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Spain in the Struggle Against Fascism

For almost three months the Spanish people have been carrying on a heroic struggle against the fascist insurgents.

Workers from Madrid and Catalonia, peasants from Andalusia and Estremadura, office employees, professors, poets and musicians, are fighting shoulder to shoulder at the front. The whole nation is conducting a life-and-death struggle against a handful of generals, enemies of peace and liberty, who, with the aid of the cutthroat soldiers of the Foreign Legion and duped Moroccan troops, want to restore the rule of the landlords and the church, and to sell the country piecemeal to the German and Italian fascists.

This is a struggle of the millions for bread and liberty, for land and work, for the independence of their country. It is a struggle of democracy against the dark forces of reaction and fascism. It is a struggle of the republic against those who are violating the orderly life and peaceful labor of the workers and peasants. It is a struggle against the instigators of war; it is a struggle for peace.

The relationship of class forces in Spain is such that fascism has the vast majority of the Spanish people against it, that the people, united in the alliance of the working class, peasants, and working people of the towns, would long since have settled with the revolt, were it not that behind the backs of the Spanish fascists stand the forces of world reaction, and first and foremost, German and Italian fascism.

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On April 14, 1931, the monarchy was overthrown in Spain and the republic was victorious. A revolution commenced, the fulfilment and victory of which stretched over a number of years.

After the bankruptcy of the policy of the coalition government which cleared the path for fascism, after the temporary triumph of reaction which won a victory at the elections in the autumn of 1933, after the bloody suppression of the armed struggle of the Asturian miners in October, 1934, the masses of the people began rapidly to gather their forces for determined resistance to fascism.

In the autumn of 1935, a powerful anti-fascist People's Front began to be gathered together.

In the attempt to bar the path against the People's Front, the reactionary fascist camp hastily fixed the elections to the Cortes earlier than the appointed time. Fascism hoped for victory, but was mistaken.

The camps of both fascism and democracy made energetic preparations for the elections of the new Cortes. The leader of the fascist organization *C.E.D.A.*, Gil Robles, elaborated a plan for "introducing order" into the country, and for the destruction of the working class parties and the organizations of the People's Front. On the other hand, the forces of the People's Front grew and gathered strength. On the initiative of the Communist Party, an agreement among the parties and groups participating in the People's Front was made at the end of 1936. These were, first and foremost, the proletarian parties and organizations, namely, the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the General Federation of Labor (the united trade union organization), the League of Socialist Youth and the Syndicalist Party (led by Pestana); then there were groups of

petty-bourgeois republicans, Left Republicans (Azana) and the Republican Union (Martinez Barrio).

The slogans of the People's Front reached wide circles of the population, and became a banner of struggle for the masses.

The elections of February 16 ended in a splendid victory for the People's Front. The parties of the People's Front obtained 263 seats in the Cortes (the working class parties holding 112), while the Rights received 136 and the Center 66.

Although the elections of February 16 dealt a heavy blow at reaction in Spain, the enemy was nevertheless not routed. The enemies of the people had tremendous material forces in their hands, namely, the land and the incalculable wealth of the banks and the church. During the period that they had been in power, they had fortified their positions in the state apparatus and in the army. The authority of the church was on their side. The mass basis of the fascist parties had not yet been destroyed.

It was beyond doubt that the enemy would not fail to use all the positions they held, all their forces, and all the power of their organizations to prepare a decisive blow at the gains won by the people. It was beyond doubt that a clash between the two forces that had been engaged in struggle against each other for six years, a clash between the two organized camps—the camp of fascism and the camp of democracy—was inevitable.

What were the tactics of counter-revolution after the victory of the People's Front and the formation of the Left Republican government of Azana? The enemy acted along three lines: the organization of economic sabotage, terroristic acts against the leaders of the People's Front—prominent Communists and Socialists—and preparation for a military revolt.

The basic and central task which the reaction set itself was to prepare the armed revolt. Economic sabotage, acts of provocation and terror were auxiliary means for the fulfilment of this main task. They were intended to create a situation where discontent would arise among the masses of the population, thus facilitating the carrying through of the revolt, for which the fascists began to prepare immediately after the outcome of the election of February 16.

“Leave the army alone, no politics in the army,” such was the slogan of reaction, under cover of which it prepared to transform the army into a political weapon of the counter-revolution. Behind the back of the government, the fascists carried on intensive work to strengthen their positions in the army. The fascist generals carried on a despicable game against the republican government, lulling its vigilance by hypocritical assurances of loyalty to the republic and the constitution.

While swearing their loyalty to the republic, the fascist-monarchist generals assigned the officers in the army to their places, carried through transfers of army units, built up reserves of ammunition, gathered together fighting detachments outside the army, drew up secret codes and passwords, and developed a wide-flung network of counter-revolutionary conspiracy that stretched from Morocco and the Balearic Islands to Madrid.

Apart from the technical preparations and the preliminary distribution of forces, the insurgents set themselves the task of seizing the main lines of communication in the country. The plan of the revolt, carefully prepared, provided for the rapid seizure of the main strategic centers. Foreseeing possible resistance in each town and district, the organizers of the rising in good time stationed trustworthy forces in the old fortresses.

The fascist monarchist counter-revolution, relying on the strength of all its organizations, secretly prepared for civil war all along the line.

What was being done at that time by the Azana government, and then by the Quiroga government, which relied for support on the parties and organizations of the People's Front? The Azana government proceeded to carry out the program of the People's Front.

But the imprint of moderation and irresolution lay on all the measures of the Left Republican government. The situation in the country (sabotage, direct preparations for the fascist revolt) demanded sharper measures in the struggle against the fascist danger, against devastation and hunger, demanded decisive measures so as to clean up the army and the state apparatus. The government did not notice the intrigues in the fascist-monarchist camp, and placed far too much faith in the assurances of the reactionary officers (Franco, Coded, Mola). This credulity led to the government being caught to a considerable degree unawares by the events of July 18.

The Communist Party knew that fascism would not surrender without a struggle. It understood that a conspiracy against the government was in preparation, although it had not the threads in its hands as yet. The Communists in the Cortes exposed the preparations for the revolt. Day after day, the Communist press showed up the machinations of the counter-revolution, sounded the alarm about the sabotage of the employers, about the speculation being carried on in foreign currency, called for vigilance, and for decisive blows to be struck at the enemies of the republic.

