again became a mode of literary ex-

pression. Similarly German and Italian nationalism began as literary movements, and owe much of their consciousness to men like Grimm, Jahn, Manzoni, etc.

The revival of the old festivities and of the old literary language was the first conscious expression of Catalanian nationalism. The motto of the early pioneers was, "A people that finds its language finds itself again." The Catalan language had ceased to be used by the educated classes in the 16th century, but it had continued to be spoken by the lower classes, by "illiterate peasants," and "by the rabble of the town," as Madariaga expresses it. Soon a new set of writers stirred up the hatred against the Spanish oppressor.

The Catalonians had always shown a strong legal ability. It was they who, in the 13th century, had created the first code of maritime law in Europe. The tradition was now taken up again, and Catalan law was revived and in 1880 a congress codified Catalan civil law.

In 1868 a political regionalist movement took shape, and in 1892 a programme was laid down at Manresa which formulated the demand for complete independence in matters of internal administration. The political movement grew in strength each year. The turning point in modern Spanish history, the loss of Cuba and the Philippines, had involved the Catalanian industrialists in immense expenses for a war for which they disclaimed all responsibility. It had meant a loss of colonies just at a time when industrialists all over the world had woken up to

the desirability and necessity of having colonies. The agitation against Spanish inefficiency and corruption increased, and gave a new impetus to the desire for administrative autonomy. In 1899, Dr. Robert, a great figure of the nationalist movement, became Mayor of Barcelona. Even the Church had to join in with the movement, and demanded "to be instructed in Catalan about the things of Heaven."

Nationalist movements are sound, justified and usually irresistible. The eyes of the outsider are, however, often painfully struck by the conceited nonsense of their more vocal spokesmen. Some Catalanian nationalist writers claim racial superiority over the Spaniard on the ground that Catalan skulls are supposed to be bigger than Spanish skulls. This argument echoes that of a German Fascist who proved the inferiority of the workers as a class by showing "statistically" that wide hats are more expensive than narrow ones; he concluded that the working class has got the smaller skulls. When French writers established a claim to the Rhine they spoke about Cæsar. Catalan writers indulge in long discussions as to whether one thousand years ago they had been a separate nation with a national consciousness of their own. De Valera's mind is still preoccupied with the wrongs inflicted upon Ireland under Cromwell. The Catalanian intellectuals have not yet overcome their resentment that Barcelona, a flourishing trading centre in the Middle Ages, had been ruined about 1500 by a ban on its trade with the newly-discovered

American possessions. There are also many discussions among the intellectuals as to whether the Catalans are "Europeans exiled in Spain," and already before they have liberated themselves they speak of a "greater Catalonia," and intend to annex Valencia and parts of France on doubtful historical grounds.

But this sort of nonsense should not make us lose sight of the essentially progressive character of Catalan nationalism. The excitement of the intellectuals is an unimportant by-product of a progressive movement, which in its present form is based on economic circumstances. The negligence, ignorance and corruption of Spanish administration may do for agricultural districts: they are disastrous for an industrial region. Catalonia is the richest part of Spain. She pays one-fifth of the budget, yet the greater part of the taxes go to Madrid and are spent largely on other districts. The central bureaucracy takes little account of the peculiar necessities of industrial Catalonia, and again and again has impeded improvements. A typical case is that 25 years ago Barcelona had to sue the State in order to get permission to have a street mended. Education has been crippled. Barcelona, the main industrial town, had attained in 1930 only the ninth place in the order of literacy. At the same time, of course, the industrialists need Spain as a market, and therefore they are opposed to complete separation.

Between 1900 and 1919 Catalan nationalism became an instrument of the Barcelona indus-

trialists. They used it as a means of pressure upon the Madrid government for the purpose of obtaining tariffs for the protection of their industries. Catalan big business threatened that unless tariffs were granted, the nationalist movement could not be kept in hand. They insisted that tariffs were the only way of preventing the secession of Catalonia. In almost all cases the government yielded.

But matters became different when a strong working-class movement developed in Barcelona. The separatist desires of the industrialists vanished. They sought protection in an alliance with their fellow industrialists throughout Spain. Madariaga has expressed this change of mind in the following candid and tactful words:

"Experience has shown that Labour matters in Barcelona are of so grave a character that though often mismanaged by the Central Government, an exclusively Catalan government would probably be too weak to handle some of their more serious aspects." ("Spain," p. 305.)

In this way the nationalist movement became the property of the middle classes, who without very definite objects demanded an autonomous republic. The Republic bestowed a certain amount of administrative independence upon them. (The "Generalidad," about which we read in the newspapers, is the government of the autonomous region of Catalonia.) The Lerroux government attempted to abolish the liberties of Catalonia and in this way furnished the revolutionary workers with valuable allies. For the middle classes of Barcelona the



independence of Catalonia is an article of faith. They will oppose any government that tries to tamper with it.

How far has the Labour Movement made use of the discontent of the suppressed nationalities which constitute one-third of the Spanish population? The Socialists have given their somewhat half-hearted support. Their policy is guided by the desire to avoid either of two evils—the loss of the nationalist vote and the breaking up of the central state.

A look at MacDonald's treatment of India and the Iraq might suggest that Socialists lack sympathy with the struggle of oppressed nations. Socialists are often heard arguing that socialism aims at a world state, that nationalist emotions are therefore reactionary, and that in consequence, guided by the ideal of the brotherhood of man, one is justified in either ignoring or even in actively suppressing the national aspirations of foreigners. This misconception of "internationalism" can govern the policy of the British Labour Movement because it coincides with the Imperialist mentality of the electorate. In Spain, however, the Socialists, by opposing the separatist tendencies of the provinces, would lose much popular support. The Republic has given a certain amount of administrative independence to vast areas of the Spanish peninsula—to Catalonia, Valencia, Murcia, Galicia, Andalusia, Vizcaya, Aragon and the Balearic Isles.

On the other hand, however, the Socialists believe that the central government in Madrid, being at the moment very much under their influence,

should not be weakened. We have now in Spain the curious situation that Gil Robles, who has always opposed regionalism when his friends controlled the Madrid government, now wants to extend it even to Castile. He aims at weakening the government of the Popular Front. It must further be borne in mind that a complete pulverisation of Spain would be equivalent to its Balkanisation. The dozen or so of small independent republics which would result, would be completely dominated by Britain and France, and perhaps Italy. Considerations of this kind are responsible for the oscillations which Socialist policy has recently shown in the national question. They may loosen the Socialist contact with the feelings of the masses. For the anarchists, deaf to statesmanlike considerations of this kind, stand for regionalism unconditionally. Each defeat of the central state is welcomed as a step towards anarchy.

Different from both Socialists and anarchists, the solution of the Marxist party is inspired by the example of the Soviet Union. The Marxists demand that the nationalist movement should be used for the revolution. They demand full satisfaction of all separatist claims, in order then to rebuild Spain as a Federal Socialist Republic. With Lenin, they point out that a nation is free only if it has the right to separate. The right to separate usually ends the desire to do so. "The true Iberian unity, Portugal and Gibraltar included, can be realised only by means of the triumph of the working class." (Maurin.)

## Chapter II

### THE POLITICAL FORCES AT WORK

#### THE PARTIES OF THE LEFT

DISUNITY is the curse of the working-class movement everywhere. In Spain, too, the Left is split into a number of organisations. The two most powerful ones are the Socialists and the anarchists. The Socialist Party has about 60,000 members, and the Socialist Unions (U.G.T.) have a membership of about 1,500,000.

The anarchists, whose ideas have for 70 years won allegiance among Spanish workers, have formed two organisations. The one, illegal, is called the *Federación Anarquista Iberica* (F.A.I.). It has approximately 10,000 members. The anarchists have always refused to legalise this organisation, and keep it as a reserve in case the power of the State destroys their legal organisation, the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* (C.N.T.). The membership of the C.N.T. is about 500,000. The anarchist unions are guided by anarchist principles, but it would be a mistake to assume that all their members would claim to be anarchists. Every worker can join the union, whatever may be his political or religious opinions. The C.N.T.,

#### THE POLITICAL FORCES AT WORK

founded only in 1911, attempts to co-ordinate the efforts of free and autonomous local unions by a minimum of centralisation. It is thus only by continuous propaganda that the anarchists of the F.A.I. can maintain their influence in the C.N.T. Seventeen years ago, the Russian Revolution had made a profound impression on the rank and file of the C.N.T., with the result that the anarchists lost control and the second Congress of 1919 decided to join the Third International and to aim at the "dictatorship of the proletariat." A fierce internal struggle followed. The anarchist unions were paralysed for years, helpless against the terrible repression under Primo de Rivera. But in the long run the old anarchist ideals gained ground, and now they again determine the policy of the C.N.T. The influence of the C.N.T. is unequal in different parts of the countries. Some towns, like Zaragoza, Valencia, Gijon and Barcelona, are anarchist centres. Thus in the South is the province of Andalusia where the anarchists stimulated and directed the savage rebellions of the land-workers, and the wine district of Rioja in the North. Barcelona, dominated by anarchists until quite recently, publishes the *Solidaridad Obrera*, the anarchist daily. In addition, anarchist weeklies and monthlies appear in many provincial towns.

Ever since 1911 many attempts have been made to unite C.N.T. and U.G.T. But in each case the discrepancy of their aims and ideals proved greater than the workers' need for unity in their own ranks.

In addition, Moscow is represented by the communists, who give 50,000 as their membership. Everybody who knows how the C.P. calculates its membership is aware that this figure is in excess of reality. The central organ of the communists appears in Madrid, and is called "Mundo obrero." Their leader, at the moment, is José Dias, a typical bureaucrat, like Pollitt and Thorez. The chief centres of the communists are Madrid and Vizcaya. Their organisation is not very strong. Their policy makes it impossible for the communists to become a considerable force in a revolutionary country. Their policy during the last year was dominated by the fear of endangering the Franco-Soviet pact by energetic mass action. They argued that the present Liberal government of Spain is the ally of France, that France is an ally of Russia, and that therefore the present Spanish government is an ally of Russia, and should not be embarrassed. For this reason, they curb mass actions like strikes. Or they divert the energies of the workers into innocuous channels, and show themselves far more preoccupied with Thaelman and the U.S.S.R., than with problems of the Spanish worker and peasant. Driven by Moscow's foreign policy to the Right Wing of the socialist movement they cannot compete successfully with the anarchists and Left Socialists who voice the aspirations of the Spanish workers and peasants. As everywhere, Russian administrative negligence has spread to the communist party of Spain. I went to a meeting for Thaelman in the arena of Madrid. The meeting was due to

begin at 8 o'clock. It began at 10.20. A record even for the C.P.

Far greater than the influence of the communist organisation is the influence of the ideas of Leninism which indeed have become one of the major forces in Spanish politics. At the moment the ideas of Leninism fuse with the anarchist traditions of the Spanish working class, and a new synthesis is on the way of being achieved by the Socialist Youth (which comprises also the communists), and the followers of Caballero.

Finally, one must mention the Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (P.O.U.M.). Although weak in numbers—it comprises only 8,000 members—this party is likely to have a big future in front of it. Its leader is Joaquin Maurin. The "Marxists" have a very considerable influence in Barcelona. This fact gives them a weight far in excess of their numbers, for to-day's ideas in Barcelona are tomorrow's ideas in Spain. The most prominent writers of the socialist movement are connected with this party. This book owes much to their works and to the help they gave me. In some towns like Gerona and Lérida the "Marxists" have fused with the Agrarian Union. Recently they founded a Trade Union which, according to their information, has about 60,000 members. The P.O.U.M. issues two papers, *La Batalla*, a Spanish daily, founded in 1928, and *Front*, a weekly in Catalan language. The majority of the Marxist leaders are former communists, who found it impossible to combine obedience to the ever-chang-



ing dictates of Moscow with a constructive socialist policy. The P.O.U.M. signed the election pact of the Popular Front. In consequence, Joaquin Maurin became a member of the Cortes. Soon Maurin left the Popular Front, and opposed the election of Azaña as President, voting, instead, for the Socialist Peña. The moral and political collapse of the Third International has created a vacuum in the political life of Europe. The revolutionary Socialists of the P.O.U.M. try to fill this gap. Convinced with Lenin that the existence of a trained vanguard is indispensable for the victory of the socialist revolution, they attempt to build up a Spanish Bolshevik Party. In times when the political scene is subject to rapid changes, the understanding of the average man is apt somewhat to lag behind the realities of the situation. The Marxists in Barcelona hope that their day will come after the workers have learned fully to realise the extent to which the Comintern has collapsed and to which anarchist Quixotism dissipates their revolutionary energies.

#### THE SOCIALISTS

Two socialist parties in Europe only have proved capable of learning from experience—the Russian and the Spanish. In Western Europe, the Spanish Socialist Party is the Saul of the Socialist movement—"from his shoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the people." For fifty years Spanish socialist policy was the same as that of all other social democratic parties. The Trade Unions grew, the State drew them into "responsibility." Four

years ago the socialists had reached the natural end of the tactics of reform. Discredit and corruption threatened to choke them. But just when they were on the verge of moral and political collapse, their majority turned round, and under the leadership of Largo Caballero built up a revolutionary organisation. The dramatic history of the Spanish socialist movement, so typical in its beginnings, has belied all expectations and forecasts by its recent phase. Fifty years of tradition were thrown aside.

Pablo Iglesias imported socialism from England. The history of the Spanish Socialist Party (Partido socialista obrero) goes back to 1879. In 1886 the paper, *El Socialista*, was founded. This paper now is the organ of the Right Wing of the party. In 1888 the Socialist Trade Union, the Unión General de Trabajadores was established. The personal influence of Iglesias was considerable. He died only in 1925, and he personally trained the first leaders of the Socialist Party. Much homage is paid to his memory, and I frequently saw badges with his picture. A grateful Spanish Republic placed his portrait on several postage stamps.

For a long time\* the socialist movement remained very small—just a few thousand members, with its main strength in Madrid, its headquarters since 1889. Madrid, an artificial capital which exists for the bureaucratic administration of Spain, lacks

\* For the description of the Spanish socialist bureaucracy I am indebted to Juan Andrade's classic, "La Burocracia Reformista en el movimiento obrero." Ediciones Gleba, Madrid, 1935.

industry, except for the building trade. The employees of artisans, tailors and small printing works formed the social basis of "Pablismo." The overwhelming majority of militant workers in the industrial centres and in the countryside remained anarchist for decades. Andrade describes Iglesias' "opium poppies" (adormideras), as they were called, as a lot of honest folk, somewhat small-minded and devoted to the cult of the petty virtues, if possible non-smokers, good workers and fathers of their families. Humbly and modestly they hoped that the rich might take a greater interest in the workers. They strove, not for social equality, but for the betterment of the workers. Their leaders loved the detail, the precedent and the routine. Punctilious administration was their main strength. Almost all of them were workers. They have, as Andrade puts it, been educated "not in the class struggle but in administrative patience," and they hated everything new, young and violent.

As everywhere else, in Spain the reformist working class movement brought forth a bureaucracy with interests and an outlook of their own. They meet the working class only at public meetings and in the course of administrative work. The bureaucrat lived outside the working class quarters. He found his friends among the middle class and the bourgeoisie. He and his friends formed a bureaucratic oligarchy which seized all the power, and maintained it by methods known in all industrial countries. They overawed the average person by impressing him with their own great experience. They accumu-

lated considerable funds. Even under the dictatorship, the Unions in Madrid had funds of two million pesetas. These funds naturally paralysed action. They are hostages to the enemy who, by threatening to seize them (as for instance in Germany both in 1914 and 1933), paralyses Socialist action. A considerable part of the funds was used for bureaucratic necessities. In 1932 a memorandum of the U.G.T. showed that in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years they had spent 200,000 pesetas on administration and only 15,000 pesetas for assistance to prisoners. Of these, both Largo Caballero and Fernando de los Rios had received 1,400 pesetas each. Ordinary working class prisoners once received a tiny sum. The leaders, when in prison, continued to draw their salaries. In addition they got 15 pesetas a day. This seems not a good beginning for a struggle for social equality. Old age pensions, health insurance, etc., created a vested interest and further helped to perpetuate the rule of the bureaucrats. An army of voluntary spies, collectors of contributions, porters in the Casa del Pueblo, etc., kept them informed about the revolutionary workers, and allowed them to take action in time.

It must, however, be borne in mind that even in the worst times of bureaucratic rule, in comparison with other countries, the number of officials was rather small. In Madrid, about 220 persons were employed in 1933 in the most important local socialist organisations and about 1,100,000 pesetas were spent in 1933 on their salaries.\*

\* Detailed figures in Andrade, pages 233-253.

Nobody can complain that the offices are over-staffed. There is one official for each 1,000 members. It was the power and policy of the bureaucrats which was disastrous, not their number.

In 1931 the Republic gave the reformist bureaucracy its chance. In most European countries social democracy had been allowed to participate in government coalitions with the Liberals. In all those countries the power of the ruling class had remained unimpaired, but the social democrats had been discredited. The Spanish industrial classes did not, therefore, run a disproportionate risk by allowing the socialists to participate in office.

The Republican government at once created machinery for arbitration between employers and employees—Jurados mixtos, Tribunales Industriales, etc. The U.G.T. grew by leaps and bounds. The new social legislation prompted many workers to affiliate. Numbering three hundred thousand members under Primo de Rivera, the U.G.T. now has one million four hundred thousand members.

While they were contemplating complacently the rapid increase in their membership, the socialist officials prepared their own downfall. All this new machinery of arbitration needed a new staff. There were only a few trained men in the party. Far more jobs were going than people able to take them. In consequence, one official took a number of offices at the same time. As the corruption of the German Social Democratic party had contributed considerably towards the victory of Hitler, so the unscrupulous seizure of the administrative spoils

—by the way, quite in the common tradition of Spanish policy—was one of the causes which brought about the downfall of the socialists and of the first Republican government. The press, both bourgeois and anarchist, waged a fierce campaign. It turned out that a number of socialist leaders combined between three and six offices each and received between 30,000 and 70,000 pesetas a year as a remuneration for their toil. The well-meaning officials of Iglesias' time had turned into careerists. They became firm conservatives and interested in the preservation of the capitalist order. What could they do without a capitalist to negotiate with?

The Nazis, having removed social democratic corruption, turned out to be far more corrupt themselves. It must be borne in mind that also in Spain the middle class enemies of the socialists are not better, but far worse, as regards political corruption. As a matter of course, they use their offices for speculation and regard them as a convenient veil for their more shady business operations. "The advocate who is a parliamentarian uses this fact to increase the number of his clients; the merchant to get contracts and concessions from the State; the journalist for subventions and paying campaigns." \*

In addition, participation in the Liberal government compelled the socialists to lend their good name to a number of measures which were clearly against the interests of the working class.

