

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION

By M. ERCOLI

**Member of the Executive Committee,
Communist International**

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BY M. ERCOLI

**Member of the Executive Committee
of the Communist International**

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The Spanish Revolution

THE heroic struggle of the Spanish people has deeply stirred the whole world. It is the greatest event in the struggle of the masses of the people in the capitalist countries for their emancipation, second only to the October Socialist Revolution of 1917.

The struggle against the remnants of feudalism, the aristocracy, the monarchist officers, the princes of the church, against fascist enslavement, has united the vast majority of the Spanish people. The workers and peasants, the intellectuals and lower middle class people of the towns, and even certain groups of the bourgeoisie, have taken their stand in defense of freedom and the republic, while a handful of insurgent generals are waging war against their own people with the aid of Moroccans, whom they deceived, and the international criminal riffraffs of the Foreign Legion.

The struggle of the Spanish people bears the features of a national revolutionary war. It is a war to save the people and the country from foreign bondage, since the victory of the insurgents would mean the economic, political and cultural decline of Spain, its disintegration as an independent state, the enslavement of its peoples by German and Italian fascism. It is a national revolutionary struggle for the further reason that its victory will bring liberation to the Catalonians, the Basques and the Galicians who have been oppressed by the old aristocracy of Castile.

The victory of the people will deal fascism in Spain a mortal blow and will destroy its material basis. It will hand over the large landed estates and the industrial enterprises of the fascist insurgents to the people, and will create the conditions for the further successful struggle of the mass of the working people of Spain for their social liberation.

The victory of the People's Front in Spain will strengthen

the cause of peace throughout the whole of Europe, primarily by preventing the warmongers from converting Spain into a military base for the fascist encirclement of, and attack on, France.

The struggle of the People's Front in Spain is setting into motion the democratic forces of the whole world. Success in this struggle will strengthen the cause of democracy in all countries, will weaken fascism wherever it is in the saddle, and will hasten its downfall.

A People's Revolution

The revolution in Spain, which is part and parcel of the anti-fascist struggle all over the world, is a revolution having the broadest social basis. It is a people's revolution. It is a national revolution. It is an anti-fascist revolution.

The relation of class forces within Spain is such as to render the cause of the Spanish people invincible, but the forces of world reaction, first and foremost the German and Italian fascists, hinder the victory of the Spanish people over fascism. They are supporting the insurgents, supplying them arms with the connivance of the democratic governments of the capitalist countries. It would not be correct to draw a complete parallel between the present Spanish revolution and the Russian revolution of 1905, and still less with the Russian revolution of 1917. The Spanish revolution has its own peculiar features which arise out of the specific internal as well as international situation. Big events and movements in history do not repeat themselves with photographic exactness either in time or space.

The Spanish people are solving the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The reactionary castes, whose power the fascist insurgents wish to restore, ruled and domineered

over the country in such a way that it became the poorest, the most backward country in Europe. All that is healthy, creative and alive in the various strata of the Spanish people felt and still feels the stranglehold of the past which is now irrevocably doomed to disappear. In Spain all that is creative and possesses vitality expects a radical improvement as a result of the solution of the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

This means that in the interests of the economic and political development of the country, the agrarian question must be settled by abolishing the feudal relations which dominate the countryside. It means that the peasants, the workers, and the working population as a whole must be relieved of the intolerable burden of an outworn economic and administrative system. It means further that the privileges of the aristocracy, the church and the religious orders must be done away with and the uncontrolled sway of the reactionary castes must be broken.

But Spanish fascism stands in the way of the solution of these problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Spanish fascism is not only the vehicle of capitalist reaction but also of medieval feudalism, of monarchism, clerical fanaticism and bigotry as well as the Inquisition of the Jesuits; it is the defender of the reactionary castes and of the privileges of the nobility, which like a dead weight act as a drag on the country and hinder its economic development. Spanish fascism is not only the representative of trustified capital, which resorts to social demagogy, too, as a means of crushing the masses; it brings with it open violence without demagogy. It is the representative of the old order, rotten to the core and hated by all. Therefore, in a country like Spain, where the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution have not yet been accomplished, fascism has not succeeded in forming a party based on the masses of the petty bourgeoisie. By rising in

armed rebellion against the lawful government, the fascists alienated even some of those bourgeois elements which, under a bourgeois constitution, would have sought to come to terms with them. Fascism has succeeded in swinging the petty bourgeoisie definitely over to the side of the proletariat, in forcing the reformist elements in the labor movement who stood for “constitutional” development to side with the people. Fascism has consolidated against itself, as never before, all the parties and organizations of the People’s Front, from Martinez Barrio to the Communists, from the Basque nationalists to the Catalanian Anarchists.

The Spanish people is solving in a new way the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution which is in accordance with the deepest interests of the vast mass of the people. In the first place, it is solving them in circumstances of civil war brought on by the insurgents. In the second place, it is forced in the interest of the armed struggle against fascism to confiscate the property of the landlords and employers involved in the insurrection, because it is impossible to secure victory over fascism without undermining its economic position. In the third place, it is able to draw on the historical experience of the proletariat of Russia, which completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution after it had conquered power, for the great proletarian revolution splendidly achieved “in passing” the very objectives which form the basic content of the revolution in Spain at its present historical stage. Finally, the Spanish working class is striving to accomplish its leading role in the revolution, and place upon it a proletarian imprint by the sweeping range and the forms of its struggle.