But the Communist Party at the same time realized that it must not break with the government in spite of its waverings. A break with the Azana government would have meant splitting the People's Front, and a split in the camp of the People's Front would have played into the hands of the fascists. While supporting the government, the Communist Party nevertheless criticized its weaknesses and mistakes, taught the masses from these mistakes, organized the pressure of these masses on the government along the road of resolute struggle against fascism.

During the days immediately preceding the revolt, the Communist Party again warned the government and the people of the approaching danger. The Central Committee of the Communist Party proposed that the government arm the Communist, Socialist and Anarchist workers for defense against the fascist offensive that was being prepared.

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The plan of the revolt was drawn up in such a way at the outset as to mislead the government as to the extent of the plot. The rebels decided to begin the rising in Morocco so as to distract the attention of the government from the events inside the country, and then to raise the revolt throughout Spain. They calculated on carrying the army with them, on bringing in the navy and, with its help, landing a big army of Moroccans and soldiers of the Foreign Legion in the south of Spain, to advance northward in two columns—on the one hand to the capital, and on the other to Murcia and Valencia, the basis of Madrid's food supplies. At the same time, General Mola was to have marched on Madrid from the north. And General Sanjurjo, one of the chief organizers of the revolt, who had been living in Germany, was to have become the commander-in-chief of all the rebel forces.

On the night of July 17 and 18, the revolt broke out in Morocco. At the same time General Goded began a revolt in the Canary Islands. Throughout the rest of Spain, "quiet" reigned. The government imagined that by dispatching the fleet to Morocco and arresting a group of fascists it had been able to avert a revolt inside the country. But on the night of July 18 and 19, the radio station at Ceuta sent out the agreed signal—"There is a

cloudless sky throughout all Spain". These words were the signal for the revolt to begin.

On July 18 revolts broke out in the north of Spain, in Navarre and Old Castile. These were the only provinces where the rebels had a mass basis composed of reactionary kulak peasants. Simultaneously, action was taken in various parts of the country—in Barcelona, Seville, Saragossa, Valladolid. All the military districts were involved in the revolt. The majority of the army supported the rebels. Only in the first district (Madrid), the third (Valencia) and the fourth (Barcelona) did they not obtain the support of all the soldiers. On the other hand, the second divisional district (with the exception of the 17th Infantry regiment in Malaga) and the soldiers of the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th divisional districts, as well as the regular troops in Morocco, the Canary Islands and partly in the Balearic Islands went over to the side of the rebels.

In the north, the rebels succeeded in concentrating in their hands 36 infantry battalions, 72 batteries of light artillery, six batteries of heavy artillery, two cavalry regiments, a tank regiment and other auxiliary units. In the south, they had at their disposal from the outset six infantry battalions, one cavalry regiment, one or two artillery regiments. In addition, General Franco, with the aid of Germany and Italy, succeeded in transferring from Morocco about 20,000 out of the 60,000 soldiers stationed there. In all, during the first days there were about 60,000 soldiers on the side of the rebels.

If we examine the relationship of forces according to types of arms, we find that the vast majority of the infantry was on the side of the rebels; the artillery was about equally divided, while a large section of the air fleet remained loyal to the republic. At the beginning of the struggle, the fascists had few airplanes. The navy introduced big changes into the plans of the rebels. With the exception of the "Almirante Servera", the navy was entirely on the side of the republic.* During the very first days, in reply to the attempt to bring the navy into the revolt, the sailors threw their officers into the sea. The sailors of the battleship "Jaime I" shot down their officers with machine guns, and threw their bodies into the sea, while the radio operator sent out the message: "The Jaime I is loyal to the people." The loyalty of the fleet to the republic made it difficult for General Franco to transfer troops from Morocco. He could only do this to a partial extent and not in the first few days as the rebels had expected, but later.

In spite of the loyalty of the navy and the great majority of the air fleet, the government was in a difficult position during the first days. It had few weapons. The troops at the disposal of the republic were plainly insufficient to offer up successful resistance to the numerically and technically superior forces of the insurgents. It should be remembered that apart from the troops, the rebels had at their disposal about 20,000 members of the Civil Guard (the gendarmerie), detachments of the Storm Guard, the militarized detachments of the "Spanish Phalanx" and the Navarre Carlists (supporters of monarchy in the province of Navarre).

The government was bewildered by the fact that the greater part of the armed forces were on the side of the rebels. Rumors were spread in Madrid that under the pressure of the big bourgeoisie the government was prepared to make a compromise. Hoping to split a section of the army and some circles of officers away from the rebels, President Azana proposed that a government be organized of a more moderate type, with Martinez Barrio at the head. The working class organizations, and first and foremost the Communist

* Considerably later the fascists succeeded in repairing the battleship "Espana" and the cruiser "Canarius", but the cruiser "Almirante Servera" was put out *el* action.

Party, were against such a government. They demanded the most resolute struggle against the fascist rebels. Azana took heed of the voice of the masses. He understood that the working class was the cement binding together the People's Front, that to quarrel with the working class meant to destroy the republic. He made his choice in favor of an honest alliance with the working class, and formed the Jose Giral government. The seriousness of the situation demanded the adoption of resolute measures. The Communist Party, reflecting the will of the workers, proposed that the people be armed. The newly organized government carried out the demand of the workers' organizations. This was the decisive moment. Had the republican government not armed the workers, Madrid and Barcelona would have been in the hands of the rebels.

On July 19 in Madrid a revolt broke out in the La Montana barracks, which constitute a real fortress. In it were 14,000 soldiers under the command of reactionary officers. The workers had 2,000 rifles when they stormed the approaches to the La Montana barracks. But it was not only the armed Workers' Militia that marched against those entrenched in the barracks; all the Madrid workers took action against them. A few hours after the beginning of the revolt it was crushed. On the same day, the rebels tried to take action in the military camps (Carabanchel, Quatro Vientos, Getafe, Vicalviro) situated near Madrid. This attempt also broke down. But it was early as yet to celebrate victory.