"They saw themselves obliged to contemplate

\* Andrade, p. 249.

how the repressive forces of the State persecuted the workers and peasants who were hunted with rifles or burned alive, and brutalised more even than under the Monarchy. They had to approve of the creation of special 'security' corps and of the increase in Civil Guard and Police who did not hesitate to turn their pistols against them. They had to vote for counter-revolutionary laws and they took offices which were harmful to the unity of the working class movement," in these words Maurin\* sums up the final stage of socialist disgrace.

But then the unexpected happened. Below, among the rank and file, discontent grew and grew. This is not surprising in socialist parties. But what is new and almost without parallel—the majority of the leaders of the Trade Union movement yielded to the discontent of the rank and file and rectified their steps. In the years between 1933 and 1936 the Spanish socialist movement has been born anew.

#### SOCIALIST FACTIONS

Strictly speaking, we must distinguish three sections of the Spanish Socialist Party. There is first a Right Wing, led by Besteiro. The policy of this wing is guided by antediluvial ideas which correspond to those of the Victorian Trade Union leaders. Besteiro opposes a contamination of the Trade Unions by politics because he believes that the Trade Unions cannot dare to try and influence

\* *Hacia la segunda Revolucion*, p. 81.

the State. In a spirit of true humility these Trade Union officials "know their place" and condemn the *hubris* of workers attempting political activity.

The mentality of the Besteiro group is so much out of date that it possesses almost no influence at the moment, although it would fit in very well with a Corporate State in case Fascism should become the order of the day. In actual practice, Besteiro's followers have now been absorbed by the "Centrists." The "Centrists" or "Reformists," led by Indalecio Prieto and by Gonzalez Peña, fight for domination over the socialist movement with the Left revolutionaries who are led by Largo Caballero. Indalecio Prieto, a burly man of 53, and an astute politician, is a self-made business man who, as a boy, sold newspapers in the streets of Bilbao, and who now owns one of the leading provincial newspapers—*El Liberal* in Bilbao. In the eyes of the anti-socialist press he compares favourably with Caballero. Each day the reader of Spanish newspapers is told that Prieto is a real statesman whereas Caballero "has his head in the clouds." Of course, Caballero's paper, *Claridad*, thinks differently.

The fight within the Socialist Party will decide the future of the Popular Front and of Spain. While the present civil war lasts, the socialists are united. But as soon as the armed struggle ceases, the divisions will reappear. Although Spaniards speak of "Centrists" when they want to describe Prieto's standpoint, I shall call them the "Right Wing" in view of the insignificance of Besteiro's group.

The Right Wing leaders are anxious to repeat the German and English policy of a coalition with the Liberals. Their strength lies, firstly, in the fact that, at least on the surface, they are very unlike the Noske, Ebert and Macdonald types. In the October revolution of Asturias they, and especially Peña, were far more prominent than the Left. The Left further bear the responsibility for mismanaging the Revolution of 1934 in Madrid. They were so half-hearted in their desire to arm the workers that they gave them rifles—but the ammunition was lost on the way, and one still discusses where it might have been at the time. Whatever may have been the cause for the relative inconspicuousness of the Left Socialist leaders in the October uprising—most of them in fact were in prison—the fact that the glorious memories of those heroic days are linked up with the names of Right Wing leaders weighs heavily in their favour. Secondly, the Right Wing has the machine of the Party—not of the Trade Unions—in its hands. While most of the members of the Socialist Party are followers of Caballero, the official element is predominantly reformist. The machine assumed that Caballero would get an overwhelming majority at the next Party Congress. They calmly tried to postpone it from June to October, in the typically reformist hope that something might turn up. When this proved impossible, and when the Congress took place in July, they annulled 16,000 votes cast for Caballero, and in this way elected Peña chairman of the Party.

Further, the Right have concrete plans, for irrigation especially. The Left, like the anarchists, expect everything from the spontaneity of the masses and mistrust the plans of Prieto. A responsible member of the Left told me with great satisfaction that the experts (!) had found Prieto's plans to be unworkable. The faith in the creative abilities of the working masses is the basis of the strength of the militants of the Left. It is coupled, however, with an absence of concrete plans and of a clear theory. This weakness is usually summed up in the Spanish word "confusionismo." The doctrines of anarchism and of Leninism, contradicting each other, struggle with one another in the minds of the Left and a new synthesis has not been found yet.

The difference of opinion centres round two points, collaboration with the Liberal government and the speed of socialist change. The Right Wing wants to enter the government. Prieto argues that social change must proceed slowly in order not to drive the middle classes into the arms of the Fascists. He argues further that the aspirations of the workers must not go beyond the capacity of capitalist economy. Strikes may lead to the abolition of profit, but not to a loss. If they do, the economic system will collapse, and there will be no work. Prieto opposes strikes by saying that, to be sure, the workers have Justice on their side; but also statistics will have to be reckoned with; a satisfaction of their demands will make goods too expensive and in this way will



act as a boomerang. Prieto believes that by turbulence and violence the working class can only lose, and play into the hands of the Fascists. I heard his great speech in Bilbao at the end of May. He justified his desire to collaborate with the Liberals by arguing that at the moment the bourgeoisie have lost their head, and that one must use their confusion to introduce legislation "which will forever make indestructible the power of the proletariat." Right Wing papers approvingly quote his remark that all the present trouble in Spain will lead only to "the socialisation of misery."

The Left Wing under the leadership of Caballero, aim at "socialism in our time." They insist that one should learn from experience. They point to the catastrophe which has befallen reform in Italy, Germany and Austria, and to its sterility in England and Belgium. They have learned from history that it is just the timidity of reform which is responsible for the rise of Fascism. The recent rise of the Rexists in Belgium has been amply used to defend their point of view. The Left further point to experience of the years 1931 to 1933 when one tried in vain to make a revolution by a great quantity of decrees. They demand unity, not with the bourgeoisie, but of the workers among themselves.

The fight between the two sections of the Socialist Party was up to July a fight without quarter. It was waged at the meetings. Socialist youth broke up Right Wing meetings with revolvers and not without the application of violence. At

the meetings of the left, the cry "Death to Prieto" was a familiar occurrence. Daily their newspapers insulted one another. Each section has a paper of its own. The Right Wing controls *El Socialista*. Recently the left founded *Claridad*. Its circulation is now already three times that of *El Socialista*. *El Socialista* hints at Jesuitic money in *Claridad*. *Claridad* is eloquent about the Jesuitic perfidy of *El Socialista*. Each day, columns dwell on the dishonesty and bad manners of the opposite Wing.

At the end of May, the National Committee of the Socialist Party came down on the side of Prieto. It declared that the discipline of the party was endangered by factions. It threatened to dissolve those branches which opposed the national committee. It declared *Claridad* to be dangerous to the unity of the party and emphasised that it was the duty of every member to get *El Socialista*. In July, the Moderates got Peña elected chairman of the Party. Caballero was defeated; technically at least. But his followers nurse a grievance. By annulling 16,000 votes, the Right Wingers have not added to their moral authority.

The Socialist Party has 65,000 members only. Hopelessly divided among themselves, they have great difficulty in establishing the long-needed unity with the anarchists, except when army pressure drives together the entire Left. It is a hopeful sign that in the youth movement at least socialists and communists are now in the same

organisation. In the Party itself the struggle will continue, and a split is very unlikely since Caballero hopes to conquer the machine of the Party from within. The Left can make light of the administrative chicaneries of the executive of the Party. The strength of the socialist movement lies in the Trade Unions and the overwhelming majority of their 1,400,000 members stand firmly behind Caballero, their General Secretary.

#### THE ANARCHISTS.

Forty years ago, the anarchists were the terror of princes and policemen. As in the course of evolution the gigantosaurus has been dwarfed into a lizard, so the anarchists have been reduced to insignificance by modern industrial development. Spain is the only country where a strong anarchist movement has survived. The anarchists are, in fact, the decisive factor in Spanish politics. The influence of their spirit is not confined to the ranks of their own organisation; it pervades, too, the minds of the left wing of the socialist movement.

Anarchist mentality must appear like a strange exotic plant to a person used to the dandelions and buttercups of the European working class movement. It seems strangely out of place in the workshops of the modern trusts. While everywhere the workers' movement is bent on attaining comfort and security, the Spanish anarchist lives for liberty, virtue and dignity. Perhaps, like Don Quixote, the anarchist is but the solitary remnant of an extinct species. Perhaps his very loftiness of

spirit will enable him to break the slavery of modern machinery and of big money, and his spirit may have a mission even outside Spain. In Spain, the anarchist survival is facilitated by special social conditions which give a certain justification to this movement.

In the scale of anarchist values there is none higher than liberty. There is nothing worse than coercion. The short statute book of the anarchist unions merely aims at guarding this liberty at all costs. The discipline of the members is a voluntary one, and nobody is compelled either to pay his contributions, or to take office, or even to go on strike. "A union which needs coercion among its members, has no moral value whatsoever for the emancipation of the workers." The strength of the union lies in the conscience of the individual, in his initiative, in his will power. Everything that cripples or fetters the initiative of the individual, will tend to weaken the union. Not the authority of leaders but coincidence of the desires of many individuals is the basis of anarchist discipline. The emancipation of the workers can come from below only, and therefore one must do everything to allow the workers' moral faculties to grow. The workers cannot be regarded as simply the soldiers of an army led by Trade Unionists. The success of a revolution which does not again lead to a new slavery depends on their vivid sense of human liberty and dignity. The moral value of man is pushed into the background by the socialists who, absorbed in the technical reconstruction of society,



are inclined to regard the workers as merely human "material" to be used wisely. By their example the anarchists hope to transform each individual wage-slave gradually into a human being conscious of his own strength and dignity. "The Unions are the work of the workers, of their idealism, of their conscience, of their necessities and worries, of their capacities, sentiments and will, and the workers themselves have to determine all the aspects of the life of the Union. The workers need energy, serenity, enthusiasm and intelligence, but all these qualities will be of little value if there is no goodness (bondad) in their hearts." With these characteristic words Esgleas finishes his pamphlet on anarchism. To the Marxist, the anarchist appears to have his head in the clouds. To the anarchist, the socialist seems to have his nose in the mud.

The unfettered liberty and the uncrippled growth of the individual is the guiding idea in the anarchist doctrine. Not that there is a fully developed doctrine, as Marxism boasts of. Anarchist doctrine remains deliberately vague. "Anarchism is not a doctrine but an ideal" I was told dozens of times. A fixed and dogmatic doctrine would only cripple the free and spontaneous initiative of the masses. When you ask an anarchist for a more detailed description of an anarchist society, he will reply that there would be no point in giving one. At the moment, the only task is to smash the bourgeois state. Plans already in existence on the day when the revolution is victorious, would do harm only.

The masses would, after they had once liberated themselves, settle their destiny according to their own taste. This negative attitude to making plans and imposing them from above upon the masses is also shared by the Caballero socialists.

The anarchists abhor any kind of centralisation. It involves a central bureaucracy that will soon dominate the workers. An anarchist society will be decentralised to the utmost. Here, the anarchists are inspired by the traditions of Spanish history. The different Spanish provinces always remained isolated from one another, the whole country has never been knit together into one big economic unit and the central authority always was a source of far more harm than good. A further point must be borne in mind. Large scale industry everywhere has been deadly to anarchism, by depriving the movement of its mass following. Large scale industry obviously requires large and centrally directed economic units which offer guarantees for comparatively stable markets and comparatively stable supplies of raw materials. In large scale production, the different units of production are knit together far more closely than they are under older forms of production. Now in Spain, large scale industry is almost absent, and small and middle-sized undertakings are the rule. Already at the time when the struggle between Marx and Bakunin wrecked the First International, Marx found his support in Germany, England and the United States, whereas Bakunin drew his main strength from Spain, Italy and the Jura, i.e. from

districts in which small factories prevailed. In small undertakings the need for a centre of co-ordination is not felt very strongly. That is why they can provide a basis for anarchism.

As "libertarian" Communists the anarchists oppose the Communism of the Third International. As the enslaver of the individual they detest state-communism. On the walls of Spanish houses the visitor can see a monarchist election poster—a worker behind a plough and above him a hand with a whip. The poster points to State communism. Similar drawings have been published by anarchist newspapers for many years.

On principle the anarchists are unpolitical. The State is an enemy. It must be broken, destroyed, and smashed to pieces. The Spanish workers, until quite recently, did not deal with a benevolent State which gives them schools, health-insurance and unemployment benefit, and which *looks* at least as if it were *their* State. In Spain, the State for the worker was the Civil Guard who always helped the boss, who imprisoned the worker, shot him down, beat him up and tortured him. The State was an arbitrary and unintelligible law which always helped the land-owner and industrialist, and which always wronged the worker. The Spanish State combined a maximum of oppression with a minimum of organisation. The anarchist simply hates it. He wants to do away with it once and for all.

The anarchist refuses to have any dealings with political parties. Political parties in a modern

democracy are open to corruption. They take up the case of the workers only as far as it suits their own ends. The worker who gets into the habit of trusting in their tricks and manœuvres, loses his initiative and energy. Afraid of the corrupting influence of Parliament, the anarchists send no delegates to it. They have heard that in Parliament the working-class deputy, newly elected, arrives full of vigour and of the desire to do something. But he soon finds that much fuss is made of him, that he is flattered, and that quite imperceptibly he acquires the feeling that he is an important person differing from his former workmates by his outstanding abilities and the width of his outlook. The intricacies of the parliamentary machine damp his revolutionary vigour, and he becomes either tired or cynical. He finds that not all the "bourgeois" are wicked, that quite a number of them, when met socially, are nice and agreeable people. His social contacts with nice individuals make him forget the social functions of the bourgeoisie and their responsibility for the hunger and the exploitation of his former workmates. New facilities open for making money easily, and many former workers seize these with a greedy hand. In this way a genuine socialist, by the incessant action of almost imperceptible corrupting influences, gradually changes into an upholder of the existing order of society—until the existing order has no further need of him, and he ends like Severing or J. H. Thomas.

The spirit of anarchism—so admirably described

in R. J. Sender's "Seven Red Sundays"—determines its tactics. Imbued with an incurable distrust of the State, of politicians and of Trade Union leaders, the anarchist knows only one weapon in the revolutionary struggle—*direct action*. Working on the assumption that any intervention on the side of the State in social conflicts is calculated only to cheat the workers, the anarchists claim that the workers can rely on themselves only. Both the restrictions of the law and the seductive lures of arbitration machinery must be disregarded. The social struggle must remain a struggle between workers and their employers. Any outside interference must be rejected. That is the meaning of the famous "direct action." "One can see that 'direct action' is each direct demand of the workers to the employers, each direct fight of the union against the coercion of the State, each strike, each demonstration in the street, each insurrection, and act of violence applied intelligently in the social struggle." (Esgleas *Sindicalismo*, p. 41.)

Unfettered by the materialist conception of history, the anarchists lay great stress on the moral qualities of the workers, and of their syndicates. Their moral purity is recognised even by their socialist enemies. Their audacity, coupled with strong self-discipline and the desire to act violently, has created many heroes and brought forth immense sacrifices.

The strike is the most usual manifestation of direct action. Often it is supplemented by boycott and sabotage. Recently, for instance, the workers

of the Asland Cement Factory were on strike. Thousands of small posters at once covered the walls of Barcelona and Zaragoza and Madrid, explaining the situation and calling upon all transport and building workers to boycott Asland cement, "Boicot a la Casa Asland." As regards sabotage, the reader will find a vivid and telling description in R. J. Sender's "Seven Red Sundays" of how one evening some anarchists plunged Madrid into darkness.

Violence, viewed with almost superstitious horror by so many English socialists, becomes the object of an almost religious worship in Spanish anarchism. While our train was slowly moving up the Ebro valley, an anarchist from Zaragoza kindly informed his "capitalist" friend from England about the merits of violence. Here are some of his reflections which I wrote down at the time:

"Nothing great has ever been achieved in history without violence. Violence is the natural mainspring of all action and reaction. Without it there is no life or possibility of life. The possession of revolvers and machine-guns distinguishes the free man from the slave. One might almost say that they are the only machines which are of real use to the workers. Everybody who has studied, or perhaps felt, history deeply enough, must see that as long as social questions remain merely a matter of talking and collaborating and negotiating, nobody feels really serious about them and nothing great can be achieved. The really great convulsions and changes in human history have gripped people so

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much that they were not content only to talk but were willing to sacrifice their lives. The sins of an old and corrupt system can only be washed away by violence and in blood. No social change has ever achieved any stable results without a great number of the representatives of the old order being annihilated. The English, the French, the Russian revolutions compare favourably with those 'revolutionary' changes in which the revolutionaries tried to avoid violence, only to become the victims of their opponents' violence."

In vain did I tell him that our British Labour detestation of violence was founded on the experience of deep statesmanship, and that he must appear to us as an incurable romantic or as a boy who had not quite grown up. For like a boy, he had the naïve friendliness and serenity which I found in so many anarchists and which contrasts strangely with their bitterness against the men who brought dire poverty and brutal oppression upon them. He lived in Zaragossa, where, as he told me, the priests with their gigantic Cathedral had sucked the life-blood out of the workers and their families, and compelled them to rot in slums the like of which I was not likely to find anywhere in Europe.

In any case, whether the anarchist belief in violence is philosophically well-founded or not, it is a social factor of primary importance and it makes it very difficult for any government in Spain to settle down quietly. The ballot-box is regarded as a trick to keep people in slavery, like the bleeding

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of Saint Januarius. Armed insurrection alone can burst open the gate that leads to the workers' emancipation.

The technique of anarchist insurrections was originally devised by the French revolutionary Blanqui. First, the authorities of a certain district are frightened and bewildered by a guerilla war of local strikes and isolated insurrections. The soil being prepared in that way, some few audacious militants make a *coup d'état*. Surprise counts for everything. If the coup fails another one is prepared. If this fails, another one. "Anarchist obstinacy knows no bounds," as the socialist Maurin expresses it.

The day-to-day struggle of the anarchist unions does not receive its impulse from a central authority but from the spontaneous activity displayed by the workers in the different localities. In this way, the anarchists are capable of a tremendous drive. But much of it is dissipated by the lack of a central co-ordination which is not merely due to preconceived ideas, but largely to the relative autonomy which the different districts—only loosely connected—always owing to the mountainous nature of the country.

