

The Struggle Against the Fascists and the Counter-Revolutionaries in Spain

Fascist reaction, which still holds a strong economic and political position in Spain, is raising its head once again.

The fascist organizations "Falanga Espaniola", led by the son of Primo de Rivera, and the "Rinovacion Espaniola", led by Calvo Sotello, have begun their new attacks, under the leadership of "Action Popular", headed by Gil Robles. The aim of these attacks is to destroy the People's Front, split the republicans away from the working class parties, drive the masses to premature spontaneous action and use this in the interests of the counter-revolution. To achieve these aims, fascist reaction is resorting to two tactics, the first being to intensify its social demagogy, following a course aiming at discrediting the People's Front. To this end they express in words their readiness to support the People's Front on condition that the republicans give up collaboration with the Socialists and Communists.

In a speech at a session of the Cortes (Parliament), held on June 16, Gil Robles openly stated that:

"There will not be a minute's peace in Spain as long as the People's Front contains such parties and organizations as the Socialist Party (which will soon call fascists all those who do not think the same as Mr. Largo Caballero) and the Communist Party."

The fascist leader was given a fitting reply by Comrade Dolores Ibarruri, a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain. Accompanied by the stormy applause of the majority of the Cortes' deputies, she stated that "neither the attacks of reaction nor the more or less masked maneuvers of the enemies of democracy will break down or weaken the confidence of the toiling workers in the People's Front and the government which represents it". And, in concluding her brilliant speech, Comrade Dolores demanded decisive measures by the government against the fascists "if we are to avoid the unrest and disorder prevailing in Spain, it is not sufficient only to lay the responsibility for possible events upon some single person as Calvo Sotello.... Those people must be thrown into jail whose hands are still red from the blood of the victims of the October repression, and who with unprecedented cynicism appear here and wish to make the government responsible for events which have not taken place."

In addition to demagogy, fascist reaction is resorting to other methods such as terror and assassination, sabotage, speculation and the deliberate organization of hunger by the landowners refusing to gather the harvest, and finally, an attempt at an armed uprising. Literally not a day passes without in some town or village some active figure in the People's Front falling at the hands of the fascists. But the "bold" young men of the "Spanish Phalanx" do not limit themselves to this. They are making their way into the Anarchist organizations of the National Confederation of Labor, so as from within to spread hatred and hostility among the workers' organizations and to carry on there their criminal work. It was they who in Malaga provoked the murder of the Communist Municipal Councillor, Comrade Rodriguez, and a number of conflicts between Socialists and Communists, on the one hand, and Anarchists on the other. It was only the interference of

the Central Committee of the Communist Party that put an end to this fratricidal struggle. As the *Mundo Obrero* wrote, this was the work of the provocateurs and fascist agents operating in the Anarchist organizations.

At the same time the reactionaries are carrying on a campaign to devalue the peseta, and are organizing the export of capital from the country, and closing down enterprises.

The fascists are attempting to use the wave of economic strikes for their own provocative ends. Big employers are refusing to take part in arbitration commissions, and drag out strike negotiations, attempting to starve the masses into submission, and organize and direct their dissatisfaction against the government and the People's Front.

The big landlords in the village in particular are making wide use of these tactics. Despite the government decree as to the hiring of unemployed agricultural workers, the landlords refuse to hire them or, if they do, do not pay them wages. This has brought into being a large strike movement in the villages in a number of provinces—Malaga, Seville, Heine, Cordova and others. The big landlords do not stop at anything. They are making use of the fact that the harvest this year is a poor one in order in organized fashion to give rise to hunger in the country, and to this end leave their crops uncultivated and ungathered.

Parallel with this, the fascists were preparing an armed uprising for the 19th of July. The fascists have strong positions among the commanding officers in the army and civil guard. Such facts as the murder of the republican captain Farando for his sympathy to the Socialist Party and People's Front, the events in Alcal de Henares, where the officers of the local garrison refused to subordinate themselves to an order of the government, the events in Jest, where the civil guard shot at unarmed peasants, all give convincing proof of the preparation of the putsch.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the fascists are preparing a military coup d'état. It is sufficient to mention such facts as the transfer of arms across the border of the province of Navarro, and the speech of Calvo Sotello in the Cortes where he openly stated that military forces will have to be called in if "Spain is to be saved".

The Communist Party of Spain, which is at the present time a big political force (with more than 100,000 members in the first half of June) is rallying the broad masses organized in the People's Front.

While supporting the government against the attacks of the fascists and counter-revolutionaries, the Communist Party at the same time demands the adoption of the most decisive measures against these enemies of the people and the republic. This program of demands was elaborated by Comrade Diaz, the General Secretary of the Communist Party, in his speech in Madrid on June 26, at a meeting organized by the building workers' federation.

In this speech Comrade Diaz quoted numerous facts to show how the big landlords are organizing sabotage in the village, leaving their land untilled, and refusing to gather the harvest, and pointed out that if was necessary to organize the people so as to prevent the loss of a single ear of grain, and that the land belonging to those who are organizing the hunger must be expropriated. Those employers who refuse to carry on negotiations with the workers' organizations must be compelled to do so, while those employers who close down their enterprises must be deprived of them, the government taking charge of them, and operating them jointly with the trade unions. This needs money. Well then, the government should introduce a progressive tax upon the rich, it should establish control over the Bank of Spain—and then there will be money. These are neither Socialist nor

Communist measures, Comrade Diaz pointed out, they are measures which must be carried into life to strengthen the republic.

The Communist Party of Spain calls for the vigilance of the broadest masses of the people. It explains that this, the first and most necessary condition for further victories, lies in the extension and consolidation of the People's Front, which must lead the struggle against the fascists and counter-revolutionaries to a victorious end.

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Such was the situation immediately preceding the fascist putsch. A few days prior to the putsch, the fascists killed an officer of the civil guard, Castello, who was known for his anti-fascist leanings. On July 13, Calvo Sotello was found murdered. This was utilized by the fascists for their provocative propaganda against the government and the People's Front.