According to plan, General Mola began to advance on Madrid from the north. Occupying Aragon, Saragossa, Navarre and Old Castile, Mola's troops advanced in two columns on Madrid over the mountain range of Sierra Guadarrama. Learning of the new danger that threatened the capital, the workers' organizations formed five regiments of Workers' Militia. These regiments, together with units from the Madrid garrison and reinforcements from Valencia, held up the advance on Madrid.

Simultaneously the revolt was crushed in the big industrial center of Barcelona. The rebels had placed great hopes on Barcelona. A large number of troops had been concentrated there. General Goded came from the Balearic Islands to direct the action taken. But the people prepared to resist the rebels properly. At the demand of the masses, the Catalonian government armed the people on the night of July 18-19. On the morning of the 19th, detachments of the People's Militia were stationed in all the most important points of the city. Suspecting nothing, the soldiers found themselves faced with organized resistance. After a bloody fight lasting 14 hours, the rebels were defeated, and their leaders (including General Goded) were arrested and later shot by sentence of the tribunal. After crushing the revolt in Barcelona, the Catalonian People's Militia moved off to besiege Saragossa and to defend the mountain passes leading to Madrid.

The rebels were also unsuccessful in their attempt to cut off Madrid from its food basis. In Valencia the revolt was nipped in the bud. The same took place in Albacete.

Events took a worse turn in Asturias. Here the commander of the 3rd Infantry regiment, Colonel Aranda, who pretended to be a supporter of the republic, tricked the vigilance of the workers' organizations. He instructed them to gather the workers to receive arms, but met them with machine gun fire, and seized Oviedo and Gijon.

A fierce struggle broke out in the south of Spain. General Llano with the help of troops landed from Morocco succeeded in seizing Cadiz and later Seville.

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The government, with the aid of the armed people, succeeded in warding off the first blow of the insurgents. In the very first days of the revolt, 60,000 workers were armed.

They formed the People's Militia, which fought side by side with the troops who had remained faithful to the government. The People's Militia were hastily established and armed with rifles, machine guns, artillery and armored cars, that had been left, and naturally had no uniform organization. Whereas the Madrid Militia were organized after the army type—in battalions and with commanders elected and confirmed by the War Ministry, in Catalonia, on the contrary, thanks to the Anarchists, the Militia had a collective command. The commander here was merely a military adviser. Although the workers who joined the Militia knew nothing of the military art, and had to learn as they went on, the workers' battalions literally performed miracles. In the first few weeks of the struggle, some of the militia detachments became firm military units.

The best workers' regiment is the 5th Communist regiment, formed by the Communist Party during the first few days of the revolution. It is universally recognized to be a model regiment, the backbone of the entire defense of the republic.

The government had not only to form armed forces capable of fighting against the rebels, but also to develop commanding officers. Eighty per cent of the officers proved to be on the side of the rebels. The revolution brought forward its own commanders. A number of talented commanders and good strategists have already developed. The People's Militia has brought forward such commanders as Asencia and Mangada. In the recent past a second lieutenant, Mangada has developed during the revolution into an important army commander. He has succeeded in grouping people around himself, in building up a regiment around which legends are already growing. At first General Mangada had a small detachment of 500 workers. In the course of two months this detachment grew into a regiment of over 5,000 disciplined and well-armed men.

The armed people of Spain are astonishing the world by their heroism and self-sacrifice.

The first months of the struggle against fascism have written many noble pages in the history of the revolutionary people of Spain. It was only due to the self-sacrifice of the masses that the government troops succeeded in beating back the onslaught of the rebels against the main centers of the country, and in taking the offensive in a number of places. Spain has virtually been split into two parts, republican and fascist. Out of the fifty Spanish provinces, eighteen (with a population of 8,000,000) are in the hands of the republicans, and in fifteen military operations are taking place. Finally there are seventeen provinces with a population of 7,000,000 in addition to a number of regional centers such as Grenada, Cordova, Huesca, Tiruel, Saragossa, Oviedo and Toledo that are completely in the hands of the rebels.

A frightful White terror reigns in the provinces occupied by the rebels, by comparison with which the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition of the middle ages fade into insignificance.

In Badajos, all who had hardened hands or signs of having used rifles were seized. Then 1,500 people were driven into the arena of the bull ring, and shot down with machine guns in the presence of the highest society. In addition, 400 people seeking shelter in Portugal were shot down near the border. The fascist General Queipo de Llano informed the world by radio that he had fulfilled his program. He had set himself the aim of slaughtering 3,000 Marxists in Seville and he had killed 5,000. Shootings are carried on methodically in Seville. Not long ago, the whole of the population of one street were shot.

In Cordova, over 1,200 workers were shot. In the little town of Baen, all members of trade unions were hunted down. Out of 375 members, 296 were shot. The frenzied bandits

in Irun fired at the women and children who were fleeing to French territory. The fascist gangs that burst into the village of Arajal locked the population in their houses over which they poured gasoline, and then set fire to them. Men, women and children perished in the flames.

The provinces which are in the hands of the rebels are being converted into deserts. Towns are being set fire to, and the working population is doomed to wholesale destruction. Robbery, violence and swashbuckling tyranny reign wherever the generals are masters.

And in the districts where the republican government is in power militant solidarity exists, and all efforts are concentrated on the organization of victory. Factories and mills are being adapted to the needs of the front. Factories whose owners are rebels or have gone abroad are managed by workers' committees. The peasants, who have dreamed for centuries of owning their own land, have received the lands of the church and of landlords who sided with the insurgents. Under the protection of the People's Militia, they are sowing their land and gathering the harvest. At the first call of the government and the workers' organizations, hundreds of working people give up their work and go voluntarily to the front.

What are the results of the first phase of the struggle? The first phase of struggle has shown that the people are ready to fight to the last drop of blood, that the working people of free Spain would rather die than surrender to the mercies of the fascist conquerors. "It is better to die standing than live on your knees," said Dolores, expressing the unanimous will of the people. The rebels did not succeed in taking the peoples unawares, in drowning the revolution in blood and in establishing a fascist dictatorship. The rebels have no support among the people. Their strength lies in the bayonets of hirelings and kulaks' sons, and in the airplanes, arms and men that they receive from the Italian and German fascists. On the other hand, the republican troops have not succeeded in striking a decisive blow at the rebels, who have a smoothly working military organization and an army well supplied with technical equipment.