## THE ANARCHISTS AND THE REPUBLIC

When Primo de Rivera fell, it was as though a dam had burst. Anarchism, driven underground and just appearing as a slight trickle on the surface of Spanish public life, again showed the strength of a torrent. Millions of workers in the first years

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of the Republic placed their hopes in the C.N.T., as the one revolutionary organisation. The following figures show the growth of the membership of the C.N.T. :

1914	...	25,000
1918	...	500,000
1923	...	1,000,000
1931	...	1,500,000

Maurin describes anarchism as "the bastard child of socialist opportunism." We have showed how much of its strength the anarchist movement derives from the reactionary nature of the Spanish State, from the geographical decentralisation of the Spanish provinces and from the special character of Spanish industrial production. But among the factors that make for anarchist power in Spain, hostility towards reformist socialism is perhaps the most potent one. For more than 60 years, an implacable war has been waged between libertarian communists and State socialists. All means, foul and fair, are used—arguments, calumniations and revolvers. After some days of gathering information in Spain, I could not fail to see that the two hostile brethren were very much inclined to "speak evil of one another"—to put it mildly. In June this year the whole cause of the revolution was threatened by the consequences of this enmity. The C.N.T., on principle, joins any strike begun by another Union "in order to avoid incidents." But in the case of C.N.T. strikes, the U.G.T. often urges its members to continue working. Friction naturally arises, and

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in June a number of revolver battles took place. The reactionaries believed to have won. The self-discipline of the workers triumphed this time, but similar outbursts of violence among workers can occur at any moment and wreck the progress of the revolution. We can be sure that the reactionaries have their *agents provocateurs* in each of the rival unions.

But in the years after 1931 the fight against reformist socialism attracted all those workers who were discontented with the collaboration of socialists like Prieto and Caballero in the Republican Government, and who wanted a revolution, their own revolution. But, with remarkable inconsistency, the same anarchists who always refused to compromise with reality as far as "socialist" reforms were concerned, had often found it quite easy to come to an understanding with the Republicans. In the revolution of October, the anarchists—except in Asturias—sabotaged the workers' movement. Their affection for the old Republican, Lerroux, was largely responsible for the passive and even treacherous policy they pursued at that time. Anarchist prestige received a serious blow.

A year later, the Popular Front brought the anarchists into new difficulties. In 1931 already many workers who formerly, under anarchist influence, had abstained from voting, voted for the first time. In 1936, the anarchists themselves had to recommend participation in the elections. No anarchist candidates were included in the lists of the Popular Front. Yet the anarchist vote



decided the election in favour of the Popular Front. Since the material conditions of the workers are definitely better now than they were under Lerroux or under Primo de Rivera, it is difficult to maintain that political action is of no value whatsoever.

A second difficulty arises out of the transformation of the State. As long as the State was a pure tyrant, a negative attitude was justifiable. But now the State begins to do something for the worker by social legislation. Should the worker continue to rely only on direct action, or should he use the machinery of arbitration? The difficulty is great. In fact, after February, 1936, the State has intervened so frequently on behalf of the workers that repeatedly I heard from workers the phrase, "and the government, that is us, the workers." The anarchists have seen the danger. I can do no better than translate faithfully the words in which Morales Guzman, an anarchist from Granada, sums up the situation as he sees it\*:

"The stomach, the economic necessities of the working-class home, are the worst enemies of the revolution. An increase of some pesetas can appease hunger. Since many workers lack the right consciousness which would make them resist the weight of this egoistic materialistic disease, negation results for the movement. And when one neglects to foment in the working class the conscious and responsible revolutionary spirit, many of the exploited will prefer to strike only for more wages, fewer hours of work and more amusement. . . . To-

\* Solidaridad Obrera, 19.6.36.

day, with all these wage increases, one sees them go through life without any urge to put their lives into the service of the barricades. This attitude, in the present momentous period, represents the worst possible cowardice.

"At the meetings of the Unions one talks of nothing else any more than of working conditions. If a comrade speaks about the necessity of creating the moral force for revolutionary measures, he is told by some militants that there is no hurry with that, and that there will be time enough yet.

"As long as the instruments of production are not yet in our hands, all our economic gains can be nullified again.

"We have to fight for all the needs of the exploited class, not imagining that we can satisfy them under this system—for that is impossible—but in order to destroy the causes of those needs with the help of a revolutionary "shock" and by the explosion of the social revolution in the entire country."

In Spain, the reformist Sancho Panza, of the Trade Union Movement, fat, sturdy and comfortable, has found his Don Quixote. Sancho Panza will find the ideas of his master noble but ineffective. Don Quixote might answer that the world would be worse off but for the disappointed idealists who keep on striving.

#### FASCISM

In the long run, a civil war in a modern country is terminated by either socialism or fascism. It is



possible to build halfway houses in times of comparative social stability. A deep crisis which has uprooted social stability has only two ways out, socialism or fascism. When Hitler's victory brought him power, almost without any resistance from the socialist organisations, the fascist idea received a new impulse all over the world. In Spain, too, a number of fascist groups were formed, and gained a measure of support in the latter half of 1933. The son of Primo de Rivera was the leader of a group of black-shirted fascists, who wore a badge of five arrows through a Roman yoke. Several groups existed, calling themselves National Syndicalists, Phallanx, Juntas, etc. The propaganda of these groups had been declared illegal in March, 1933. This, of course, did nothing but drive them underground. At the same time, Gil Robles founded the Acción Popular. From Hitler he had learned the method of whipping up mass support through the emotions by parades and mass meetings. His social ideas were inspired by Dollfuss's Catholic variety of fascism. Gil Robles had seen that the fascists can win only as a mass movement. He tried to gain some footing among the workers by playing up to the anarchists. At the end of 1934 he made a number of speeches against the growing influence of the State, either under State capitalism or State socialism. But at the same time he made these attacks in such a way as to antagonise the anarchists more than to attract them. He said, for instance, that the State more and more "kills the initiative of the individual and of the family,

especially by developing State public services. In the spiritual field, too, it kills individual initiative by taking over education as its own obligation. It substitutes benefits for individual charity. All this is an enormous danger, and the administration becomes more and more expensive and at the same time threatens individual initiative, and in consequence the State budget grows constantly." (Maurin, "Hacia la segunda Revolución," p. 230.) Remarks like these, while they fail to impress the anarchist worker, nevertheless show Gil Robles' line of attack against the republican government. They show that Spanish fascism of the Gil Robles type is imbued with the traditionalist ideas of the good old times. It fails to appeal to the more progressive people. Nevertheless, the mass support which Gil Robles managed to collect considerably contributed to the Right Wing electoral victory in Autumn, 1933.

By his enemies, Gil Robles is continually accused of being financed by the big land-owners, banks and by the Jesuits. In Spain I could see on many houses a poster by which he replied to these allegations. The posters showed his plump and well-dressed figure speaking to an almost innumerable audience of people. Then the heading "This is my power." As a matter of fact, Gil Robles' mass support consists almost entirely of the rich and a number of Catholic middle-class families, i.e. all those whose existence is bound up with the property of the landowners.

Before the civil war broke out, all over the country a number of clandestine circles existed

which produced unrest and scandals, often by assassination of political opponents. They intended to discredit the republican government by demonstrating that it was unable and unfit to rule. I was told that almost all the fascist workmen after the victory of the Popular Front had joined the anarchists. It remained a matter of doubt whether they were actually converted, or whether they went as *agents provocateurs*, for the purpose of stirring up unrest and damaging, by strikes and sabotage, the economic prosperity of the country, in this way manufacturing evidence against the republican government. In May, a clandestine meeting of 28 fascists, each of them armed with pistols, was surprised by the police, and the fascists arrested, some of them from under the beds. Apart from political assassination, the fascist circles fostered the export of capital as a patriotic duty. They assisted actively in smuggling Spanish money out of the country in order to embarrass the government. Spain, like many other European countries, has no stable currency, and has to safeguard it by complicated laws. Nobody is allowed to take more than £12 10s. out of the country. When I took a registered letter to the post office, I was told that registered letters must be handed in open, in order to enable the official to see whether they contain any banknotes. I complained that I had no other envelope handy. The official, with a practised hand, simply opened the letter before my eyes without doing any damage to it—the fruit of many years of censoring letters.

The prospects of the fascist “pistoleros” are not very rosy. They are disunited, and possess neither leader, not ideas, nor stable organisations. Gil Robles has disappointed them.

Maurin (*Hacia la segunda Revolucion*, p. 229) says: “A fascist leader requires either intelligence, like Mussolini, or a great passion, like Hitler. In Gil Robles up to now—but it is possible that the future may reserve some surprise for us—one has witnessed neither that which makes the strength of the Duce nor that which makes that of the Führer. Gil Robles vacillates, and does not know exactly what he wants. On occasions he gives the impression of a sleep-walker . . . when he lets himself go, he endangers his political positions, creating havoc in his own party.

At first he felt converted by fascism. He took part in 1933 in the Nazi Congress in Nuremberg. But later on, when in 1934 he read the famous speech of Mussolini in which he officially pointed to the great crisis which Italy experienced, when he saw the assassination of Dollfuss by the Nazis and the slaughter of the 30th June in Germany, the fascist enthusiasm of Gil Robles began to decline. He then attempted to conciliate fascism and democracy, the corporate state and popular representation, the authority of the state and individual liberty.”

In July, the death of Calvo Sotelo was a great loss to Spanish reaction. He was easily their most intelligent and energetic leader. Primo de Rivera's son is too young, unbalanced and inexperienced. Too many people still remember the dictatorship. Fascism holds out not a prospect of vague hope, but of tangible disappointment. Experience shows that it takes people at least twenty years to recover from disappointment in war. It may take them at

least ten years to forget the record of the dictatorship. With their monarchical and clerical ideas, the fascists have difficulty in attracting the masses. They are small gangs of "pistoleros," and in spite of rumours to the contrary, Hitler did not win as the head of a small gang of knuckleduster boys, but as the acknowledged leader of 17,000,000 voters. The Spanish fascists are thus still in the process of development and immaturity, divided among themselves, without a clear line and without a leader. Big business is not on their side yet. The fascists are too much allied to the agrarians. The Republican government is determined to fight fascism. It rounded up the plotting fascists three times in its short career, in August, 1931, July, 1933 and July, 1936. Fascist attacks prefer the summer; workers' attacks, winter.

But there were some factors which worked for the fascists, until recently. The number of unemployed is growing. Spain numbers 1,000,000 unemployed now. The unemployed might become an easy prey of fascists who promised to spend 1,000,000,000 pesetas on rearmament and 300,000,000 on military airplanes. The attack of the workers by means of the strike may drive big business and agrarians together. That section of the republican parties which lives on profit is already beginning to be disappointed with the republic, and has moved perceptibly to the Right. Without being fascist in the proper sense, the Right Wing Press, "*A.B.C.*," "*El Debate*," "*Informaciones*," etc., tried to act as Hugenberg to a prospective Hitler. The officers

of the army nourish fascist ideas—a vague conglomeration of monarchism and the desire for a strong man, for army power and for keeping down the canaille.

But history shows that only the mistakes of the working-class movement create a chance of victory for fascism. Fascism has always been the result of a broken revolution. Spanish fascism can win only if the lethargy and weakness of the government discredits democracy, and if socialism is discredited by the workers quarrelling among themselves, instead of making a united bid for power. By making war on the Spanish people, the army has brought things to a head. The fascists are discredited, as the Russian Whites were. Only a Spain in ruins will bear their rule.

### *Chapter III*

#### POLITICAL EVENTS UP TO 1935

THE 19th century, used by Britain to amass fabulous wealth, saw in Spain numerous revolutions and civil wars between, on the one side, the liberals who wanted to modernise the country, and on the other side the army, navy, police and clergy. The Peninsular War, in which France and Britain fought for their domination over Spain, had almost destroyed the resources of the country. Spain, later on, had very little chance to recover, because civil wars are usually much more disastrous and destructive than external wars. I remember in Germany a university professor saying, after listening to a communist speech, "When we fought the French and bombarded one of their hospitals, we at least apologised later on. If we came to blows with these communists there would be no mercy and no decency left on either side." As regards his own side, the events of 1933 proved his words only too true.

Through all this bloodshed and disorder, the Spanish liberals gradually made some headway. Industrialisation took place, especially after 1868,

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but on a much smaller scale than in other countries. Excessive taxes, devoted to financing the civil wars and a rapidly growing central bureaucracy, crippled trade. But nevertheless, the imports and exports increased four-fold between 1850 and 1913, the population had grown from 15.7 million in 1860 to 19.9 million in 1910, and the receipts of the treasury had been almost doubled between 1883 and 1913.

At the end of the century, Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines, after repeated rebellions, achieved their desired independence from Spanish mismanagement, only to be taken over at once by the United States. The circumstances in which the Spanish-American war was lost, hurt Spain's national prestige terribly. But the war proved to be the turning point in modern Spanish history. For 300 years Spain had been like the Pole whose sledge was followed by wolves, and who threw out one baby after another, but remained complacent, saying to himself at each loss, "Oh well, why worry. I am not completely lost yet. Look, there are some babies left still." But about 1900 Spain had nothing left. At first, profound pessimism spread. The inferiority of Spain under modern conditions had been definitely rubbed in, the self-complacency of the nation shaken. A regeneration started which culminated in the present revolution. It is a pity that history shows us that only terrible blows will shake national self-complacency. Slighter incidents like Britain's defeat by Mussolini are not likely to start a wave of regeneration in this country, for "look how many babies we still have."

The Spanish-American war, apparently a blow to Spanish prestige, regenerated Spanish morale. At first it seemed disastrous for trade, but it proved a boon. Much capital which had been wasted in the Spanish possessions abroad could now be invested at home. While working on this book, I found that there could be hardly a more profitable occupation for an Englishman at present than to study very carefully and thoughtfully the history of the Spanish Empire.

Spain, after 1874, was ruled by the big landowners. Imitating England in everything, these landowners had formed two groups, the one founded on Castile and the other upon Andalusia. They called themselves liberals and conservatives respectively. There was no essential difference between them. They were like two branches of one trust who advertise against one another in the papers. The working class occasionally grew restless. Once only, in 1909, did a serious revolution take place, in Barcelona. This insurrection was caused by the Catalonian movement for independence, by the general crisis in the government, and, to a certain extent, by the Russian revolution in 1905. The insurrection, led by anarchists, was brought to a head by one of the frequent disasters in Morocco. The workers of Barcelona who were going to be sent to Morocco preferred to resist.

The Great War came, and industry grew by leaps and bounds. It had all of a sudden to supply the Spanish internal market, and in addition found a ready market among the belligerents. The economic

structure of Spain changed and dissolved the basis of the political power of the big landowners. The possessing classes in the countryside ceased to be regarded as the representatives of the country as a whole, and the docility of the electorate began to fail them. In 1917, business people, middle classes and workers joined in a series of rebellions. They were defeated. But the new economics continued to demand new politics. The world crisis of 1921 brought things again to a head. A number of temporary measures were taken, but the unrest continued to grow. At last, in 1923, the King fired his last shot. The ultimate device of any government when in serious trouble, a military dictatorship, was established.

#### THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP

In 1923 Alfonso XIII had made a decision which in the end proved fatal to him. Between 1902 and 1923 he had had thirty-three Cabinets. In other words, each one lasted only about 7½ months on the average. Alfonso XIII was quite successful in thus preventing Parliament from becoming so strong as to embarrass him. But at the same time he prevented his ministers from governing properly and from developing a mature and stable policy. Now, in 1923, during a severe crisis, Alfonso XIII saw himself pushed along by the industrialists \* and by the army. He persuaded General Primo de Rivera to establish a dictatorship.

\* It is significant that Primo de Rivera took power in Barcelona, an industrial centre.



It is well known that Hitler's victory was hastened by the Junkers' fearing an investigation into the Osthilfe scandal. In 1923 the Spanish army saw its considerable political influence endangered by the military disaster in Morocco, in July 1921. An investigation was opened. This enquiry would have shown the personal responsibility of the King, who in a letter to a subordinate General (discovered in 1931), had ordered the attack, over the head of the Commander-in-Chief. The republican party, rather timidly, began to hint at this fact in Parliament. Thus Parliament had to go. On September 15th, the investigation into the conduct of the military chiefs in Morocco was to begin. On September 13th, the *coup d'état* took place.

Present-day Spanish revolutionaries owe much to Primo de Rivera. He did much to liberate them from the nightmare of fascism by showing fascism at work and thus depriving it of most of its attraction for the working masses. In 1923, however, the masses welcomed enthusiastically the dictatorship or, at least, they proffered no serious resistance. The middle classes, in true fascist style, were neutralised by promises and by a demagogic attack on the corruption of former governments. The Social Democrats remained neutral. They defined their attitude in the following characteristic words: "Adversaries of the old state of things, they disapprove of the military movement which brought it to an end; but in view of the impossibility of realising their own ideal in the present circumstances,

they preserve a calm attitude of expectation." (quot. in Baerlein, p. 278). The anarchists, disinterested in politics and suffering from the effects of internal strife and of recent severe repression, offered no resistance.

Primo de Rivera, by his somewhat hasty and ill-prepared *coup d'état*, was the first consciously to imitate Italian fascism in Europe. Soon both Alfonso XIII and Primo de Rivera paid a visit to Mussolini in order to get his advice. Up to 1928 things went pretty smoothly. In August 1924, it is true, the army had another catastrophic breakdown in Morocco. This time, however, with the collaboration of the French army, Primo de Rivera managed to defeat Abdel Krim. The Moroccan situation has remained comparatively quiet ever since. The dictator's economic policy satisfied the industrialists and financiers. Vast programmes of public works were planned and even begun. In 1925 a Ten-year plan foreshadowed the expenditure of 3,500 million pesetas for public works. In addition 2,600 million pesetas were to be spent on the railroads between 1925 and 1930. Public works like roads, railways, canals, etc., increased the value of property. Large government loans furnished profitable investment. The public debt was increased by one-third. The policy of economic nationalism—demanded by Catalonia and Vizcaya—was carried through consistently. High tariffs kept out foreign competition. All coal consumers were compelled to use at least 40 per cent. Spanish coal. At the same time, the workers were kept in their place, the



strikes were reduced to about one-fifth or one-tenth of what they were before. The industrialists could without resistance carry through the rationalisation of their enterprises. The power of the State paralysed the workers' efforts to resist a decrease in their wages. The peasant insurrections, so conspicuous between 1918 and 1921, suddenly ceased. The success of the theocratic military monarchy seemed assured.

In a somewhat despotic manner, Primo de Rivera also looked after the poor and lonely. It was typical of his mentality that he was very proud of having spent State money on rescuing for poor families in need, the garments which they had placed in the pawnshops. He further made some of the usual fascist concessions to the workers. Instead of wages he offered honours. For long service in a factory a worker could receive the *Medalla del Trabajo*. He also made some feeble efforts to establish the Corporate State. Many Social Democratic leaders in Italy intended to collaborate with Mussolini. They were not allowed to. In Spain, however, the Social Democrats had never been in a responsible and powerful position. They, therefore, were not discredited, and Primo de Rivera looked upon them as the future pillars of his corporate state. He created quite a number of jobs to Social Democratic officials, and hoped in this way to bind them to his system.\* The workers in Barcelona had demanded a share in the administra-

\* A list of state positions held by socialists under Primo de Rivera is given in Andrade, p. 242.

tion of the factories, and a fixed percentage of the profits. As a halfway concession they received mixed tribunals of employers and employees.