The first phase of the struggle has brought to light a series of weak points in the defense of the republic. While the enemy has a united command, a single well-worked-out strategic plan, the republican troops have acted in scattered groups. The absence of a single command hindered the republic from the very outset in gathering its forces into a single striking force. The government had no united plan for the liquidation of the revolt. Every province acted on its own discretion, defending its own borders first and foremost, without taking into account the general situation in the country. A striking example of the lack of organization, the absence of a united plan and action, was the prolonged struggle carried on by the Catalonian People's Militia for the island of Majorca. Instead of utilizing their existing forces to seize all the chief strategic points in the hands of the rebels, to help the troops in action at Saragossa and the Sierra Guadarrama, the Catalonians, after crushing the revolt in Barcelona, concentrated their forces on the seizure of the island of Majorca, which is not of major importance as far as concerns the outcome of the struggle.

The lack of military commanders greatly impeded the struggle. People who had never commanded military units were forced to lead big bodies of men, while against them there were well armed units led by military specialists. The formation of a strong body of commanding officers is one of the chief tasks facing the republican government.

Finally, a big shortcoming has been the lack of strict military discipline. The People's Militia, which has displayed great heroism, has often lacked the discipline involving the

rapid and exact fulfilment of the orders of commanding officers.

The situation demanded resolute measures to organize the Militia, demanded the formation of a real army.

Such are the results of the first phase of the struggle, which have not given the republican people a decisive superiority over the organizers of the civil war—the fascist generals and the mutineers.

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The struggle that has dragged out for months has now entered a new and more difficult phase. It has outgrown the national bounds. On Spanish territory the forces that have clashed are those of democracy and international fascism. Germany, as well as Italy, is actively supporting the rebels. It is the help received from European fascism that is the main source fostering the civil war in Spain.

Proof of the support being given to the rebels by Germany, Italy and Portugal is provided by innumerable facts. As early as July 31, the *Daily Herald* reported the despatch of 28 airplanes, with bombs, shells and other military stores from Hamburg to Spain. On August 13 19 German airplanes arrived in Seville. A further 24 airplanes landed in Seville on August 14. On September 2, after the non-intervention agreement had been signed, Germany sent a new consignment of airplanes, guns and ammunition to Portugal for the Spanish rebels. On the same day a German steamer arrived in Cadiz, with 26 airplanes aboard. The German consulates in Spain have become bases for the rebels, who have German military advisers. Germany is providing the rebels with airplanes, tanks and men. German bombing planes (of the new Heinkel type with a speed of 400 kilometers an hour) and the latest kinds of tanks are constantly arriving at the fronts of the civil war in Spain, and highly skilled German airmen take part in the fighting. German warships are being concentrated in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean.

And the whole world is aware of the help being given to the insurgents by Italy. Not less than 100 airplanes, mostly bombing planes, have been sent to the insurgents from Italy. The best airmen of the Italian air fleet are in action on the side of the rebels. On September 11, the Italian steamer “Nereida” landed 30 airmen and mechanics, and unloaded airplanes on the island of Majorca. Italy is supplying the insurgent forces with officers. On September 9, a hundred officers of the Italian militia arrived in Spain through Portugal, armed with false passports.

Italy has virtually occupied the island of Majorca (the Balearic Islands), which is in the possession of the rebels. An Italian legion has been formed on the island. The general command of all the armed forces there has passed into the hands of the Italian emissary. Count de Bossi. The approaches to Majorca from the sea are guarded by Italian cruisers.

All these facts go to show that the fascist warmongers are cynically helping the forces of reaction in Spain. They have chosen Spain as a jumping-off ground from which to wreak bloody vengeance on an awakening people and provoke a new world war. Were the fascist insurgents in Spain to be victorious it would mean a blow at the People’s Front in other countries, and first and foremost in France. It would make it possible for Germany and Italy to consolidate their position in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic Ocean in preparation for a new redivision of the globe.

This aid to the rebels from the fascist countries (while the lawful government is virtually blockaded) is creating special difficulties for the struggle of the revolutionary

people. The rebels have succeeded in strengthening their forces with new equipment, powerful aviation, artillery and skilled military specialists.

These are difficulties of an external order. No less important are the internal difficulties. The civil war is dragging on. The rebels have occupied a series of important points, and have set themselves the central strategic and political task of occupying Madrid. So long as the forces of the rebels were divided into two groups—the northern and the southern—all attempts to advance on Madrid were unsuccessful. The establishment of contact between the two groups, the transfer of the most reliable units, the Foreign Legion and the Moroccan Riflemen, to Estremadura, have made it possible for the rebels to surround Madrid on three sides—north, west and south. A direct threat hangs over the capital. Whether the center of the revolution will be saved depends entirely on how far the republican troops and working population of the capital are in a position to fight, on their organization and discipline.

It is in this situation that a new government was organized on September 4, headed by Largo Caballero, the leader of the Left of the Socialist Party. The fascists of all countries and their lackeys are depicting the Largo Caballero government as being practically the dictatorship of the proletariat, and speak of it as a “Red”, “Bolshevik government.

Nothing could be more incorrect than such an estimate of the Caballero government. It is the government of the parties of the People’s Front, including the Left bourgeois republican parties, the Catalanian Lefts, the Socialist and Communist Parties, and the Basque nationalists. The task of this government, as of the government that preceded it, is to defend the republic, to defeat the military-fascist revolt.

The central task is to “coordinate all the forces of the people”, as the government declaration demands, to gather the forces of revolutionary democracy into a single striking force, to establish real fighting discipline and organization, and to begin a struggle against the disorganizers, the enemies of the people. This enemy, however, is ensconced not only on the other side of the war front, but also in the districts occupied by the government troops, spreading petty-bourgeois laxity and slackness, and philistine individualism. This domestic enemy is a dangerous one, and is many-faced. He possesses arms but does not go to the front. He does not go to the front, but does not hand over his weapons to those who are fighting at the front. If he happens to go to the front, he replaces discipline by discussions on discipline. He disobeys military orders and is the first to run from the field of battle. He opens up the front, subjecting his comrades to the danger of being wiped out, because his “individuality” cannot bear the whistle of bullets, the roar of shells, sleepless nights and war alarms. He prefers to “guard” the revolution in the rear, while others lay down their lives for the cause of liberty at the front.

It is no easy task to overcome this enemy, and is complicated by the fact that the parties of the People’s Front do not form a solid united force. Within the People’s Front there are elements who in practice frequently resist the establishment of real discipline and order. This applies first and foremost to the Anarchists, who still possess considerable influence in Spain.

The influence of Anarchism is the main weakness of the working class movement in Spain. How is it to be explained that Anarchism has maintained its influence in Spain whereas it has long been outlived almost all over the world, to the degree that the capitalist mode of production has grown, and the working class movement developed?

It is to be explained, in the first place, by the petty-bourgeois character of the country, conditioned by the backwardness of the economic life of the country, and the considerable

role played in it by small production. Anarchism is the product of the under-development of capitalism, of the dispersed and scattered character of its production and working class, of the immaturity of the workers' organizations, a product of the influence of the petty bourgeoisie over the working class.

It is to be explained, in the second place, by the feudal relics in the state structure of Spain, by the isolation and particularism of its provinces, resulting in the dissipation of the state powers, and the entrenchment of the power of the local potentates, the so-called caciques (gentry). The particularism of the provinces creates the basis for anti-centralist tendencies. Anarchism always advances dismemberment and federalism in opposition to the idea of a centralized movement, and the mustering of all the forces of the working class into a single force.

It is to be explained, in the third place, by the existence of a tremendous stratum of declassed elements. Thousands of people, who have been without work for many years, and have degenerated into lumpen proletarians, form favorable ground for the influence of Anarchism. It is from these declassed elements that fascism recruits the so-called pistoleros—people who carry out terroristic murders.

Wherein lies the harm of Anarchist tactics at the present stage of struggle for the victory of the democratic revolution?

The Anarchists even now are advocating the establishment of a “new social order” of anarcho-communism as an immediate practical task. The Anarchists consider that Spain has already entered the stage of the Communist revolution, of the “fundamental remaking of class society”. Failing to understand the essence of the events now taking place in Spain and the character of the revolution that has developed, the Anarchists are trying to “push” the revolution ahead. The more difficult the situation becomes at the front owing to the support of the rebels by German and Italian fascism, the more energetically they are “pushing on” the development of the revolution, thus threatening to narrow its social basis. This is shown by the proposals to hand over all the factories to the trade unions.

If this proposal were carried out, it would cause great harm to the struggle against fascism. The transfer of the factories to separate groups of workers and scattered trade union federations would be a blow at the defense of the republic. The task of serving the needs of the front cannot be solved along the lines of decentralizing the leadership of the economic life of the country. In addition, the seizure of the factories of the small and middle bourgeoisie would strike at circles which are today supporting the democratic republic and the People's Front. Such a measure could only drive these strata into the camp of reaction. Such “pushing” of the revolution could have a fatal effect on its further development.

The tendency to “push” the revolution is clearly emphasized in the proposal immediately to collectivize the peasant farm. In some places the Anarchists are trying to carry this idea into practice, by forcing the peasants to join collective farms. The path to collectivization is a long and difficult one. Collectivization is a task of the proletarian revolution, and is carried out by the proletariat after a whole series of preparatory measures have been taken: the establishment of a powerful industry, the provision of a machine basis for agriculture, the re-education of the peasants, etc. Can there be any question of collectivization in the period of the democratic revolution, the central problem before which is the transfer of the big estates of the landowners to the peasants? Compulsory collectivization, the “pushing” of the revolution along this line simply plays into the hands of the enemy.

The harm done by Anarchism is also expressed in all kinds of feverish “reorganization”. The frequent changes of governments and other organs of power provoked by the Anarchists interfere with the organization of defense, and set the nerves of the masses on edge, the sharpest moment for the defense of the republic, namely, during the breach of the Talavera front by the rebels—the Madrid Anarcho-Syndicalist federation called a meeting dealing with the differences of program between themselves and other workers’ organizations. On the day when fierce fighting was taking place near Toledo, the Anarchists were busy with the reorganization of the government of Catalonia. During days which were most serious for Madrid, as when the enemy was only 60 to 60 kilometers from the city, the Anarchists were occupied in drawing up a plan for reorganizing the central Madrid government. A plenary session of the C.N.T.* demanded the formation of a national committee, and the conversion of the ministries into departments, etc.

The harm being done by Anarchism, and its influence, is also expressed in the fact that some of the supporters of the Anarchist organizations (and sometimes people who hide behind the Anarchist flag) violate revolutionary order, sow the elements of an anti-social regime such as knows of no revolutionary law. Such a regime, where everyone does as he wishes, and where there is no order, discipline and law, can only give rise to discontent among the population.

Finally, the harm done by Anarchism and its influence lies in the denial of the need for military discipline, in the rejection of organization and the centralization of the leadership. At a time when all forces need to be mustered and all actions to be united for the struggle against the military fascist revolt, the Anarchists oppose the centralization of the leadership of the armed forces, oppose the decision of the government to form a republican army, and oppose a united plan and discipline.

The Anarchists propagate the idea of indiscipline and are full of praise for it. On August 28, in the newspaper *D’Espan Anti-facista*, a monstrous article entitled “The Organization of Indiscipline” signed by three Anarchist organizations in Spain—the C.N.T., the F.A.I. and the A.I.T.—was published. It was a hymn of praise to indiscipline and unbridled passion.

In addition, however, to the petty-bourgeois, declassed, and hostile elements in the Anarchist movement there are also healthy proletarian elements. The Anarchist workers, in spite of the wishes of their leaders, fought bravely in 1934 side by side with the Communist and Socialist workers at the barricades in Asturias. From the first days of the fascist revolt, thousands of Anarchist workers have been fighting and have died heroically in battle against the fascist gangs. And among the leaders of the Anarcho-Syndicalists there are such honest, courageous proletarian fighters as Duruti, and Oliver Garcia. Within the Anarchist Confederation of Labor itself there is growing up a healthy feeling in favor of order, a strong army, discipline, and the Leninist conception of the role of the state and state power.