But after 1928 the world crisis set in, and Primo de Rivera was not its only victim. Now the warnings came true which Maura had uttered in the first days of the dictatorship when he had said that "the dictatorship can be compared with a bicycle going full speed. So long as it goes, it keeps its balance but at the moment it is stopped it will fall to the ground." In 1928 it stopped. Primo de Rivera gradually lost everybody's support, that of the army, industrialists and middle classes. His authority had vanished already when the support of the army crumbled away. To be sure, of the 3,500 million pesetas foreseen by the reconstruction budget in 1925, 1,500 million pesetas were destined for the army and navy. To be sure, the dictator had found numerous civil jobs for his military friends. But he was unable to satisfy all the demands of an army which in Spain is nothing more than an institution for providing jobs for the better classes and an instrument of political bullying. Primo de Rivera, being an infantryman, got into conflict with the artillery officers, who combined against him with the leader of the Conservative Party, Sanchez Guerra. When Sanchez Guerra was arrested in 1929, a court of carefully selected brigadier generals found him not guilty. When he entered the court, his judges rose to their feet. The people could not fail to see that Rivera had lost the support of the army.

The crisis compelled the government to suspend the loans and the public works just when the industrialists needed them most. The agrarian crisis diminished the revenue of the landowner, who was used to living an easy life in Madrid or Barcelona or Toledo on the work of his peasants, and who now devoted his ample leisure time in the cafés to grumbling about the weakness and incompetence of the dictator.

About this time a petroleum monopoly was created. Spain began to import great quantities of Soviet oil. This step annoyed English and American financiers. By a strange coincidence the peseta lost much of its value, and reached a point as low as that touched in the Spanish-American war.

At the same time, the middle classes became restless. Dissatisfaction among the middle classes in many countries is indicated first by students' troubles. The dictator had done everything to strangle the intellectual life of the nation by a rigid censorship and by yielding on all educational questions to the demands of the clergy. Now the Jesuits insisted that the examinations in one of their colleges should get the approbation of one of the universities. The universities were convinced that the teaching in this college was of a very low quality. The Jesuits won, and the government published a decree to this effect. All over Spain the students revolted. After a prolonged fight, which included street battles between police and students, the government yielded. Women students were prominent in this fight.

It was strange to see how the middle classes, so fond of worshipping great and strong men, overnight altered their views about the personality which had appeared to them almost as a divine saviour. Hitler and Mussolini will find in this experience something to ponder about. Again it was shown that for the middle classes the great man is the successful man, and that they are unable to see human greatness divorced from success. If they see that a man is successful, they at once invest him with all the qualities which a perusal of books about Cæsar and Napoleon has made them associate with a great man. If he ceases to be successful at once the halo of greatness disappears. In Spain, the middle classes discovered that their Duce after all was nothing but a glorified corporal who shouts orders right and left, and who in his simple mind believes that a dictator is a man who orders other people about. What formerly had appeared as a firm and iron grip over affairs was now resented as an uninformed, impatient and arbitrary dabbling with intricate problems. The interference of police officials with the private lives of the people had been hailed as a determined struggle against Bolshevism. But now the middle class man became annoyed at the police interfering with his after-dinner speeches, spying on his conversations, opening his letters, and doing everything that is necessary to combat Bolshevism efficiently. The intelligentsia began to feel that the persecution of the greatest minds in the country, like Unamuno, was a disgrace to the country since it was no longer justified by economic

stability and good meals in the evening. The whole hollowness of middle class worship for the great man was again exposed.

At the end of 1929, the *Estampa* had asked Primo de Rivera what he thought about the year 1929. He answered: "It may go to hell. It was a most unsympathetic year. I hope 1930 will bring me the rest that I desire." 1930, indeed, gave him the rest he desired. Faced with this discontent in the army, industrial and middle classes, and at the same time afraid that the workers would seize the first chance to revenge themselves, the King, in order to save himself, dismissed Primo de Rivera in January, 1930. But he had miscalculated. It was he who now was made responsible. Formerly it had appeared as if the King was always good, but somewhat unlucky in the choice of his ministers. Now the King himself was made responsible for his dictator. All over Spain demonstrations took place, and everywhere the slogan was "Down with the King." The fall of Primo de Rivera was the first act of the Spanish revolution. A new general, Berenguer, tried to revert to constitutionalism. In vain. A dictatorship destroys the possibilities of solving social conflicts by peaceful gradualism. The censorship had deceived the rulers about the true feeling of the country. They permitted an election. The victory of the Republicans was overwhelming. On April 14th, 1931, Alfonso XIII fled the country, harassed by the memory of Louis XVI. The Republic began its career.

THE REPUBLIC

At first the Republic showed great energy. In the Cortes Constituyentes, the Right had 42, the Centre 136 and the Left 291 seats, 117 socialists among them. In August, 1931, the religious orders are dissolved. The former dictator, Berenguer, is condemned to twenty years' imprisonment for high treason. In October women's suffrage is granted, by 160 to 121 votes. A law for the protection of the Republic is passed. In November the Cortes find Alfonso XIII guilty of high treason. The former king is declared outside the law. In December, the constitution is passed, and the election of Zamora as president takes place, with 362 out of 410 votes. In January, 1932, the property of the Jesuits is seized by the State. In September, 1932, a law confiscates the land of the grandees, property worth about 25,000,000 pounds. This series of measures shows an energetic government, a government which almost reminds us of the Jacobins.

There were early signs, however, to show that the red cap alone does not transform a Liberal into a Jacobin. The constitution is a typical Liberal document. It is modelled on the ill-fated constitution of Weimar. Like the Weimar constitution, it indulges in empty phraseology. For instance, its first article declares "Spain is a democratic republic of workers of all classes, which organises itself into a regiment of Liberty and Justice." A number of articles further remained empty words in the first years of the Republic, for instance the

articles 10 to 22 which give autonomy to the different districts. Article 34 abolishes the censorship. Nevertheless, all Left Wing Spanish newspapers appear with large blanks, due to the censorship. The right of asylum envisaged in article 30 is continually broken. Article 46, which declares work in its different forms to be a social obligation, has never been put into force, unless sitting in cafés and drawing dividends is regarded as a new form of work. Of the entire constitution of Weimar in the long run only one article survived the vicissitudes of the time. This was the famous article 48, which declared it to be constitutional to suspend the constitution. Similarly, article 42 in the Spanish constitution enables the government "in the interest of public security" to abolish by decree most constitutional liberties. As in Germany, governments are very fond of invoking this article. Although the Republic guarantees to each worker the conditions necessary for existence "in dignity," it has not been very successful in that direction. The only new feature of the constitution is its respect for the League of Nations, which is mentioned repeatedly. But if the constitution declares that "Spain renounces war as an instrument of national policy" (article 6), subsequent events in 1934 showed that a war against its own citizens was not a war but a police action, long before the Archbishop of York decided to draw a distinction of this kind. To sum up, judged by its phraseology the Spanish constitution is a very well-meaning document. But it is little more.

From the end of 1932 onwards the Republican government got into serious difficulties. The record of the Republic in the economic field was not at all enviable. Progressive governments are often unlucky in that they take power just in time to shoulder the responsibility for a world crisis. We find that in Germany and England socialists were burdened with the responsibility for the effects of the last crisis in the eyes of everybody who did not study economics. So in Spain was the Republic. The reactionaries with one voice blamed the government for the crisis.

They could point to the fact that the issues of new capital by limited liability companies had declined steadily. At the same time, the strikes had increased :

	<i>Issue of Capital</i>	<i>Number of Strikes</i>
1927	1,709 million pesetas	107
1928	2,824 „ „	87
1929	213 „ „	96
1930	802 „ „	402
1931	534 „ „	734
1932	42 „ „	681
1933	51 „ „	1,039

Between 1930 and 1932 the import of chemical manure had increased by 220,000 tons, to drop again by 160,000 tons in 1933. The Republic was blamed. It also had to take the blame for the bad harvest of 1933. The agrarian law was met by sabotage everywhere: the proprietor "has to suspend his

initiative," as the Marques de Ybarra\* expresses it. A capitalist crisis usually disappears because prices go down, and in this way the surplus products can be absorbed. In the great capitalist countries prices decreased by 20 to 35 per cent. between 1928 and 1934. In Spain they rose by 24 per cent. The production of iron was halved between 1924 and 1934. Whereas the depression in the big capitalist countries reached its deepest point in 1932, it continued to grow in Spain. In December, 1933, Spain had officially 620,000 unemployed, among them 395,000 land workers.

In consequence a period of reaction set in, in the years 1933 to 1935. In March, 1933, fascist propaganda was declared illegal. In July, the Soviet Union was at last recognised. But in August the law for the protection of the Republic was repealed. In December a new Cortes was elected. It included 207 Right Wing deputies—62 of Gil Robles' Acción Popular—99 Left Wing deputies—among these 58 socialists and one communist—and 167 deputies belonging to the Centre. In January, 1934 the establishment of concentration camps was announced, and in April an amnesty for Right Wing offenders was passed.

On June 8th Azaña, Left Republican, had resigned.† In September Lerroux, Right Wing Republican, had formed a government. In April, 1934, it was replaced by the Samper government, the structure of

\* "Estudio económico-social anterior y posterior a 1931," p. 151.

† The following account is based on Maurin, "Hacia la segunda revolución." Ch. 12 to 14.

which resembled that of von Papen in Germany. Samper was unable to maintain order. His chief counter measure against the strikes was a solemn declaration that Spain was absolutely quiet. The wave of strikes never ceased for one moment in all these years. In the beginning of September, the proprietors of Catalonia held a big meeting. A general strike in Madrid was the workers' answer. In Asturias Gil Robles held a Fascist parade, which was answered by the general strike, and by the entrance of the anarchists into the alianzas obreras (the United Front). Socialists and communists held in Madrid a mass meeting of 100,000 persons. The police searched the working-class quarters for arms, and the People's House in Madrid was closed. Special tribunals—created originally by the socialists—imprisoned workers by the hundred. The ruling class was in plain panic. On October 3rd the Fascists of Gil Robles entered the government, and the following day the workers mobilised everywhere. The insurrection in Barcelona and Asturias began.

In Barcelona the situation was singularly favourable for a successful insurrection. The Madrid government tried to take away the liberties of Catalonia and thus had antagonised the middle classes. The workers, except for the anarchists, were united in the alianzas obreras, a form of local councils. They proposed an alliance to the nationalists of the Generalidad. The rebels could count on many of the peasants in the Catalan countryside. But nevertheless, the insurrection ended as a farce.

The alianzas obreras declared a general strike.



In spite of the opposition of the anarchists, the strike was complete. Up to October 5th, 1934, the anarchists alone could call forth a general strike. Times had changed so much that a general strike was possible despite them. The Catalan nationalists, however, were divided among themselves. A republican and a fascist wing fought one another fiercely. At the same time the nationalists were afraid to lose by an alliance with the workers. In case of a fight a socialist republic would be the undesirable outcome. A mass demonstration took place. The workers demanded arms. Automobiles were confiscated by the alianzas for couriers. A workers' militia was being formed. The alianzas seize a government building. Their representatives enter the houses of political opponents and confiscate arms. On the evening of October the 6th 10,000 workers are organised in the militia. Everything depends on what the Generalidad will do. For the Generalidad has about 10,000 armed policemen. The army's loyalty is doubtful as far as the soldiers are concerned. And there are only 5,000 soldiers. In the evening the nationalist leaders proclaim the Catalan Republic from the balcony of the Generalidad. But they refrain from using their armed forces. Only the badly armed workers resist the army. Some fierce fighting takes place. Even to-day a number of buildings still show traces of the bullets and shells. On October 7th law and order is restored. The anarchists, over the wireless, announce their intention to resume work. For one more day the general

strike continues. Then work is being resumed. For the first time Barcelona has failed to lead the Spanish revolution. This failure will soon lead to a regrouping of political forces in Barcelona.

Very different was the insurrection in Asturias, which led to the establishment of a commune. Maurin explains why the Asturian workers had the great honour of being in the front of the fight. Madrid lacks a big industry. Barcelona suffers from a continual influx of land workers and of unskilled workers, who while giving the movement an explosive character, deprive it of steadiness. Asturias is populated by workers who are used to conditions of big industry. For twenty-five years they have worked steadily, building up the co-operative organisations, trade unions, cultural institutions, newspapers, etc. The Asturian workers were the first to break the spell of the military dictatorship by their strike in 1927. In October, 1934, they were united in the alianzas obreras. Socialists, anarchists and communists for the first time collaborated in one organisation.

The Commune in Asturias lasted a fortnight, from October 5th to 19th. The movement was organised by the mine-workers of Mieres, a small and dismal village twenty miles south of Oviedo. The main object of the struggle was Oviedo, the provincial capital of Asturias. On October 5th about 200 workers formed the first company of the Red Army in Mieres. They were armed with revolvers and—being miners—with dynamite. Three companies of soldiers and policemen opposed them.



After many hours of struggle the better equipped government troops were beaten. The news of the victory soon spread through the whole mining district. In many villages police quarters were stormed and the arms seized. Oviedo was conquered. In Trobia twenty-seven cannons and twelve machine-guns were seized. On October 6th the rifle factory De la Vega was occupied. The soldiers left it without a fight. Their officers wanted to burn the rifles in the factory, but no petrol could be found. The workers tried to be helpful by finding two bottles of brandy instead. But the brandy would not burn. In this way 21,000 rifles and 200 machine-guns fell into the hands of the workers. Soon they were distributed throughout Asturias. But ammunition was scarce. In Oviedo the banks were occupied and the money seized. A guerilla war was taking place throughout the province. Two sergeants from Oviedo went over to the revolution, and directed the military operations. The factories worked day and night to transform the confiscated motor-cars into armoured cars, and to manufacture hand-grenades.

Money is abolished, complete "war communism" reigns. The distribution of goods is directed and controlled by the workers' committees, which issue sheets of paper "valid for one kilo of bread," etc. The sale of alcoholic liquor is prohibited. The troops of the government do not dare to approach Asturias, and meet with sabotage everywhere.

Soon, however, the consequences of fifty years of working-class disunity make themselves felt.

The Asturian miners see themselves isolated. The Catalanian insurrection collapses. Madrid keeps quiet. Still, the government is so doubtful of its own troops that it has to fetch troops from Morocco, the Foreign Legion. Aeroplanes are sent over Asturias which first drop proclamations and then bombs. The revolutionaries fail to increase their supply of ammunition. The cannons are mis-managed and get out of order. On October 11th it is clear that the fight is lost. The workers of Spain are not yet united. Nevertheless, it takes the government troops eight days to overcome the revolution. 5,000 men attack Llano, and sixty revolutionaries hold it for 6½ hours. The village Cimadevilla can be seized only after the revolutionaries are all dead. The women everywhere take an active part in the fight.

On October 19th General Ochoa, of the counter-revolutionary army, concluded an armistice with the revolutionaries. The General knew that it would take him weeks to defeat the Red Army. He was willing to accept a compromise. The miners promised to disband the Red Army. General Ochoa—now living in the U.S.A.—agreed that the Arabs and the scum of the world's population organised in the Foreign Legion should not enter the mining villages. Ever since the days of Wat Tyler, the ruling classes have broken agreements concluded with rebellious peasants or workers. The Asturian miners laid down their arms. The Arabs and the Foreign Legion invaded the mining villages.

Most socialists know Lissagaray's description of the blood-bath that followed upon the Paris Commune. If it were not for Hitler, one might say that the atrocities of the Spanish troops in Asturias had one precedent only—in the Paris of 1871. The Spanish troops combined the brutality of Thiers with the refined cruelty of Hitler's guards. There is not one atrocity mentioned in "The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror," which was not committed in Asturias. In many villages dozens of workers were bound together with rope, and then fired at with a machine-gun. 1,500 workers were butchered in cold blood by the triumphant counter-revolution—after the armistice. Prisoners were tortured. Hung up by their arms, they were beaten with whips. Rubber truncheons hit their backs and dislocated their kidneys. The clerical terror tried to outdo brown brutality. Again, the troops fighting for the sacred ideals of private profit showed their true face.

Centuries ago, the Asturian Christians hid from the Arabs the relics of the Saints in the inaccessible mountains of their country. Now, the very Christian and Catholic government had sent the Moors to spread the true faith among the miners of the Asturian valleys. Those miners who escaped from the troops, fled into the mountains, and wandered about, hungry, in the cold and the mist.

All over Spain, 35,000 socialists, anarchists and communists were imprisoned. Reaction had triumphed. But the government of the landowners had triumphed so ignominiously, it had violated so

flagrantly the elementary laws of a civilized society, and it was so devoid of any constructive ideas, that it repeated the fate of Pyrrhus. The October repression paralysed the government—as though it were horrified by its own barbarism. Its energies were exhausted. It never again did anything in particular. The one exception was a revision of the law for Agrarian Reform, published in 1935. The new law ordered the compensation of expropriated landlords by 4 per cent. government bonds and aimed at creating a new class of small proprietors on the land. But the law, like its predecessor, altered little in the world of reality.

The working class movement gave no rest to the government. The strikes never ceased for a week. The movement towards unity among the workers grew day by day, after Asturias had shown the way. The government staggered along. The dead-weight of absentee landlords prevented any economic reconstruction of the country. In February 1936, the new elections were due.

Asturias dominated the elections. The monarchist and clerical posters showed the broken tower of the cathedral of Oviedo—"this is marxist civilization." The Left concentrated on the issue of amnesty for the 35,000 political prisoners. The confessional had, in the election of 1933, prejudiced many women in favour of the Right Wing candidates. This time, sympathy with and pity for the human victims of clerical oppression made many women cast their votes for the candidates of the Popular Front. Further, the anar-

chists, out of loyalty to their imprisoned and tortured comrades, disregarded their apolitical principles and urged their followers to vote. Their votes decided the elections. By terrorising the workers, the government had thus struck a death-blow at itself. In Asturias the Left had suffered a tactical defeat but won a strategical victory. The Popular Front was formed on a very broad basis, comprising the entire "Left," from the Republicans to the communists. The experiences of Asturias and the blows of the common enemy had done much to bring the workers together. The change of Moscow's foreign policy had decided the communists to join in a coalition, the common programme of which was not inspired by socialism but by moderate Liberalism. Further, the reactionary government of 1933-36 had on many workers an effect similar to that of the Taff Vale decision in England. Many workers, for decades under anarchist influence, now saw by their own daily experience that economic action alone was futile if the entire forces of the State were marshalled against them. With the victory of the Popular Front a new period began in Spanish history.