This is an indication that considerable sections of the workers who follow the Anarchists are beginning to outlive their Anarcho-Syndicalist illusions.

The foulest and most despicable role in Spain is being played in the present serious situation by the Trotskyists, who are a miserable little group, lately reinforced, it is true, by an influx of Trotskyist elements from other countries. Not long ago, the reactionary French journalist de Kerillis, who works hand in glove with the French police, made a

* Confederación Nacional de Trabajo—National Confederation of Labor

sensational statement in the *Echo de Paris* to the effect that, according to incontrovertible proofs in possession of the French police, the so-called Fourth International (Trotskyist) is in the closest connections with the Gestapo, and is being utilized by the latter to carry on disintegrating work in the ranks of the world working class movement.

And there is no doubt that the well-informed Kerillis has made no mistake in this case. The trial of the leaders of the Trotsky-Zinoviev terrorist gang has plainly shown to the whole world in whose interests and at whose orders the Trotskyist degenerates are working and whom they serve. The role of the Trotskyists in Spain is merely new confirmation of what was disclosed at the Moscow trial. And really, what would fascist agents do in Spain at the present moment of tense struggle by the masses of the people against fascism?

They would try to introduce dissension among the organizations of the People's Front. This is exactly what the Spanish Trotskyists are doing. They are endeavoring to penetrate into the various organizations of the People's Front, so as to set them one against the other, and thus weaken the unity of the struggle of the Spanish people.

Fascist agents would try to break up the People's Front. This is exactly what the Spanish Trotskyists are doing, when they demand that the working class organizations break away from the republican parties of the People's Front.

Fascist agents would spread distrust in the government, so as to weaken the defenses and open the front to the enemy. This is what is being done by the Spanish Trotskyists. The very day after February 16, they led the line of struggle against the government resting on the support of the parties of the People's Front, thus helping the reaction to conceal its plans for revolt. On June 16, after Dolores had made her speech exposing the plan for the preparation for the fascist revolt, a Trotskyist, Maurin, took the floor. Did Maurin make an attack on the fascist conspirators? No, Maurin directed his fire entirely against the government, which the fascist plotters were seeking to overthrow. Now, when the people are exerting heroic efforts to repulse the fascist rebels, the Trotskyist provocateurs are attacking the government and its measures for organizing defense.

Fascist agents would try to demoralize the troops of the Spanish revolution by attacks on the U.S.S.R., would try to discredit it in the eyes of the Spanish people. But this is just what the Trotskyist provocateurs are doing.

Fascist agents would sow the seeds of hatred for the Communists, who are bravely fulfilling their duty at the front and in the rear. And this is what is being done by the Trotskyist agents of fascism, who hate the U.S.S.R., but after it, hate the Communist Party and the Communists most of all.

Fascist agents would advance slogans and provoke movements of such a type that German fascism would be able to justify its intervention. The Trotskyists are doing this as well. "It is not true that our troops are fighting for the existence of a democratic republic" declares the Trotskyist paper *La Batalla* in Barcelona. And the German and Italian fascists, the British conservatives, give the utmost publicity to these statements, and try to prove that in Spain it is not a question of the struggle of democracy against fascism, but of the proletariat against bourgeois democracy.

Finally, fascist agents in Spain have orders to carry on terrorist activity in the districts occupied by the republican troops. The Trotskyists do this as well. They have used and still use the most disgusting means of terror against the Communists and revolutionary workers. During the trial of the Trotsky-Zinoviev gang of bandits in Moscow, the Trotskyists in Spain carried out a series of terrorist acts against Communists. When an

air raid was in progress one night in Madrid, a gang of Trotskyists took advantage of the darkness to commit the cowardly assassination of a group of active members of the Party. While the People's Militia were conducting an heroic struggle near Sierra Guadarrama, a terrorist plot of fascist-Trotskyists was discovered, aimed at the murder of Jose Diaz, Dolores, Largo Caballero and Azana.

Such is the real countenance of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, which is trying to stab the Spanish revolution and the Spanish people in the back.

Difficulties in the domestic political situation have also arisen from the past vacillations of the Socialist Party on a number of extremely important questions of the organization of defense. The seriousness of the situation demands the maximum unity of all the forces of the People's Front. But in the struggle to achieve victory over fascism, the unity of the People's Front demands that the parties which compose it be solid and united. But divergences of opinion take place among the leaders of the Socialist Party on questions that are by no means important or questions of principle at the present stage of the revolution.

At a time when Socialist workers are displaying tremendous military prowess, not everyone in the ranks of the Socialist Party possesses a sufficient sense of responsibility in face of the serious situation. Certain groups of Socialists do not understand that everything at present must be subordinated to the interests of the front, that the policy and activity of all the parties and organizations of the People's Front must be subordinated to the one task of organizing victory over fascism. Excessive optimism, which arises from an underestimation of the strength of the enemy, the absence of a sober appreciation of difficulties of an international character, self-assurance leading to the adoption of defensive instead of offensive tactics, the substitution of the propaganda of the heroism connected with the struggle instead of organizing it—all these shortcomings were still possessed by certain Spanish Socialist leaders until very lately.

Estimates of the character of the revolution are current in the Socialist Party and in its press such as are incompatible with a correct Marxist calculation of the forces concerned, and which rather reflect the influence of Anarchism.

Finally, right until very recently, some elements in the Socialist Party have wavered on the most important question arising at the present stage, that of the building up of the armed forces of the republic. As early as August 20, the Giral government issued a decree to form a republican voluntary army with a minimum term of service of six months. The Anarchists were up in arms against this measure. And there were people to be found in the Socialist Party who did not understand the significance of a regular army, and who opposed its formation.

And, at the same time, every new day brings reports from the front that side by side with the exhibition of heroism on a mass scale by the militia, there are ever more frequent cases of indiscipline on the part of the Anarchist elements, and that the losses suffered by the People's Militia are often so great because the men do not act in unison, do not possess the requisite endurance, and are without a strong commanding staff, etc.