## Chapter IV

### LARGO CABALLERO

THE acknowledged leader of the Spanish militant socialists is Caballero. He is, too, the most outstanding personality in the European socialist movement since the death of Lenin. In a movement which has produced either shapeless and monotonous bureaucrats, or intellectuals who combine an affection for the proletariat with a strong sense of æsthetic appreciation, and who are more at home among their flowers and Egyptian vases than in the slums of the working classes—among this crowd of sturdy Trade Union officials and anæmic intellectuals—here is a real personality. Like Lenin, he is from peasant stock. His brain reflects the mentality of the Spanish peasant. He is now sixty-six, but still looks fifty. Prison and the death of his wife have aged him during late years. Yet he is still more alive than most young people. He began life as a navvy, and worked for his living from the age of seven. He was over twenty when he learned to read and write. For almost forty years he was a Trade Union organiser for the Union of Building Workers. He did exactly the correct thing and thought exactly the correct thing.

In 1917 he was sentenced to imprisonment for life. But under Primo de Rivera he was a member of the Council of State. The first Republican government made him Minister of Labour. He tried to do things, being brought up with a respect for reform and parliamentarianism. He believed that he could do things. His experience changed him completely. He felt that he fought in vain against the ill-will and petty sabotage of the officials of his ministry. In his room on the first floor of the ministry he devised laws and decrees. He sent them up to the second floor for his subordinates to fill in the details. When they came back, nothing of his original intentions had been left in, and the details had completely reversed the sense of his decree. For months he exhausted himself in a vain and losing struggle against his officials. Unlike many of his colleagues abroad who had the same experience when they were ministers, but who feared to lose their reputation of "strong men" by admitting it, he learned from this experience. He saw that even if he managed to get something of his original intentions into the shape of a law, and even if parliament had passed that law, almost nothing was ever put into operation. The sabotage of his officials in the country rendered the law futile.

This experience induced Caballero to do something very unusual. He began to study. Patiently he read through the works of Marx and of Lenin. His right hand man told me that "all of a sudden he saw things as they are." He saw that it was impossible to expect the liberal bourgeoisie to

socialise away their profits. He saw that a coalition with the Liberals has never meant anything else, and can in the nature of things never mean anything else, but a loss of prestige and credit by the socialists. In the period of repression, in 1934, he was in prison—for the sixth time in his life. In November 1935 he was released. The parliamentary section of the Socialist Party made itself independent. He waged a bitter struggle from prison against this measure. During the last years he has become the recognised leader of the militant socialists. His popularity is immense, and "Viva Caballero" is found on the walls of the houses and churches, in the railway carriages and on the pavements in the streets. The *Daily Telegraph* insists on calling Caballero the communist or anarchist leader. Thereby it shows more disapproval of his person than a respect for accuracy.

Caballero's popularity has not suffered much from the mistakes he made during the October uprising. He is treated like a reigning monarch. People say that many of those faults were not his own but those of his advisers. He has done more than anybody else to achieve the unity of the proletariat. He first united the socialists and communists in the socialist youth, and established a close collaboration with the communist party. He now puts most of his energies into an attempt to unite the socialists with the anarchists. His prestige among all the workers is so immense that he managed to go to Zaragoza, the centre of anarchism in the north, and to hold a meeting of 30,000 people

without provoking anarchist violence, without being shouted down, and without experiencing anything more than a few interruptions. If it is true that a revolution can be victorious only if it is pulled through by a person who becomes the symbol of the aspirations of the working masses, then the Spanish revolution has found this symbol already in Caballero.

Caballero is often called the Spanish Lenin. Caballero's speeches, like those of Lenin, are unadorned, unemotional, even dry, merely intent on imparting some truth. In their outward appearance both popular leaders are also remarkably alike. As regards Lenin, I can only speak from photographs and descriptions. But these descriptions fit Caballero quite well. He has a wonderfully intellectual face with very bright and wide eyes, a high forehead, the head almost bald, with some white hair at the top; he talks vividly, and when he has made a point his forehead becomes wrinkled and is drawn up, as if he were saying, "Now these are the facts and this is the truth, and you can take it or leave it." In arguing and making points, his face shows a shrewd expression which was also noticeable in Lenin. He has the practical common sense of the peasant. His friends often contradict him, but in the back of their minds they suspect that he is right.

## Chapter V

### THE EVENTS OF 1936

THE Spanish civil war of 1936 did not come as a surprise. For five years now Spain has been in turmoil. Strikes, shootings and local insurrections were a daily occurrence. The ruling classes lack both the material resources and the mental acumen of their British brethren. In the absence of an external enemy — hereditary or otherwise — they could not enforce peace at home by frightening people out of their wits about dangers from abroad. The workers in town and country are desperately poor. There is nothing of the spirit which makes British workers entrust the safeguarding of their interests to knighted officials. Things are, in fact, so radically different from those in Britain that it will be best if I first simply relate some typical observations made in May and thus try to give readers an idea of the Spanish political atmosphere which led to the present civil war.

An observer is soon struck by the extent to which public life bears the stamp of the working-class offensive. The workers cannot conquer the State before they have dominated the streets. Proletarian symbols are found everywhere, on houses, walls,

churches and railway carriages. Everywhere the mysterious initials which sum up the aspirations of the working class. Everywhere U.H.P., C.N.T., U.G.T.\* Everywhere hammer and sickle, and inscriptions like "Viva Caballero" and "Muerte a Gil Robles." Everywhere large posters call the workers to a meeting, or small posters call for a strike or for a boycott. In Barcelona, the biggest Spanish town, propaganda for a Popular Olympiad to be held in Barcelona to counteract Hitler's Olympiad. A tourist bureau for workers displays posters with hammer and swallow.

The greeting of the clenched fist has become the common property of all militant workers. It is the best introduction to any working class quarter. Half an hour after the train had crossed the frontier from France, it was greeted with the raised fist. All over Spain it was the same—the clenched fist was the usual greeting.

On the bookstalls appear many workers' newspapers and revolutionary books, which books have been best-sellers for seven years now. Russian films are shown at the cinemas. In the evening many Spaniards take a stroll about 6 or 7 o'clock on one of the main streets. When I was in Spain ten years ago, these streets were filled in the evening with well-dressed people. Now the workers dominate the scene completely. Few well-dressed people

\* U.H.P. means Union de hermanos proletarios, Union of proletarian brethren, and is the designation for all militant workers. C.N.T., or Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo, is the anarchist Trade Union (with about 600,000 members). U.G.T., or Union General de Trabajadores, is the socialist Trade Union (with about 1,400,000 members).

are ever seen. They are afraid, and keep quite to themselves in their villas, cars, or in those cafés which charge prohibitive prices.

The class struggle takes place in Spain in a ruthless and almost undisguised form. On the one side the workers. Their main weapon is the strike. On the other side the landowners and capitalists, the Church, the army and the police. Their chief weapon is the bullet.

#### STRIKES

In Barcelona I witnessed a strike of the waiters which contained most of the elements of the Spanish situation. The strike affected all hotels, restaurants, cafés and bars. It began on a Saturday night at 10 o'clock. The employers, demoralised and impressed by the strength and determination of the workers, issued a circular in which they recommended the "voluntary" closing of all establishments. The stoppage was complete for seventy-two hours. Only one bar near the Palace of Justice was allowed to work—for the purpose of sending food to those detained in the cells. Some cafés tried to open. Groups of strikers asked them to close, and in cases of unwillingness, smashed all the glasses and thus enforced closing. About forty strikers were arrested, but after pleading guilty at the police station, they were released at once. The strike put the whole life of the town out of gear. It struck at everybody accustomed to have his meals in a restaurant or to meet friends in a café. It struck at the cyclists who, on their race through the



whole of Spain, had just arrived in Barcelona. Sport does not come first in Spain.

The strikers demanded a 20 per cent. increase in their minimum wage, i.e. an increase from 330 pesetas (£9 10s.) to 400 pesetas (£11 7s. 6d.) per month. They further demanded the abolition of the tip, which demoralises the worker and undermines his dignity as such. Finally, only members of the two Trade Unions—the anarchist and the socialist—should be employed, and, even then, only workers who remained in their union while unemployed. The employers should get workers only through the Labour Exchanges of the Unions. The strikers further demanded a strict eight hour day and up to three months' wages in case of illness.

The strike committee had its office in the central street. On Saturday evening the flag of the province of Catalonia was seen on the balcony. The following morning, after much discussion, the red flag was added. Discussion and dissension among the strikers was one of the main features of the strike. This was natural in view of the dis-unity of the workers, who are split up into two main groups—socialists and anarchists. (There are groups of communists, Trotskyites, Marxists, etc., also.)

The strike ended on the intervention of the Government of Catalonia and of its Councillor for Labour Questions. A great part of the workers' demands was accepted. With regard to others, an arbitrator was appointed who promised to give his decision "as soon as possible." An overcrowded

meeting of the workers accepted this settlement. At this meeting the secretary of the socialist Trade Union made the significant remark that "as a result of each strike the prices of commodities rise," and that this would directly take place in the hotel industry, because the employers would at once use this strike as an excuse to raise the prices to the consumer.

The anarchists and the Marxists were dissatisfied with this solution. Considerable excitement prevailed. At 4 a.m. the dissatisfied elements made a demonstration of protest. The ordinary citizen was pleased. A bourgeois paper said that "the town had ceased to be clothed in a veil of sorrow (tristeza)."

#### A BONE OF CONTENTION

I discussed the matter with some anarchists and Marxists. They argued that the strike had not ended in a full victory because the socialists and communists did not want to embarrass the Government by going on with the strike. They predicted that in France also the communists would do as much to curb the strikers as anybody else and that fear of endangering the Franco-Soviet Pact was at the basis of their conciliatory policy both in France and in Spain. The anarchists complained that the socialist union had signed a blank cheque, that the possibilities of a united struggle had not been used, and that, again, the necessities of the tactics of party politics had proved incompatible with the industrial aspirations of the workers. They claimed

that in this case again "direct action" without State intervention would have led further. With or without the Popular Front, the workers could not be guided by a desire to respect the convenience of the authorities. The anarchists condemn political alliances with Liberals which, according to them, bind the working class to the defence of a state of affairs which perpetuates all inequalities and injustices, all the misery and indignity of bourgeois rule.

Nevertheless, in this case, the unity of action which the strike committee had achieved was a triumph in itself. Later on, in Madrid, I witnessed a waiters' strike, in which the anarchists and the socialists were disunited. The old feud between them flared up again. Revolver shots were exchanged, and several workers killed each other. The anarchists believe that the arbitration machine which the State is beginning to set up and which the socialists welcome, is simply another means of taming the workers, of taking the initiative out of their own hands, and of increasing the stranglehold which the Spanish State has over the working class movement. They prefer illegal and unofficial strikes. They started one in the hotel industry of Madrid, but the majority of establishments continued to work. The prestige of the anarchists suffered severely. They decided to use coercion. They terrorised people who went into cafés by throwing stones, and later on by throwing bombs into from five to twenty cafés each evening. These bombs are not meant to kill. They make a terrible noise—like thunder breaking directly over your head.

But only occasionally is anybody hurt. I was near a café when a bomb was thrown. The police moved very slowly towards the place in order not to arrest anybody. The policemen are afraid of anarchist violence. The public in the café was not specially excited, only somewhat worried. A big café nearby closed at once. Police were placed in front of the others. This guerrilla warfare went on for more than a week, but brought no immediate success. But anarchist obstinacy is famous throughout Spain.

#### STRIKES AND THE CENSORSHIP

Each day, hundreds of local strikes are taking place all over Spain. A strict censorship suppresses most of the news about them, and allows reports only in the local press. The poverty of the country, the effects of the agrarian world crisis, and the brutal tyranny of former governments have driven wages down so much that many workers live on the edge of starvation. They are now using the favourable political situation to win a decent wage. They know that the employers can pay. Take, for instance, the case of a railway company in the North of Spain. Its dividends grew steadily from 3 per cent. in 1902 to 14 per cent. in 1930-31, and it paid out 12 per cent. in each of the last three years. But it paid some of its workers only 5, or more accurately, 4.76 pesetas a day (about 2/6). It was natural that the workers should strike and that public opinion was favourable to them.

The reactionaries reply to the strike with the

bullet, the razor blade and the axe. On my way to Oviedo I passed through a place called Miranda del Ebro. A local fascist, member of Gil Robles' "Acción Popular," had just gone into the house of the socialist mayor, a tailor, with a razor blade and inflicted a deadly wound on him. The wife and son of the mayor mishandled the fascist until he was almost dead. The mayor had, some days ago, imposed a fine on the fascist's father. The workers, who felt that the State did not protect them, went to the church and burned it as a protest. The priests are usually accused of being behind the fascist terror. Further, a general strike was declared.

Oviedo itself was the centre of the revolution in October, 1934. Much of the town is still in ruins, but it is being rebuilt rapidly. The province of Asturias, of which it is the capital, is very similar to Wales. The same mountains and valleys, the same mines and villages. Oviedo's position is similar to that of Cardiff in relation to the mining valleys. The experiences of the revolution have shown the workers there that they must be armed and the "anti-fascist militia" is strong in Oviedo.

One of the anti-fascist workers had a private quarrel with a policeman. The policeman had been disarmed. The police felt that their honour was at stake. Some days later, some of them, in civilian clothes, went to a big dancing hall which was full of workers. They shot with their revolvers into the air and in the confusion switched off the

lights. They then shot into the workers. When the workers fled out of the hall, a car of uniformed policemen awaited them and used their rifles against them. Thirty-two workers were wounded severely. A general strike, i.e. a strike of all the workers in Oviedo, followed. The Governor, a Liberal, came down on the side of the workers. Some of the guilty policemen were arrested and some were transferred to other towns.

Take another case. In a village near Murcia, the socialist mayor returned with a group of land workers after having, in Murcia, negotiated about a strike. He was received by a great number of people. Among them was a fascist family. Suddenly they attacked with pistols and axes the father of the alcalde, a man of 77 years. He received five revolver wounds and was struck several times in the head with an axe. He died at once. "The Guardia Civil detained the aggressors."

#### TRYING TO PROVOKE REBELLION

In all these incidents one does not know whether to wonder more at the ruthless brutality of the police and army, or at the patience and discipline of the workers. Everywhere the fascists try to provoke a large-scale rebellion in order to be able to use their armed forces and beat it down. Two days before I came to Toledo, 15,000 members of the anti-fascist militia had held a meeting in that town. There is in Toledo a school for training officers of the infantry—formerly 2,300, now only 200 strong. The cadets were furious at this workers' meeting

and tried to provoke a riot. They beat up a boy who sold socialist newspapers, shot into the air, shouted "Viva el fascio." Later on some officers walked through the streets, their right hands firmly on the revolver in their pockets, and attempted to provoke the workers. The workers, partly armed, refused to be taken in. The Governor, again a Liberal, cleared the streets, sent the officers back to their barracks, and several of the cadets were arrested by the police.

All the militants, both socialists and anarchists, believe that only an armed insurrection can give a decisive victory to the workers. The fascists in the army and police, on the other hand, wanted to compel them to act too soon, before the failure of this year's harvest has radicalised millions who still place their hopes in Church or Parliament. The workers have, however, wisely restrained themselves.

#### THE POPULAR FRONT

It must amaze the student of social science to observe how far a new word can carry the politician. Old and discredited slogans and ideas are re-baptised, and pass as new cures which will work miracles. The Popular Front is a striking case in point. If Blum had come into office ten years ago, one would have spoken of a "Coalition Government." Now, after the socialists in Germany and England have been discredited repeatedly by forming a government together with Liberals, a new name must be found for the discredited policy. Many "Lefts"

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in this country believe that in France the millennium is round the corner. What is round the corner is fascism, the inevitable consequence of disappointment with socialists. The Government of the Popular Front cannot possibly lead to socialism because its Liberal members detest socialism, and because the electorate gave them no mandate for socialism. The Government of the Popular Front in France cannot possibly get hold of real power, military or economic. It is at the mercy of the owners of the factories whose sabotage can end it any time—if they think fit. The impotence of a coalition between Liberals and socialists has been proved to the hilt in Germany and Italy. In both cases fascism—in milder or severer forms—arose inevitably out of the ashes of popular disappointment. But a new name washes away the unambiguous experiences of fifteen years, for a time at least, until the day of reckoning comes.

The Spanish Popular Front is very different from the French. In order to appreciate its meaning and significance, we had best start with an analysis of the results of the election of February, 1936. The results of the election were :

	Votes in millions	Per cent.	Seats	Per cent.
Popular Front	4.356	47	162 Left repub- licans. 108 {socialists and communists.	57 {34 23
Centre	340	4	60	13
Right	4.570	49	140	30
				119

Three observations show that the present parliament is largely an artificial product and that its composition is not fully representative of the political structure of the country. First, owing to the involved electoral system the Popular Front achieved a majority in Parliament which is far in excess of its strength in the country. The P.F. has to reckon with the possibility that in a future election the tricks of the system may turn against it, and favour the Right. In France, on the other hand, the parties of the Popular Front polled 53.34 % of the votes in 1928, 55.24% in 1932 and 56.14% in 1936. Secondly, the Left Republicans, a middle-class Liberal party, are the strongest party in Parliament. But the number of their deputies is not due to any real strength among the electorate. When the Popular Front was formed and the lists of candidates for the different constituencies were agreed upon the Left Republicans, who hate the socialist revolution as much as anybody else, insisted on the inclusion of a disproportionate number of their candidates. These candidates were then brought into Parliament, mostly by socialist and communist votes. It was understood that only the Republicans should administer the State and that therefore they should have an adequate parliamentary representation. The socialists and communists, feeling that anything was better than the reactionary Government of 1933 to 1936, yielded to these demands. In case of refusal they would have been faced with three-cornered contests everywhere. The prominence of the Left Republicans on the lists also

added respectability to the Popular Front, and was likely to attract the floating vote. Thirdly, the very influential anarchists who had kept aloof from politics for sixty years, voted for the first time. But, afraid of the corrupting atmosphere of the Cortez, they did not put up candidates, and therefore they are not represented in Parliament.

Under the stress of reaction and on the wave of hatred against fascist tyranny, it was comparatively easy to form an electoral part of the Popular Front. But it was difficult to keep the Popular Front together. The Left Republicans formed the Government Casares Quiroga. The socialists kept out of the Government, but defended it against fascist aggression.

#### THE WORKERS GAIN LIBERTY OF ACTION

The creation and victory of the P.F. in Spain has had two, mutually contradictory, consequences for the working-class movement. It gave the workers a certain liberty of action and at the same time it tied the workers' movement to the bourgeois state. To understand this contradiction is to understand the Popular Front, both its past and its future.

After the election, Ministers and Governors drawn from the ranks of the Left Republicans were put at the head of army and police. This measure removed to a certain extent the fierce police pressure which a despotic government had exercised. The workers obtained a certain liberty of action in their fight for a higher standard of life. There can be no doubt that the masses themselves have come into



movement—with the hesitant permission of the middle-class government. After I had seen a collective farm in the province of Toledo, I somewhat naively asked one of the landworkers: "Why do they not send any soldiers to stop you?" He answered, with genuine surprise: "But the State has let us take all this."

Middle class governments do not, as a rule, have a reputation for taking rapid and decisive action in favour of the working masses. In this way, after 1931, the Republic had passed a number of useful although slightly confused laws, which proved to be just as many sheets of paper.

This time, immediately after the election, the workers took matters into their own hands. They liberated the political prisoners. Speedily a law was passed to legalise this action. They seized much of the land. Speedily this seizure was legalised. But wherever they wait for an initiative from Parliament, they wait in vain. The workers demand the punishment of the butchers and torturers of the October revolution. As a matter of fact, the judges have been careful to waste their time on those fascists who had safely gone abroad, and condemned them to long terms of imprisonment. The others still await trial, and nothing decisive has been done. The punishment of the guilty and the indemnification of the families of the victims are still a wish of the future. The measures taken against the sporadic terroristic attempts of army, civil guards and fascists were far from energetic. The men who shot workers were imprisoned. But while

this may curb some excessive zeal on their part, it did not provide an effective deterrent to men who soon expect again to be in power.

#### THE WORKERS LOSE LIBERTY OF ACTION

On the other hand, the government is determined to uphold private property and private profit. The masses, on the other hand, struck by a poverty which is increased by the bad harvest, cannot help using their liberty of action to increase their wages and improve their working conditions, at the expense of private profit. The socialist supporters of the Popular Front were always afraid that the strikes might go "too far." The strikes might disorganise the country so much that the Republican Government could not continue to function. They may reduce wages so much that the business people may lose interest in the Republic and may turn to the fascists for help. Inspired by these fears, the socialist and communist leaders more and more became a conservative force. They tried to prevent strikes or to bring them to a speedy end. We saw above that in Barcelona, for instance, the socialists were so afraid of disorganising the life of the town, and of making difficulties to "their" government, that they did not dare to continue the fight of the hotel and café workers until a complete victory was gained. The communists, obsessed with the Franco-Soviet Pact, checked mass-activities from fear of endangering a government which, for all practical purposes, is an ally of France, and thereby indirectly of Soviet Russia.



Now, history has shown clearly in the cases of Ebert and Kerensky, what "socialists" may be induced to do if they become afraid that the masses might "go too far" in their attacks upon the bourgeois state. In Spain, the Popular Front is doing its best to sit on both sides of the fence. A number of business and middle class persons, disgusted at their loss of private profit, have already now moved perceptibly to the Right and begun to play with fascist ideas. The Popular Front tries to conciliate big business. It can do so only by giving them what they expect to get from the fascists. The masses must become disappointed with a Popular Front government which more and more curbs their activities. Many workers may become a prey to fascist demagogy. It would not be the first time that socialist collaboration with a bourgeois government has provided fascism with a mass basis. In the end, the Popular Front will be made responsible by the Right for creating disorder, and by the workers for upholding the existing order.

The persons committed to the P.F. have exhausted the revolutionary possibilities open to them. The future of the Spanish revolution depends on those elements of the working class movement which more and more dissociate themselves from the Popular Front—the anarchists, the "Marxists" (they correspond to the I.L.P.) and the Caballero socialists. The courage, push and discipline of the Spanish workers is unbroken. Their spirit must amaze everybody who has witnessed it. If the workers can drive the movement so far as to transfer real

power—arms and factories—into the hands of the workers, the P.F. has been the first step towards socialism. If they continue to dissipate their energies in local actions and internal quarrels, the P.F. will have been the first step towards fascism.

#### THE TRANSFER OF POWER

For in the long run, and that appears to me to be the factor which will decide the success or failure of the Spanish Revolution, the liberty of mass action can be maintained only if it leads to a transfer of real power into the hands of the workers. What has been done in this direction? The Republican government is careful to keep all the sources of power in the hands of safe people, i.e. in the hands of people who will not tolerate the abolition of private property and private profit. The sources of political power in each country are the armed forces, municipal and central administration, and, last but not least, the "means of production," i.e. land, factories, mines and banks. The working class movement has conquered bits of this power but still they are far from their goal.

#### THE ARMED FORCES

What is the control the different sections of Spanish political opinion exert over the three sources of political power? Let us begin with the armed forces. We pointed out already that the army, unprepared for an external war, exists in order to provide easy jobs for the sons of the land-owning nobility. The Spanish army has three

times as many officers as the French army. In 1931, it consisted of :

105,000 men.

195 generals (plus 437 in reserve).

5,938 higher officers (plus 407 in reserve).

5,281 captains.

5,707 subaltern officers.

This gives one officer for six soldiers, compared with one officer for nineteen soldiers in the French army) (*Correspondencia Internacional*, 16.7.36, p. 297). In 1932, the Republic diminished the number of active officers by 7,000. In 1936, the army consisted of 7,700 officers and 130,000 men. No wonder that the officers of the army long for a new monarchy. Under the Republic the officers are subjected to the acid test of the business man : Do they give value for money ? Since they definitely do not, the Republic looks upon them as a source of useless expense. Casares Quiroga has won the affection of many socialists by his firm stand against the provocations of the officers. When, in the first days of his office, he punished the colonels of Alcala de Henares for insubordination, a sigh of relief went throughout Spain. Up to then he was regarded as "Azaña's young man." In one day he won a claim to authority and respect. While the officers of the army are openly fascist, because they know that only a feudal society can tolerate their parasitism, the soldiers, workers and peasants themselves, are in many cases to the Left.

The Republic, doubtful of the continued affection

of the people has, during the five years of its existence, doubled the police forces, increasing them from 32,000 to 64,000. This figure must be compared with the 68,000 policemen sufficient for double the population of the United Kingdom. Among these various police forces, the Guardia Civil is universally detested among the workers for their record of half a century of petty and brutal tyranny. As a counterweight the Republic has created a new republican police force, the Guardia de Asalto, the "shock-troops." In their blue uniforms and caps they reminded me of the shock troops of the S.S. While often brutal against the workers, they are on the whole loyal to the Republic.

Up to now the republican government has succeeded in checking and localising the incessant provocations of the army and police. The socialists demand the republicanisation of the army and the replacement of monarchists by republican officers. But the government seemed to be in no special hurry. From the workers' standpoint, incidentally, "republicanisation" would not mean very much. Many members of the shock police are republicans only in the sense in which Noske's soldiers were "republicans." I refer the reader to the incident in Oviedo related above.

Many socialist workers and leaders told me that because Left Republican ministers and governors are placed in control of the police, the police is now on their side, or that, at least, it can be used as an instrument for their purposes. But they also clearly saw that even where the authorities are

favourable to them, they cannot rely upon them. In some places, where they are backed by a strong garrison of the army, the police are definitely fascist. This is the case, for instance, in Logroño—a provincial capital of about 5,000 inhabitants. I was amused to see there how a German Nazi—ostensibly a commercial agent—invited a dozen police officers into his pension in the evening, plied them with wine, and made them get up in intervals to the command “Achtung,” at the same time instructing them about German culture until they were too drunk to listen. In many places I was told that the police at the moment were neither this way nor that way. “These mercenaries are waiting for the winner in order to go over to him.” Only if the socialists and anarchists are sufficiently strong by themselves, can they gain the allegiance of the police.

Trusting only in themselves, the young workers have organised an anti-fascist militia, which is regarded with terror by their enemies. The militia is well disciplined and even before July was not quite unarmed. When I asked Vidarte, Right Wing secretary of the Socialist Party, whether the workers had arms, he told me they had not, because it was against the law. He expressed more a wish than a fact. The Republic punished the possession of arms by two to eight years’ imprisonment in the case of socialists, by seven months’ imprisonment in the case of fascists. Nevertheless, many workers have revolvers, and their organisations have rifles, machine-guns,

machine-pistols, wireless apparatus, etc. A worker is very proud if he can call a revolver his own. When I was alone with them, they liked to show the revolver. If one goes into the countryside and asks “Why are you organised in this section of the working class movement and not in any other one?” the answer often shows a complete contempt for doctrinaire ideas. “Oh, these people offered us ‘Star’ revolvers.” ‘Star’ revolvers, of Anglo-Saxon make, are the most precise and powerful in Spain. Their possession is the dream of many revolutionaries. Any movement which can hand out these revolvers, be it socialist, anarchist, communist or marxist, will have no difficulties in gaining support.

We can sum up. The armed forces are split between the three warring camps. The fascists can reckon on the allegiance of thousands of disgruntled officers. The workers build up their own defence corps. Left socialists and anarchists alike prepared for an armed insurrection as the way to power. From what I saw of the anti-fascist militia, I gathered that in view of the unreliability of many soldiers and policemen, they are capable of a long-drawn and successful defence. For a success in attack they depend on the active help of sections of army and police. They have become the most reliable troops in the fight against the rebel army. Finally, superiority of armed force is the main basis of the Republic. In their fight against fascism, it can count on the Shock Police, whose vendetta with the fascists recently reached a

dramatic climax when they assassinated José Calvo Sotelo, monarchist leader, in revenge for the murder of several officers of the Shock Police. In the fight against fascism the Republic can count on the anti-fascist militia. At the same time, the Republican Government could turn against the armed workers' movement as soon as its leaders feel that the feudal mismanagement of fascism is preferable to their annihilation by socialism.

#### THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION

How far has the Republic altered the distribution of economic power? We saw that the Bank of Spain is a large usurer and one of those parasitical forces which impede a healthy growth of Spain's economic system. Unlike France, the Popular Front does not envisage taking over the Bank. In vain does Caballero demand that the hundreds of millions of pesetas which lie idle in the safes of the Bank should be confiscated by the government and used for public works. It cannot be repeated often enough that the Republican Government stands for private profit, and is not going to tamper with it unless forced from below. The nation's finance is still controlled by its usurers, who can easily and who do use their financial power to bring back the good old times of the monarchy.

The workers have been more successful in their attack on the factories. Their fight for higher wages and better working conditions have made a number of industrial undertakings unprofitable for

their owners. All employers complain fiercely and bitterly about the law of February, 1936, which ordered the reinstatement of all workers dismissed after January 1st, 1934, for political reasons. At the same time, the decree forbids the dismissal of those workers who took their places. A number of enterprises are thus considerably over-staffed. With revolutionary justice, the law hits hardest just those employers who had been most reactionary.

A number of socialists look upon the innumerable strikes as the first step towards taking over the factories. Experience has taught them that strikes bring no permanent gain to the Spanish workers unless they lead to a seizure of the factories. They expect the employer to close unprofitable undertakings. The workers, unimpeded by the police, will then take over the enterprise and run it themselves. In quite a number of places, especially in the hotel and café industry, the employer actually closed his business. His colleagues paid a certain sum from their own profits into a fund which compensated him. In this industry the workers are naturally unable to run the hotel or café by themselves. In other cases, they threaten to take over the factory. The metallurgical works in Puerto de Sagunto with 7,000 workers, threatened to close. Their business could not compete any more with Vizcaya. They had to get the ore from Vizcaya, and Spanish transport is, as we saw, exceedingly expensive. The employers yielded to the workers' threat and the factory continues to work. In spite of many rumours to the contrary,

there exists only one clear case of workers' control of industry. The mine San Vicente, in Asturias, was abandoned by the owners and already under the monarchy the workers took it over. A tramway in Madrid was often quoted to me as a case of workers' control. When I went there it proved to be run by the municipality. In many factories, however, a "workers' council" shares in the management of the factory.

The seizure of factories is no more than a tendency. The anarchists, indeed, believe that the factories should be made, one by one, unprofitable. The employers would be compelled to abandon them and the workers would take them over. But the socialists insist that it is impossible to take over and run factories individually. Without a national plan of co-ordination, without a guarantee for the supply of raw materials, the seizure of factories, while morally elevating, is technically impossible, and will only lead to disaster. The more revolutionary socialists, therefore, wait for an armed insurrection to give them control over the State and thereby the ability to work the factories on a national plan.

#### AGRARIAN REFORM

It is with regard to the *land* that the transference of power to the workers has gone farthest. The government has set up everywhere Institutes for Agrarian Reform "as organs entrusted with the transformation of the Spanish rural structure." "The Institute will be governed by a

council which is composed of agricultural technicians, of lawyers, representatives of the official agricultural institute, proprietors, tenants and landowners."

(Ley de Reforma Agraria. 9th November, 1935. Articles 4 and 6.)

In Toledo I paid a visit to the local Institute for Agrarian Reform. It will be best if I give the main facts regarding the agrarian reform in the province of Toledo. There are in the main two types of farms under the new law. The first are the "integral" farms, also called *kolchos* as in Russia. They consist of peasants or land workers who have no property whatsoever, except perhaps some starving donkey. They bring in nothing except their hands. The State gives everything, land and instruments. It also advances (on loan) the money which enables the workers to live. At the present time the land-worker lives on approximately three pesetas. According to the law, he now receives five pesetas a day. He and his wife and about four children can live on those five pesetas. The number of peasants to be settled on a certain area of land is calculated by dividing the net product of the land by 1,825 (i.e. 365 multiplied by 5).

The State also promised tractors. But as far as I could see these tractors are still more an object of religious hope than an actual reality. The harvest is bought by the State. The proprietor of the land receives the rent, which is paid out of the sale of the harvest. The rent, of course, entirely depends on the quality of the land, and varies between ten



pesetas and 500 pesetas per acre. Representatives of the Land Workers Union disapprove the respect shown for private property. They hope that the Republican State, when stronger, will in the future drop entirely the payments for rent. We hear similar arguments in the British Labour Movement from those radical socialists who try to conciliate their socialist convictions with the Labour Party's policy of compensation instead of confiscation.

The second type of farm is called "Complementarios." The workers are provided for, say, half the year by seasonal work in olive groves, or by work in a factory for some time of the year. They therefore receive part of their wages from elsewhere. The State is relieved of a part of its expense.

The province of Toledo has 205 villages, and about one million, five hundred thousand (1,500,000) acres of productive surface. There are 150,000 families. In this province alone we have 34,000 absentee proprietors, i.e. people who own the land but never have been seen there, and who spend the money in Toledo, Madrid and Ciudad Real. The annual net income from agricultural land—under-estimated because the basis of taxation—is 38,000,000 pesetas. The annual net income from the land which belongs to the absentee landlords is 16.6 million pesetas. The absentee landlords contribute three million pesetas in the form of taxes, the rest seven million each year, i.e. absentee landlords pay about 20 per cent. in taxes and the productive peasants about 30 per cent.

The greater part of the province is used for dry

farming, the rest for olives, wine, grazing and cereals, etc.

The first law on agrarian reform was passed in 1932. The practical result was very small in this and other provinces. Only after the February elections of this year were things speeded up.

	<i>Acres settled.</i>	<i>Number of workers settled.</i>	<i>Cost for State.</i>
From 1932 to Feb., 1936	17,000	1,360	5.3 million pesetas
Two months later	51,000	3,600	11 million pesetas
Up to the end of June	105,800	5,800	28 million pesetas.

The latter figures are in addition to the former ones.

Near Toledo I saw some collective farms. One of these farms is near Camarena, about 25 kilometres away from Toledo. In the village of Camarena, the mayor is a socialist, a shrewd old peasant. His main opponent is the Cacique, the local representative of the landlord. Formerly, the Cacique imported workers from the poorest part of Spain, from Galicia. They could be easily recognised by their fair hair and blue eyes, natural for descendants of the Visigoths. The Cacique played the Galicians against the local workers. Shootings between them were frequent and unity of action could not be obtained.

In this collective farm, 55 families or 300 people were settled. One day they had seized the farm-house, the bulls, mules, donkeys and "all the land which one could see from the farm-house." I was presented to the pioneer of collectivisation, the



local Héroe (hero), a small man without boots, his face tanned brown from working in the sun. The son of the former tenant was allowed to stay in the collective farm "because he had formerly done some work with the mules." I felt a wave of suppressed hostility between the hero and the tenant's son when in front of me the hero shouted over the farmyard, "You say you are a worker, but look at my face and at yours." I asked whether this son of the tenant could not be regarded as a disintegrating element. I was told that he did not matter. He preferred his present position to nothing at all. The workers on the collective farm received much advice from the secretary of the Federation of Land Workers in Toledo, Orencio Labrador Maza, a small tuberculous man whom the reactionaries have tried to assassinate seven times, and who has spent many years in prison. Now he was free again. The Government had given him a revolver and he organised the entire district of Toledo. Several land workers told me that they "looked upon him as their father."

Technically this collective farm was not up-to-date. The stables were in the old style, but kept very clean. Formerly, the men had to sleep in the stables with the mules and bulls, or in the barn. This has now been altered. The olive presses were old. It was quite obvious that apart from giving money for wages the State had contributed practically nothing to the farm. It was striking to see how the workers in this collective farm looked considerably more healthy and well fed than in

neighbouring districts around, where they had not yet seized the land and taken their fate into their own hands.

All over Spain, 70,000 families have been settled in asentamientos rusticos, on 750,000 hectares. The pleasure grounds of the grandees are the first to be settled. The vast vineyards in Jerez and Rioja have, however, not been touched.

How far does the agrarian reform bring Spain on the road towards a socialist society? The possession of land alone does not give much power to the peasant. At most he has in the substance some starving mules or a bull. In spite of the introduction of the American method of dry farming, much of the land remains barren and can be worked properly only with the help of machines and of new irrigation works. This is why the possession of ten hectares of land alone, without the seizure of factories and State, does not confer much power upon the working class. On the contrary, the land-worker in the asentamientos becomes dependent on the liberal state.

Liberals and socialists disagree about the fundamental principles of agricultural policy. The Liberals favour small holdings and claim that small proprietors, co-ordinated by co-operatives, get more out of the soil than large-scale enterprises. The socialists prefer collectivisation, not only for economic but mainly for political reasons. They fear that the Republic will stimulate the growth of small peasant proprietors, who are more likely to favour a fascist than a socialist reconstruction of

Spain. Collectivised land-workers would, on the other hand, be a valuable ally for the socialist industrial workers. For the time being, the conflict has been settled by a compromise. In some districts the Agrarian Institute develops collective farms, in others it hands the land over to small owners.