Such are the difficulties of an inner political character. Nor should it be forgotten that there are food difficulties which a center like Madrid is beginning to experience and which demand immediate measures.

In this complex situation, the young Communist Party of Spain is soberly estimating the position in the country, marking out the correct line for its policy, and carrying out a definite and consistent line on the question of the defense of the republic. From the first

day of the fascist revolt, the Party threw all its best forces to the front for the struggle to save the country and the republic. On July 18 the Communists were everywhere in the front ranks of the workers who attacked the La Montana barracks in Madrid. "The rebels must be destroyed" was the slogan of the *Mundo Obrero* during these days, and it still remains so today. The Communist Party secured the arming of the workers. The Communists are the best organizers of the Workers' Militia and the People's Militia. Thousands of Communists are fighting at the fronts of the civil war. The Communist 5th Regiment is the best detachment of the revolutionary army. The Communist Party supported the governments of Quiroga and Giral. Communists entered the Caballero government and advanced only one condition on giving their support to the changing governments: "Do everything to organize the military defeat of fascism."

What is the essence of the political line of the Communist Party at the present stage of the revolution?

The Communist Party takes as its point of departure the fact that a democratic revolution of the people is taking place in the country, its task at the present stage being to crush the fascist revolt, to save the republic.

The slogan of the defense of the democratic republic makes it possible to bring the widest masses of the people—workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, intellectuals, etc.—into the struggle against fascism. This slogan creates a very wide basis for the struggle to solve all the tasks of the democratic revolution. At the same time, the slogan of the defense of the democratic republic assists the formation of a wide democratic front around the struggle of the Spanish people throughout the world. The struggle of the masses of the people in Spain for the republic is meeting with the sympathy of tremendous sections of the population in all the capitalist countries. Not only the workers and working people generally, but considerable groups of honest republicans and democrats and of other strata are raising their voices in defense of the lawful democratic government of Spain, in defense of the Spanish people. The Party understands that this growing wave of sympathy for the Spanish people is a strong weapon, which the workers' organizations of all countries must use in order to prevent German, Italian and Portuguese fascism from doing their foul work, and to impel the governments of Great Britain and France to put an end to the blockade of a people fighting for independence and freedom. Therefore the Party is against all irresponsible statements, against frivolous chatter as to projects for the future "reorganization of society", which in the present international situation can only serve to complicate the struggle of the Spanish people against those who wish to enslave them.

The Party clearly realizes that the democratic republic for which the Spanish people are fighting will not be like a bourgeois-democratic republic of the usual type (U.S.A., France). Its social content is different. It is a republic in which fascism, the chief enemy of the people, of democracy and freedom, will have no place. Fascism, which in such countries as Germany and Italy has destroyed the freedom of the people, will not have such freedom in the Spanish democratic republic as, for instance, in France, Great Britain or the U.S.A. It will be a democratic republic for the masses of the people, a republic which will not allow democracy and the rights it gives to be used for the destruction of democracy and the establishment of slavery for the people. The material basis of fascism will be broken in this republic. A considerable number of undertakings (the property of persons helping the rebels or who have deserted their factories, and also enterprises of importance as regards defense) are now already in the hands of the people. About 18,000 enterprises on the territory of the republic have passed into the hands of the state and the workers'

organizations. The estates of the landlords and the princes of the church who are participating in the fascist revolt have been confiscated and given over to peasants with little land. The republic in Spain is treating the enemies of the people and their property in the same way as the revolutionary people of France (in 1793) treated the insurgents, the monarchist émigrés of Coblenz.

But in order to bring about the establishment of such a democratic republic, the fascist revolt must be crushed. But at the present stage of the fascist revolt, it cannot be crushed unless a disciplined people's army with a single command is established, unless a strong government is organized, unless the fascist elements are cleared out of the state apparatus, and unless strict revolutionary order is introduced at the front and in the rear. Day in and day out, the Party is calling on the masses to solve the central task of the day, namely, the raising of discipline. The basic slogan launched by the Party is: "Firm government, strong army command, and iron discipline."

The Communist Party does not limit itself to agitation for discipline. It shows the people a brilliant example of organization, discipline, and order. The Communist fighters are the most disciplined fighters. Exemplary order reigns in the Communist detachments. The Communist soldiers hand over all property confiscated from the enemy to the state. It is well known that many tens of millions of pesetas confiscated from a number of rebels at the time of their arrest were handed to the government by members of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party is the mainstay of strict revolutionary order in the rear. It is fighting for the reorganization of industry to serve the needs of the defense of the republic. In the factories, the Communists are fighting for the organization of production, for labor discipline, for improved quality of output, against all petty-bourgeois laxness, graft, self seeking, and against any frittering away of the property of the people.

The Communist Party is fighting to solve the agrarian problem in favor of the peasants and agricultural workers.

The Communist Party is fighting for the liquidation of the economic and political power of the church. But this is not in the least to affect the right to hold any creed, and respect for religious convictions of one kind or another. The republic is not closing the churches and does not persecute priests. It carries on a struggle against those members of the church who are taking part in the revolt. It is closing those churches which have been turned by the rebels into storehouses for arms, and strongholds of the counter-revolutionary revolt.

The Communist Party is fighting for extensive national autonomy for Catalonia, the Basque Provinces, and Valencia.

And finally, the Communist Party is fighting for peace among peoples.

Such is the line of the Communist Party of Spain. Such are its deeds. This line is being carried out, and these deeds are being done at the front and in the rear by the best of the working class of Spain, the Communists, who are fighting shoulder to shoulder with their Socialist and Anarchist class brothers. From out of the ranks of the Communist Party, the working class, and the people are coming forward outstanding fighters, people of the new Spain.