## ADMINISTRATION

Our survey of the distribution of power in present-day Spain would be incomplete without some words about the distribution of *administrative* power. A number of socialists have entered the administration. In many localities the mayor is a socialist. The administration of local funds, buildings and laws, adds to the power of the socialist movement. For the rest, the introduction of socialists into the *State* machinery has usually turned out to be a very doubtful boon. The State machinery, if we can believe the experience of Germany and England, is more likely to consume the socialist than the other way round. It must further be noted that a cleaning of the State apparatus from reactionaries has not gone very far. To be sure, the President, Zamora, has been replaced by Azaña. But after that, little more has been done. The fate of the Weimar Republic seems to be unknown or unheeded in Spain. Because the reactionary bureaucrats have not yet made their influence felt, they are regarded as harmless, or as converted, or as defeated. One is deceived, for these administrators can wait for their chance to come.

We may usefully interrupt the argument, and have, for a moment, a look at Señor Don Manuel Azaña, now fifty-six years old, President of the Spanish Republic. In 1880 he was born in Alcala de Henares. His birthplace adds to his prestige. Another distinguished Spaniard, Cervantes, was born there too. The house in which Azaña spent his youth stood between two convents. He early became an orphan, and had a hard and gloomy youth. An early love of books and ideas gave him an escape. When seventeen, he went to study law at the Augustan University of El Escorial. He became the youngest member of the editorial staff of the paper *Brisas del Henares*. He is typical of the Spanish intellectual. Almost always he is seen reading books, periodicals and papers. He became a writer of repute. For many years he led a retired, quiet and silent life. He had few visitors and friends, and little correspondence. Almost each day he enriched his library with some books. His second home was the Ateneo—centre of the anti-clerical intelligentsia in Madrid. It was there that he shone as an orator.

Only at a late age he came into politics. One of the friends of his youth has explained why the intellectuals at that time were not much interested in politics—"One must remember the political atmosphere of the time. A person with much money used to push himself forward, and naturally his copper coins were far more effective than the speeches of the intellectuals." When Azaña was suddenly raised to the office of First Premier of the

Spanish Republic, he had to change his life completely. Visitors and letters streamed in incessantly. The telephone never stopped and continual social contacts replaced his quiet studies.

Azaña has a stout figure, with a rather round and fat face, a bald head, a big nose and a sensual mouth. His large eyes remind the observer, by their expression, slightly of those of a frog. He usually hides them behind spectacles which he takes off when reading. The world wonders whether this lawyer will be another Kerensky.

The answer depends to a great extent on whether the revolutionaries will succeed in taking a part of the country's administration out of Azaña's hand. A true revolution is possible only if a duality of administrative power can be developed. In other words, only if the working classes can create institutions of their own, which, like the Soviets, are entirely controlled by the militant workers, for some time co-exist with the organs of the bourgeois state, and in the long run may be able to replace them. The fact of this duality of administrative power was brought home to me very clearly when on one and the same day I visited Parliament and the Casa del Pueblo (People's House). The red seats of the Cortes were mostly empty. Some Liberal talked heatedly. But he found no echo for his rhetoric. Indescribable boredom had seized the rest of the deputies, who were reading, chatting and dozing. No wonder that Parliament, up to now, has revealed little ability for decisive action. In the building some workers were visible. On the

whole, however, the rooms and corridors abounded with people who looked more like prosperous cocaine smugglers in Paris back streets. The ordinary public is rigidly kept out by innumerable police and by self-important porters, whose uniforms successfully caricature that of an English admiral. An ordinary person is not even allowed to wait in front of the door, for fear that one of the precious deputies might be killed when entering or leaving Parliament. The rudeness of the porters is directly proportionate to the Leftness of the deputy whom you want to see.

After that, the Casa del Pueblo. A centre of real life, the rooms and corridors of its four floors filled in the evening with workers, who even overcrowd the adjacent streets. They come from the offices of the Trade Union, of the socialist branches, and of the branches of socialist youth. The simple furniture and architecture, the offices with many red symbols and pictures of Marx and Iglesias, contrast with the overloaded pomp of the Cortez, and the open faces of the workers with the fat and crude faces of the habitués of the Cortez.

Then there are the alianzas obreras. They were created in the time of reaction as regional and local organisations of the united front. They did much work before the October revolution and they organised the insurrection in Asturias. They had gradually been extended to include also the land workers. Now they are called "alianzas obreras y campesinas." The Right Wing of the socialist party frowns upon them, since they detract from

the authority of Parliament. Caballero for a long time regarded them as unnecessary organisations. He now has altered his opinion. The left, and especially the socialist youth, work to strengthen the alianzas obreras, and to reorganise them so that they can become organs of revolution similar to the Soviets. They regard them as institutions which should take over power at the moment of insurrection. The main weakness of the alianzas up to now is that they have no basis in the means of production. But their potentialities are enormous.

#### CONCLUSION

Karl Marx once pointed out that a revolution in France was over in three days, but that in Spain three years was a short period, and that nine years was not a long time for a Spanish revolution to last. The present revolution is five years old, and shows no signs yet of old age or decay. In spite of many reverses, the workers have gained ground. Economic misery has not crushed their spirit. Everybody who has seen Spanish working-class quarters, is convinced that no amount of army brutality or Jesuitic sophistry can prevent the revolution from running its course. In Barcelona I attended a meeting of the anarchists. With red-black flags, mostly men under forty, with intelligent faces, free and alert, they entered the arena with rapid steps. Then I did not know what inspired them. Later on, I saw the slums in which they lived, ugly, stinking, with very small windows, intolerable in

the summer heat. I saw their parents, old men and women, after a life of toil, famine-stricken, beg the priest for a piece of bread. The slums, the underfeeding, the unhygienic workshops, are an unceasing source of revolutionary energy. They create an elementary and fierce hatred against the oppressor. I travelled in a friend's car from Bilbao to Oviedo. Clenched fists greeted the car on the whole route. Sometimes a worker spat out when it passed by. And yet, side by side, a serenity of spirit which finds an expression in the anarchist dictum that "one must learn to kill without hatred."

The Spanish revolution is deeply justified and sound. It will triumph whatever may be its temporary set-backs. The premature rising of the army has speeded up events. Russia has shown that there is a limit to the oppression of the people. "The lame man who keeps the right road outstrips the runner who takes the wrong ones." Many of our socialists, so preoccupied with getting our minds ready for the new war, will smile at the naïve way in which Ramon J. Sender sums up the longings of the Spanish revolutionary: "I think then about the revolution. I am anxious that all should happen as we wish, that the bourgeois should come to offer us their bellies and that we shall only have to stick them. And that at the same time choruses should be sung, like those I heard once in Barcelona, joyful songs to greet the Spring in the gardens. And then when there are no more bourgeois, that we shall all sing and invent a new religion, some kind of religion of work and the statistics of pro-

duction. Then all men will be able to look at each other without hate in their faces, or jealousy. Everything will be made right, and children will grow up clean and happy, like plants with water and sun. We shall all be pleasant and charitable."

But this is the spirit in which in the long run the masses win their revolutions.

## POSTSCRIPT

### THE REBELLION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

THE motive power behind the rebellion of the Spanish army lies as much in the distant mountains of Abyssinia as on the plains of Castile and Andalusia. In Ethiopia British imperialism suffered a heavy defeat. Mussolini, to consolidate his gains, had to push further, and to challenge British supremacy in the Western Mediterranean (see p. 2 and 3). The discontented officers of the Spanish army looked like a useful instrument. On July 18th, the revolt broke out. On July 15th, Italian military airplanes were prepared for dispatch to Morocco.

By its very constitution\* the Government of the Popular Front had been unable to deal effectively with the right wing conspiracies and intrigues which were going on in the army and among its civil servants. Factious generals were not dismissed but transferred to outposts. General Franco, who represented Spain at the funeral of King George, was sent to the Canary Islands, General Goded to the Balearic Islands, Queipo de Llano to Morocco. In these distant places, the generals could plot in peace, paid and vested with authority by a patient Liberal Government. At the same time, the

\* See pp. 118 to 125.

Government discouraged the fight which their supporters were waging against the Right Wing. The Left Republican Governor of Oviedo, for instance, had in a telegram to Calvo Sotelo\* protested against the provocations of the Right. He was promptly dismissed. On May 30th they re-arrested under a technical pretext the lieutenant-colonel of artillery who had in 1934 allowed the workers of Oviedo to take arms from the arsenal, and who had been liberated by the amnesty. On the other hand, Doval, responsible for the executions and tortures of Asturias, had been retired on full salary, thus enjoying ample leisure to plot against the Government. Facts of this kind could be multiplied indefinitely. The supporters of the Popular Front lived under the illusion that they had triumphed over reaction.† On July 18th, the very day of the revolt, the communist *International Press Correspondence* published an article by Cesar Falcon (Madrid) which contained the following remark: "Reaction is curbed if not conquered. The working masses to-day instead of having the prospect of merciless battles to prevent the stabilisation of the fascist dictatorship, see before them the path to final victory."‡

Italy's imperial ambitions, the successful attacks of the workers and the criminal negligence of the Popular Front combined to bring about the rising of the officers.

\* See p. 79.

† See p. 138.

‡ Quoted by Jack Huntz, *Spotlight on Spain*, p. 9.

#### CHANGES IN THE GOVERNMENT.

The immediate reaction of the Popular Front Government to the revolt was to yield to the rebel generals and to aim at a compromise. The Quiroga Government resigned at once. Quiroga's ill-health was put forward as a reason. As a matter of fact, the real motive behind this move became obvious when Martínez Barrio was appointed his successor. Barrio belongs to the Right wing of the Liberal Party. He once, in October 1934, formed a Government together with Lerroux. His sympathies are with the Right. When I was in Spain I was told that Barrio would come to the forefront as soon as the Government wanted to move away from its Left-wing supporters and make an alliance with the Right wing. The Liberals were horrified at the prospect of arming the workers. By refusing to hand out arms to the organised workers, they lost Seville and Zaragoza. But the compromise of a Barrio Government did not satisfy the rebellious generals. The Liberals were forced to make a stand.

An unknown younger politician, Giral, became Premier. He is an intimate friend of Azaña. "It is evident that Señor Azaña nominated this obscure and modest politician to the Premiership of the Council of Ministers with the object of directing personally from the National Palace the work of the Cabinet."\* The Government continued to consist only of Liberals. In this way, it could command the support of the middle classes. When

\* A. R. Oliveira, *The Drama of Spain*, p. 21.



more and more the Government army came into the hands of the workers, the Liberal Government became an obstacle to defence. It was half-hearted in its attempts to draw the workers into the fight, it did not possess the authority necessary for an efficient co-ordination of the various forces at the different fronts, and it did not suppress vigorously the attempts at sabotage made by the more Right-wing Republicans. On September 2nd, Irun fell. One of the two doors to France and Europe had been closed to the Government. Two days later, Giral resigned and Caballero\* formed a Government. It is noteworthy that this step had been postponed for one week or two because of the possible reactions abroad. The Left abroad had taken the line of representing the struggle in Spain as one between fascism and parliamentary democracy. The reason was that they wanted to gain as wide a support for Spain as possible. For weeks they could point to the non-socialist character of the Spanish Government. Indirectly the defence in Spain against the rebellious army was weakened in that way, during those weeks. Again we see that it is harmful to spread for purposes of propaganda statements known to be untrue.

The Government of Caballero represents the forces of the Popular Front. The anarchists and Marxists are not represented on it, but they support the Government up to now, with the aim, in the long run, of replacing it by a pure workers' government. The Government contains six socialists, two

\* See chapter 4.

communists (Education and Agriculture), one Basque nationalist and three Left republicans. Caballero is both Premier and Minister of War.

#### THE MILITARY POSITION.

The army revolt which began in the military garrisons of Morocco soon spread throughout Spain. But the Spanish generals who expected an easy walk-over in the tradition of the pronunciamientos were surprised and disappointed. The people almost to a man opposed their revolt. The political training which the people had undergone during five years of parliamentary democracy now bore fruit.

The second surprise was that large numbers of civil guards and shock police remained loyal to the Government. The civil guards, true to their tradition, came down usually on the side of the prospective winner. Whenever the luck of battle turned against the Government, they joined the revolt of the army in good time, as in Badajoz, before it fell. The shock police were supposed to be implicated in the assassination of Sotelo and had to expect a cruel revenge if the rebels won. But it was mainly because the people themselves rose spontaneously that they carried with them many civil guards and shock police. Their enthusiasm proved contagious.

In some towns, like Seville and Zaragoza, the authorities hesitated to hand arms to the people. The result was that these towns became rebel strongholds. In other towns the armed workers

put down the rebellion of the garrisons, notably in Barcelona, Madrid and Malaga. In Barcelona the Liberal Government refused to hand arms to the organised workers, who thereupon seized vast quantities of arms from ships in the harbour, with the result that the rebellion was terminated by sunset.

The crews of most warships rose against their officers, imprisoning them or throwing them overboard. In the first days of the civil war the navy displayed great activity, shelling Moroccan towns and preventing the transport of Moorish troops to Spain. The manœuvring of warships seems, however, to require a greater amount of technical knowledge than was at the disposal of the rank and file, and little has been heard of the navy for the last two months.

The air force remained on the whole loyal to the Government. The army is led by sons of the landowning aristocracy. The air force requires men with mechanical talents and a taste for a scientific knowledge. It thus proved more attractive to sons of the middle classes than to those of the aristocracy. The possession of the air force gave in the beginning to the Government forces a superiority which they lost soon when the rebels received plenty of Italian and German airplanes and pilots. At the end of August, for instance, the *Monte Sarmiento* transported fourteen German aeroplanes from Hamburg to Lisbon. The warplanes of the Spanish air force are old models, capable of a speed of about 70 miles. The

modern Caproni and Heinkel fighting planes are capable of a speed of 130 miles. The Spanish machines are an easy prey to them. The odds were too heavily against the Government air force. It was demoralised. When Caballero became Prime Minister, the loyalty of the air pilots was further weakened. They are quite willing to fight for the Republic but not for a Socialist Spain. A representative of the Madrid Government said at the end of September that as regards airplanes the rebels had a superiority of 12 to 1. While this may be exaggerated, the slogan "planes for Spain," which has electrified the factories and the meeting places of the French revolutionary workers, voices the most urgent demand of the Government forces. By machine-gunning the Government forces from their planes, the rebels have gained several decisive victories.

Heavy artillery is another weak point of the Government troops. The workers' militia has difficulty in handling the big guns (see p. 101) and the supply of ammunition is soon exhausted. If the Government troops have for so long been unable to conquer Oviedo and Zaragoza it is because of a shortage of heavy guns and of tanks.

The backbone of the Government troops is the workers' militia. These workers, ill-equipped and almost untrained and inexperienced, have thrown the weight of their courage against the army machine of the generals. Tens of thousands of the best workers of Spain have been slaughtered in the interest of Jesus Christ, the greatness of Spain,

and private profit. It would be one of the major tragedies of history if the technical superiority of the rebel troops should manage to suppress the aspirations of a rising people for any length of time.\*

## THE REBELS.

But who are the men who are fighting in the rebel army? There are the officers, together with a number of soldiers, the Carlist "requetes" from Navarre, and fascist volunteers. The fact has been amply commented upon that the backbone of the fighting forces of the Saviours of Spain consists of foreign troops—Moors, foreign legionaries, Italian and German pilots. It is, however, a commonplace in history that the professional patriots of each nation, whenever they see their possessions and privileges in danger, bring foreigners into the country in order to destroy it rather than leave it to the people. Alcibiades, leader of Athens' oligarchy, led Spartan troops against his own native town. Later on, we find the English royalists and noblemen, defeated by the Puritans, conspiring against their own country at the Court of Louis XIV of France. A century later, the French noblemen called German troops against the French republic. Another century later, the Russian aristocrats devastated Russia with the help of foreign troops of all nations. In each case, high treason was the last shot of a dying class.

\* For details of the civil war the reader is referred to J. Langdon-Davies, *Behind the Spanish Barricades*.

But on the other hand, the responsibility for the use of *Moorish* troops on the rebel side largely rests with the Popular Front Government itself and its colonial policy, which was not so very progressive. The rebel generals could lead the Moors against the Madrid Government as against the traditional enemy, because the Popular Front had not liberated the Arabs, had not given them the right of self-determination, and indeed had made no difference whatsoever to the Arabs of Spanish Morocco. Similarly, the inhabitants of our colonial Empire had great difficulty in discerning any difference between a Labour Government or a Tory Government in this country. In both cases they were bombed and kept down for their own good. In this respect the recent Spanish civil war contains a vital lesson to British Labour. The British workers may quite well one day see their Socialist aspirations squashed by black troops, willing instruments of our reactionaries, because British Labour has never demonstrated its friendship in a tangible form.

The aims of the rebel forces are clear on the negative side. They want to exterminate all Marxists. On the positive side, they have nothing more tangible to offer than a return to the glorious Spain of 1492. They fail to explain what sort of America they are going to discover now. The minds of the generals, devastated by the barbarism of the barracks, have up to now been unable to devise any scheme of social reconstruction, such as helped considerably to win mass support for Mussolini and

for Hitler. They seem not to have gained any considerable mass support. Only in Navarre, with its Carlist tradition, did they find a considerable number of people willing to take up arms enthusiastically on their side. Throughout the country they are supported by a number of Roman Catholic middle class youth who enrol under the name of Falangists.

Without any considerable success, the rebel officers asked the anarchists to support them on the ground that they were fighting against the politicians. In Logroño, on July 19th, the colonel seems to have addressed the soldiers with the words, "Now the moment has come to defend the cause of the proletariat."\* But on the other hand, it is difficult to attract the common people by remarks like these: "We will grind your bones to make mortar for rebuilding the churches you have burnt." "Every man to the sword as in Badajoz." The methods used by the rebels are known to be barbarous. General Queipo de Llano's sadistic remarks on the Seville radio are not apt to reassure the population. Recently this general, who is fond of jokes, related that somebody had complained about the rebel troops shooting a pregnant woman. "But I see no reason to complain. In this way we have got two of them." The future must be very black for a class which is compelled to drive thousands of people into the bull ring as in Badajoz, and to shoot them down to the music of military bands. If they lose, they will be paid back in kind. If they

\* P.O.U.M., 16.9.36.

win, they will have killed many of those people on whose labour they live, and have earned the sullen hatred of the rest.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS.

The outcome of the Spanish civil war is of vital interest to all the imperialist countries of Europe. A rebel victory may lead to an alliance between Germany, Italy and Spain, with the result that France would be encircled and in a position which one must describe as almost hopeless. She would not only have to fight—or at least to keep troops—on three frontiers. Her communications with North Africa would become insecure, with the result that she might have to defend her conception of democracy without the aid of black troops from her Northern African Empire.

A victory of the workers' militia would lead to an overthrow of the Portuguese dictatorship. The wealthy Portuguese would lose their property. That is why Portugal is doing everything to help the rebels. The rebel headquarters are installed in a Lisbon hotel which is connected by telephone with Seville. Spanish Left refugees have been handed back to the rebel forces. The Banca del Santu Espiritu gives ample credit to the rebel army. German war material is continually passing through Portugal. People here in this country talk glibly about the British Government giving orders to the Portuguese Government. These orders would be certainly obeyed if the British Government could guarantee their property to the rich people in

Portugal in case of a Government victory. It must not be forgotten further that the British residents in Lisbon are wholeheartedly on the side of Salazar against their own Government. Their property too, would not be worth a halfpenny if the workers were to rule in Spain. A similar situation arose in Shanghai some years ago. The British Government at that time pursued an anti-Japanese policy. Its efforts were frustrated continually by the British traders in Shanghai who welcomed a Japanese intervention in Shanghai in the hope that the Japanese troops would put down the Communists.

In the last sentences I have implied that Britain's imperialist interests are in conflict with a rebel victory. Indeed, for Britain the Spanish civil war is just a further stage in the duel with Italy for the control over the Mediterranean. Naturally, I cannot claim to be in possession of many of the vital facts of the military situation. So many of these facts are military secrets. They will be known to the public only ten or twenty years later when our statesmen will settle down to write their memoirs. So much, however, seems to be certain: The conquest of Abyssinia together with the development of the Dodecanese Islands has weakened Britain's grip over the Eastern Mediterranean. In addition, the Turks resumed control over the Dardanelles and the Arab states formed a block with Persia, Irak and Yemen, thus increasing the resistance these countries can put up to British demands. After the 51 nations of the League

of Nations had refused to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Britain, other steps were taken. On August 26th, the new Anglo-Egyptian treaty was signed. Sir Samuel Hoare, first Lord of the Admiralty, visited the Mediterranean fleet and its bases. On his return, he issued a grave warning to Italy. 17,000 mechanised troops were concentrated in Palestine, ostensibly to deal with some Arab snipers. But a look at the map shows that Palestine is the only place in the Mediterranean where Britain can concentrate her troops, and that it lies near enough to the Suez Canal. In addition, the pipe line of Haifa can meet all the requirements of the Mediterranean fleet with oil from the Irak. Further, King Edward VIII, a new peacemaker, visited those countries which would be of vital strategical importance in case of war with Italy. He visited Turkey and Greece, and inspected the ports of Jugoslavia, a country traditionally hostile to Italy.

A victory of Spanish rebels might bring the Western Mediterranean under the effective control of Italy—unless they are bought off in time. There have been persistent rumours about deals between the rebel generals and Italy and Germany. Italy was supposed to be granted in Majorca a naval base which would endanger the security of French and British communications. As a matter of fact, at the end of September the Italians were reported to be in effective control of Majorca after the Spanish Government's expedition to that island had been defeated. Ceuta, opposite Gibraltar, was



to go to Italy or to Germany. Or Germany was to get the Canary Islands—up to now controlled by Britain. Another rumour claims that Germany will get the Azores (1,000 miles west of Lisbon) from Portugal and that Portugal will get the Spanish province of Galicia in exchange. Germany, installed in the Azores or the Canary Islands, would be able to threaten British communications along Africa. It is difficult to see how far these rumours reflect realities, and how far they only reflect possibilities, pious wishes, and vague anxieties.

There is certainly much evidence for extensive activities of the Nazi party in Spain. I told of the experience I had in Logroño in May (p. 128). In July a number of documents were found in the Nazi headquarters in Barcelona. They proved that the Nazis were in touch with the rebels, organised help for them through German Consulates and Embassies, employed spies in the Spanish ministries, etc. etc. The documents will soon be published in English. Compared with this display of German efficiency, O'Duffy's "Irish brigade" up to now belongs to the realm of comic opera.

In her struggle with Italy, Britain cannot rely on her Portuguese ally. Dr. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, dictator of Portugal, feels that his skin is nearer to him than his shirt. In addition, Britain's ruling classes are divided in their counsels. The City, concerned only with narrow money matters and politically unenlightened, is of opinion that "there has been some malaise as a result of the appearance of a new source of international

complication, but apart from this, London(!) has not allowed itself to be unduly disturbed by the death and destruction now loose in Spain. This calmness is good sense. The sum total of British capital invested in the Peninsula is small." (*Financial News*, August 8th). The more far-sighted imperialists see that England's future in the Mediterranean is at stake. But their hands are tied by those members of the ruling class whose blind class hatred desires a rebel victory regardless of the consequences for the future of the British Empire. The *Daily Mail* as an organ of this section of public opinion has surpassed its previous records during the last months. There are, however, many facts which suggest that Britain and France have not been entirely blind to their imperialist interests and that they helped the Spanish Government in an underhand and rather half-hearted way. Left opinion in this country has somehow been accustomed to regard the members of the National Government as a collection of half-wits. Contempt for one's opponents is the safest way to regular defeat.

#### DISSENTIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT FORCES.

My book has been criticised because of the care with which I tried to explain the nature of the discussions which were taking place between the different forces of the Spanish Left. In face of the common fascist enemy, the differences have been sunk for the time being, at the front and in the trenches at least. But behind the front line the



dissensions persist. The disunity of the Left is and will continue to be one of the major factors which cannot be left out of account in any evaluation of the Spanish situation. In San Sebastian, anarchists have been shot by Government troops. In Malaga, the Republican Governor has come into open conflict with the anarchists. The communists believe that they must hold the masses back. "The C.P. must make its whole influence felt among the masses, in order to prevent extremist actions," so said Antonio Mije on September 8th, in Madrid.\* The anarchists and the Marxists try to lead the workers forward to a workers' society. Jesus Hernandez, communist deputy, on August 7th, said in an interview, according to *Mundo Obrero*; "As for the anarchists, who prefer the rearguard to the line of fire, you must not attach too much attention to them. Their intentions are not clear but the Spanish people through its official organisms will fix them. We do not want to know anything about these Libertarian communists. They will be attended to the day after victory. Right now it is impossible to do anything against elements fighting on our side." The dissensions have been increased by the extermination of the old Bolshevik guard in Moscow and by the decision of the Soviet Government to remain neutral in the struggle for a working-class Spain.

The divergencies of opinion concern both the aims and the methods of the struggle. The socialists and communists maintain that they fight

\* *International Press Correspondence*, No. 43, p. 1181.

for parliamentary democracy, for a democratic capitalist society. The anarchists and Marxists fight for a new order of society, for democracy which is based on the control of factories and banks by workers' councils. The anarcho-syndicalists, in control in Catalonia, stress the difference of their conception of a workers' society from that current among the rulers of Russia. They sent a telegram to Stalin, offering an asylum in Catalonia to the widow of Erich Muehsam\* and to all other Left wing revolutionaries who are kept in political confinement in the U.S.S.R. No reply has been received up to now. The P.O.U.M. maintains that "democracy and fascism are opposite aspects of the same social régime," and that the workers will give their best only when they are fighting for themselves. The socialists and communists believe that the attempt to win socialism now, may bring the fascists into power, and that parliamentary democracy must be defended as the lesser evil to facism.

The socialists and communists concentrate all their energies on beating the rebel army. They argue that one cannot win a modern war with militia, and want to organize the workers in a disciplined, barracked and uniformed army. They have military common sense on their side. The anarchists oppose their scheme. They fear that an army may be easily used against them at some later date, and that they will be cheated of the

\* Erich Muehsam, a German anarchist, has been tortured to death in a German concentration camp. His widow was invited by the U.S.S.R., but soon arrested for "Trotzkyite" tendencies and placed in a Russian concentration camp.

fruits of the fight even if the Government wins. They hear the socialists and communists proclaim everywhere that their aim is the bourgeois democratic revolution which was accomplished in England by Cromwell and in France in 1789. They believe that as soon as the workers want to drive the evolution of Spain onwards to a workers' democracy, the barracked and uniformed army will be turned out against them. "The Companys government called for three classes of conscripts, who were to be given regular barrack training and formed into a regular army. The C.N.T. replied by calling a huge meeting of the young men called to arms by the "legal" State. They were told to refuse to become soldiers but to join, instead, the anti-fascist militia. "Popular Militia—Yes! Barracked, Uniformed Soldiers—No!" declared the Regional Committee of the C.N.R. in its organ *Solidaridad Obrera*.\* But a "people's army" in the anarchist sense is unlikely to be an efficient war machine, and the fight against the rebels has been seriously hampered by these dissensions. The discipline of the Government troops naturally suffers from the anarchists' dislike of centralisation. They defend their tactics by asserting that the socialists only create that kind of discipline that makes all local activity mark time till orders have arrived from a central committee, and that centralisation stifles the workers' initiative.† While there is some truth

\* Roberto in *International Review*, Vol. I, p. 125.

† El anarquismo en la insurrección de Asturias. Buenos Aires, 1936.

in that statement, the anarchists have wasted thousands of their splendid fighters in unco-ordinated struggles. The exigencies of a war are not favourable to anarchist ideals.

#### WORKERS' CONTROL IN CATALONIA.

The present civil war has up to now split Spain into three parts. The west is occupied by rebel troops. The east, and certain parts of the north coast, are in the hands of the Caballero Government. The north-east, i.e. Catalonia, is in the hands of the anarcho-syndicalists who have introduced workers' control of the production and distribution of goods. Catalonia is the first country in which the anarchists have had the chance of carrying through a social experiment in accordance with their ideals. After the totalitarian communists in Russia, the libertarian communists of Catalonia now have an opportunity to show what they can achieve.

On July 24th, a committee of supplies was established in Barcelona with the task of feeding 10 million people, to co-ordinate provisioning and to control internal trade. It was composed of 13 persons:

- 3 C.N.T. + 2 F.A.I. = 5 anarchists;
- 3 U.G.T.;
- 2 Esquerra;
- 1 Union de Rabaisaires;
- 1 P.O.U.M.;
- 1 Representative of the Municipality.

With 500 employees, this Committee has acted

## SPAIN TO-DAY

as an enormous house of commerce. It was responsible for supplying the army, and during the first month of its existence it sent 54,000 pairs of canvas shoes, 31,000 overalls, 36,000 shirts and 15,000 vests.

On July 30th, the Catalonian Government resigned. A new Government was formed on August 2nd. Its "Council General" consisted of 15 members, among them 2 technicians, and for the rest, of representatives of all Left parties. Soon the united socialists,\* who had occupied three minor posts, left the Government, but maintained friendly relations with it.

True to the view that revolution can succeed only "if a duality of administrative power can be developed" (p. 140), the workers' organisations have set up an authority of their own which has gradually taken all power out of the hands of the Catalonian Government. Actual power is now in the hands of the Committee of anti-fascist militias which directs the war and which has set up a supreme Economic Council, consisting of 5 anarchists, 1 socialist, 1 Marxist and 1 representative of the Generalidad.

As a result of the new régime† the minimum wage has been raised by 50 per cent. to 12 pesetas. The maximum wage or salary is 15 pesetas a day. The tendency is to equalize the remuneration of

\* The C.P., the Catalonian Socialist Party and the Catalonian Federation of the Socialist Party formed the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia, affiliated to the 3rd International.

† I owe the following account to a representative of the Catalonian Government who visited London some time ago.

## THE REBELLION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

labour as much as possible. A 40 hours' week has been decreed. In many cases, however, the workers do overtime in order to produce the requirements of the war.

Each factory, etc., is controlled by a comité obrero de fabrica. The owner, especially in small undertakings, is often retained as an employee. Many of the larger owners had fled already before the rebellion which they foresaw and helped to prepare. Owners with Right wing sympathies are dismissed.

The central control of an industry is managed by a committee (consejo de administración) which is elected by the workers' councils in the different factories belonging to that industry. The consejo de administración for the railways, for instance, consists of 3 members of the C.N.T. and of 3 members of the U.G.T. Although the socialist union would, by its strength not be entitled to an equal number of representatives, the anarchists have given them this high representation in the hope that the socialists might be as generous in those parts of Spain where the anarchists are in the minority. On the central committee of the buses of Barcelona, however, no U.G.T. representatives are sitting. There are no socialist workers in that branch of industry.

Whenever the workers seize a factory they publish the account books and thus reveal the amount of money taken out of the business by the owners. When the Water and Gas Co. was taken over, all high salaries and all posts which served no useful purpose were abolished. The 240,000

pesetas saved in that way are used for sanitary improvements. In the subway service of Barcelona, 24 high officials were discharged. The shareholders have been expropriated. The workers of Barcelona rejoice at seeing their tramways going just as well without shareholders as they did before. The socialists intended to run the industries by Government commissars. The F.A.I. opposed this scheme, and now workers' councils are doing the job.

The all-important question of the technicians seems to have been handled successfully. An office for the control of technicians has been opened. An energetic middle-aged woman, Frederica Monseny, is in charge. If a technician wants to work, he goes to the office, and he gets a card. If he is known for Right wing opinions, the card is refused. There is no compulsory work, and little sabotage has apparently taken place. Many technicians are anti-fascists. Hundreds of intellectual workers have offered to work for their food alone. The technicians, too, are paid up to 15 pesetas a day.

In each unit of the shock police, a workers' and soldiers' council has been established which purges it of unreliable elements. During the fight against the rebels, many shock police fought not in their units, but in the units of the working class organisations. Now, after the old units are being reconstituted, the spirit of solidarity remains which was acquired in the joint fight.

Seventy per cent. of the workers of Barcelona

have anarchist sympathies. The socialists believe that the anarchist way of running industry is inefficient and pernicious. On September 10th, the United Socialist Party of Catalonia published a manifesto which said\*: "To-day we have one task only, to win the war. With victory the reconstruction of the economy of Catalonia and of Spain on new lines will be inevitable. After a defeat everything would be lost. But the defeat is being made possible by the demagogues, the provocateurs, and those who suffer from revolutionary infantilism." The socialists observe that "Catalonia has been transformed into a collection of authorities, of committees, of infantile experiments, of inarticulate collectivities and of uncontrolled individual aspirations." They demand a Government which governs, and more co-ordination with the Madrid Government.

The Marxists of the P.O.U.M. who have made a supreme and partly successful effort to unite socialists and anarchists, take a similar line. In their daily paper, *La Batalla* (25.9) a leading article demands more coherence in Barcelona. At the moment we have a "syndicalisation of all aspects of economic life." "The syndicates have obtained the absolute hegemony in each industry, established their own norms and directions. They take into account only their own narrow, strictly professional interests, and not those of the working class in general or even those of the actual struggle." The Revolutionary Railway Committee for instance

\* *El Socialista*, 11.9.36.

has refused to issue further free tickets, in order not to endanger the financial stability of the industry. Families who want to visit a militiaman at the front or in hospital will now have again to pay their fare. This appears to the P.O.U.M. as "Trade Union capitalism." The Marxists insist that it is impossible for each industry to be autonomous and independent, and that a general plan is necessary.

Whenever the Catalan troops conquer a village they carry through social reforms. The militia makes bonfires of all property titles, debt and mortgage documents found in the town hall of the village. The rich are heavily taxed. I reprint here the decree which is usually issued at once in such cases :

"1. The harvest must be gathered without any delay. It is to be turned over to the workers and the anti-fascist movement.

2. All the supplies and stocks of cattle, wheat, fruit and means of transportation now in possession of the reactionary elements of the village, are to be confiscated and declared the common property of the community as a whole and placed under the control of the anti-fascist committee of the locality.

3. Large estates are done away with. They are to be turned over to the community whose committee is to determine the manner of utilisation.

4. All tools, tractors, harvesting machines now in possession of the reactionary elements are to be confiscated and declared common property.

5. All rent upon houses and other buildings is to be abolished.

6. Taxes in kind paid by the share-croppers to the landlord are to be transferred to the local anti-fascist committee in a reduced form (in this instance the reduction is 50 per cent).

7. A popular militia is to be organised by the local anti-fascist committee in order to assure the carrying out of this decree."\*

Throughout all Spain, the Government backs up its military operations with social reforms. Each day, *El Socialista* published columns enumerating the pieces of land that were taken away from their former owners and handed over to the local workers' organisation to be worked "with the technical and economic help of the Institute for Agrarian Reform." All usurious contracts are declared null. Banks and railways have been nationalised. Militiamen pay neither rent nor debts. "No child of a militiaman shall lack either bread or culture," is the slogan of the Government.

In addition, sterner measures have been taken against the generals and officers. A number of them have been executed and imprisoned. Daily, persons of Right wing sympathies are arrested in Government territory. The notices of the arrests published in *El Socialista* ring as though they came from the Jacobins at the time of the Revolution.

"In the calle de Lope de Ruedo was arrested the

\* This decree was issued on August 5th after the occupation of the village of Polipino in Aragon. From *Spanish Revolution*, 5.9.36, New York.



fascist Manuel Duran, son of the former marquis de Perales." "Arrested one Angel Carvajal, former marquis de las Nieves." "Arrested one Angel Labrador Lozano, an individual who devoted himself to usury . . . One of his clients is a certain Alfonso de Borbón said to be a relative of the former king." Under the heading "The poverty of the clergy," the socialist paper announces that 14,300,000 pesetas in shares and banknotes were found in the Episcopal Palace of Valencia. Or, about the Bishop of Murcia, "This dignitary of the Church possessed no less than 14 million pesetas in the banks. He was conducted to prison." A number of officers have, incidentally remained loyal to their Government, and are in command of the workers' militia.

#### THE FUTURE.

From a socialist point of view, Catalonia is the only bright spot in the Spain of to-day. For the rest, the outlook is dark, whatever viewpoint one may take. The rebels have been advancing steadily. They may soon take Madrid. But even then General Franco has achieved very little. He will have to conquer Catalonia. All observers are agreed on the difficulty of this task, especially when the rest of Spain has to be kept down simultaneously. Even after Catalonia is conquered, some miracle must happen to keep the generals together. Mola has clearly indicated his resentment about the presence of Moorish troops in Castile. The generals are agreed on practically nothing. And then, after

#### THE REBELLION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

the generals have come to some agreement or wiped each other out, the real task only begins—to get the economic life of the country going again.

The position is similar on the Government side. Even if the tide of war should turn, international intervention must be reckoned with. The Government forces are far from united. The prestige of the anarchists has been growing up to recently, and they are sure to make difficulties. Much of the country is destroyed, the harvest wasted, the cattle slaughtered. The task of the winner will be far from enviable. Famine is almost certain to break out. Epidemics may easily spread. Typhus is already devastating Oviedo and Bilbao. A Spain in ruins, that will be the outcome of the civil war.

So difficult it is for the common people to emancipate themselves.