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During these days and weeks, when the Spanish people are fighting bravely for their liberty, all working people are faced with the question: how can we help our Spanish

brothers so as to ensure their victory? All workers, all working people, all honest democrats are asking themselves the question; what basis in international law is there for the governments of Great Britain and France blockading the lawful government of Spain, while the German and Italian governments which have signed the non-intervention agreement continue to supply the rebels with arms? Was such a blockade employed against fascist Italy when it attacked Ethiopia? Has the blockade been employed against Germany, which is systematically violating its international obligations? Why do Great Britain and France not employ the blockade against Germany, Italy and Portugal, in spite of the fact that the governments of these countries have violated and continue to violate the pact of non-intervention in Spanish affairs? Is it not open encouragement to the aggressors when the capitalist countries keep silent about the speech of the Spanish Foreign Minister, Del Vayo, made at the plenary session of the League of Nations in Geneva? Why do the British conservatives, who have declaimed so much about the need for respecting parliamentarism, universal suffrage, the will of the parliamentary majority, and the laws voted by this majority, avert their faces when the rebel generals trample the constitution, the law, and universal suffrage under their bloody jackboots?

The governments of Great Britain and France proposed a pact on non-intervention in Spanish affairs to all countries, including the U.S.S.R.

What would the honest fulfilment of the non-intervention pact have meant in practice? The honest fulfilment of the pact would have made it possible for the republican government of Spain to liquidate the revolt, which has no mass basis in the country, in the shortest possible time. The honest fulfilment of the pact would have meant not only the liquidation of the fascist revolt in Spain but also the liquidation, in the embryo, of the new center of war (for Germany and Italy are seeking to secure the victory of the rebels with a view to seizing positions on the chief communication lines of France and Great Britain—positions which they require in order to carry out their expansionist plans). The honest fulfilment of the pact would have demonstrated not only that very wide masses of working people throughout the world do not desire war, but would have shown the fascists that the defenders of democracy and peace have effective means in their hands for carrying on the struggle against all who want to unleash war.

But, in the course of events, the pact has become a fiction. The German and Italian fascists continue to afford help to the rebels, while France and Great Britain do not “notice” the violation of the pact by Germany, Italy and Portugal. The conduct of German and Italian fascism in Spanish affairs, while Great Britain and France remain passive, is nothing but provocation directed not only against Spain but against the Soviet Union.

German fascism is waiting for any excuse, however small, to set loose the forces of war, and to organize a crusade against the U.S.S.R. The Nuremberg Congress of the fascist party had as its keynote the struggle against the forces of democracy, and first and foremost against the U.S.S.R., the bulwark of democracy and peace among the peoples. German fascism is seeking for allies for a “drive against Bolshevism”. In such a situation, could the Soviet government refuse to participate in the non-intervention agreement? No, for France, with which the Soviet Union is connected by a mutual assistance pact, insisted on it. “The Soviet government associated itself with the declaration of non-intervention in Spanish affairs” stated Comrade Litvinov at the League of Nations, “only because a friendly country feared an international conflict if this were not done.” Had the U.S.S.R. refused to participate in the agreement, this would have united the capitalist countries against the U.S.S.R., would have led to direct intervention in Spanish affairs by the fascist

countries, under the hypocritical pretense that the U.S.S.R. was inflaming civil war and implanting Bolshevism in Spain. Under the cover of slander and calumny against the Soviet Union, German and Italian fascism would have proceeded to open intervention in Spain, to the landing of troops, to the plundering and dismemberment of the country. Had the U.S.S.R. refused to participate in the non-intervention agreement, this would have fitted in with the fascist war plans.

The international working class understands the complexity of this situation and the foul game of those who are provoking intervention and war. They know that the key to the alteration of the position in respect to the lawful Spanish government lies in London and Paris.

This is why very wide masses of the workers throughout the world, and their Communist Parties, are raising the question of a change in the position of Great Britain and France on the question of non-intervention. They know that the decision of this question depends on the position taken up by these countries, that the Soviet Union only signed the non-intervention pact under the pressure of the above-mentioned circumstances. The Soviet Union has no intention of tolerating the conversion of the non-intervention pact into a virtual blockade of the Spanish people engaged in the fight against the fascist rebels, who are being supplied, in spite of the pact, with military supplies sent to them by foreign fascist governments. On October 7 the Soviet government officially declared to the committee dealing with questions of the application of the non-intervention pact:

“The Soviet Government can under no circumstances agree to the conversion of the non-intervention pact into a screen covering up the military aid being rendered to the rebels by certain of those participating in the agreement, against the lawful Spanish government. The Soviet Government is compelled, in view of this, to declare that if the violation of the non-intervention agreement is not stopped forthwith, it will consider itself free from the obligations arising from the agreement.”

A struggle is now developing throughout the world against the blockade of republican Spain. On September 6, 160,000 proletarians in Paris demonstrated their solidarity with the Spanish people. The demonstration took place under the slogan: "Down with the blockade of Republican Spain!" Three hundred thousand workers employed in the aviation, engineering and automobile industries of the Paris district declared a one-hour general strike, demanding the repeal of the "policy of blockading the republican government of Spain". And a movement has started in Great Britain directed towards changing the policy of the government.

Working people are not only demanding from their governments that the blockade of republican Spain be withdrawn, but they are organizing extensive material aid for the fighters for liberty. Throughout the world, money is being collected for our Spanish brothers. Money, food, medical supplies, and Red Cross detachments are being sent to Spain.

All the more criminal in these conditions is the step taken by the Right leaders of the Second International, who took advantage of the trial of the counter-revolutionary Trotsky-Zinoviev gang to disrupt the united front of aid for the Spanish people. This step only plays into the hands of fascism. By helping the rebels in Spain German fascism is also calculating on scaring the working people of other countries, and on showing them that the victory of the People's Front will inevitably lead to civil war. In this way, the fascists want to disrupt the People's Front that is gathering strength all over the world.

The reactionary leaders of the Second International have stretched out a hand to the fascists.

In spite of all the laborious efforts of the leaders of the Second International to disrupt the united front of aid for the Spanish people, the working people throughout the world will strengthen it further. The toilers of the Land of the Soviets are giving and will continue to give extensive moral and material support to their Spanish brothers. The proletarians of all capitalist countries, and all honest democrats, will actively support the Spanish people. They feel that the forces of democracy and international fascism have now clashed on the territory of Spain, that in this struggle the fate is being decided not only of the Spanish people but also of the masses of the people throughout the world.

All honest supporters of democracy, peace and progress must rally together to smash the criminal endeavors of the fascists—the enemies of popular liberty, and the incendiaries of a new world war.