The Role of the Working Class

At all stages of development of the revolution in Spain, the

working class has taken the initiative in every important action against the forces of reaction. The working class was the soul of the movement which overthrew the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and the monarchy. Strikes and demonstrations of the workers in all the big industrial towns lent the initial impetus to the mighty mass movement that swept the Spanish towns and villages as well as the army, a movement whose onslaught the monarchy proved unable to withstand. The tireless, heroic struggle of the working class has invariably helped to accentuate the character of the revolution as a people's revolution in spite of all the efforts of the bourgeoisie, of the republican leaders and even of the Socialist Party to retard and crush the mass movement. The working class of Spain has done a great historic service: the general strike and the armed struggle of the Asturian miners, in the unforgettable days of October, 1934, erected the first barrier against the assault of the fascist bands. In spite of its bloody defeat, the working class after October was, and continues to be, the organizer and backbone of the anti-fascist People's Front.

But the special character of the revolution in Spain consists above all in the peculiarity of the conditions in which the proletariat is making its hegemony in the revolution effective. The split in the working class of Spain has its own special features. In the first place the working class of Spain overthrew the monarchy in 1931, before there was a real mass Communist Party. At that time the Communist Party was only in its formative stage, not only organizationally but also ideologically and politically. In the second place, while in the process of the revolution a mass Communist Party was taking shape, the Spanish proletariat remained under the powerful influence of the Socialist Party. For decades the Socialist Party had been the means by which the influence of the bourgeoisie was exercised over the working class, and for two and a half years it formed a coalition with the bourgeoisie. This Party had

a much stronger foothold in the working class than, for example, the Russian Mensheviks in 1905 or in 1917. In the third place—and this distinguished and still distinguishes Spain from all other countries of Europe—the Spanish proletariat has also mass Anarcho-Syndicalist organizations in addition to the Communist and Socialist Parties. The ideology and practice of these Anarcho-Syndicalist organizations frequently hinder the principles of proletarian organization and proletarian discipline from penetrating into the ranks of the working class.

Spanish Anarchism is a peculiar phenomenon, a reflection of the country's economic backwardness, of the backwardness of its political structure, of the disunity of its proletariat, of the existence of a numerous group of declassed elements, and, finally, of a specific particularism—all features characteristic of countries with strong survivals of feudalism. At the present time, when the Spanish people are exerting every effort to drive back the furious attack of bestial fascism, when the Anarchist workers are fighting bravely at the fronts, there are not a few people who, under cover of the principles of Anarchism, weaken the solidarity and unity of the People's Front by hasty projects for compulsory "collectivization", the "abolition of money", the preaching of "organized indiscipline", etc.

It is the great merit of the Communist Party of Spain that, while tirelessly and consistently struggling to overcome the split in the working class, it fought and is still fighting to create the maximum prerequisites for ensuring the hegemony of the proletariat, the prime condition for the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The formation of a united front between the Socialist and Communist Parties, the establishment of a single organization of young workers, the creation of a single party of the proletariat in Catalonia, and, last but most important, the transformation of the Communist Party itself into a huge mass party enjoying tremendous and

ever-growing influence and authority are all a sure guarantee that the working class will be able still more effectively to exercise its hegemony by assuming leadership over the whole revolutionary movement and carrying it to victory.

The Peasantry

Such is the situation in the ranks of the working class. How do matters stand with the peasantry? It is a known fact that the majority of the army, consisting fundamentally of the sons of peasants, was carried along by its officers, and so in the first days of the insurrection it was to be found in the camp of the enemies of the people. And the fact that the fascist officers were able to win relatively large groups of soldiers to their side is the penalty which the republican parties, the Socialists and the Anarchists are paying for their many years of neglect of the demands of the peasantry. However, there are tremendous possibilities for enlisting the active participation of the Spanish peasants in the revolution.

In the Spanish countryside there are two million agricultural workers. In many of the northern districts they are still partly under the influence of the landlords and the clergy; nevertheless they constitute an element of revolutionary ferment even in the most backward provinces. This large agricultural proletariat in Spain holds out vast opportunities to the various working class organizations of influencing the masses of the peasants, of making them active participants in the struggle against fascism, of consolidating the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and strengthening the leading role of the proletariat in this alliance. Moreover, most of the remaining three million peasants are poor people who have been mercilessly exploited and oppressed for centuries, and now passionately hope for land and liberty from

the revolution. Freed from the thralldom of monarchist prejudices, these peasant masses are gradually becoming emancipated from the influence of the church, and undoubtedly sympathize with the republic. And although the military units of the People's Militia already contain solid groups of peasants, the reserves of millions of peasants have not yet entered the active struggle against the fascist insurgents. With the exception of Galicia, there is as yet no widespread guerilla movement. The peasants in the rear have as yet caused little trouble to the insurgents. But their entrance into the active struggle is inevitable. The millions of the peasant reserves are getting into motion and will soon have their decisive say.

The illiterate Spanish peasants have long lived beyond the pale of politics. It is a distinguishing feature of Spain that its peasants entered the revolution without a national party of their own. The only attempt to form a peasant party was made in Galicia. There a priest named Basilio Alvarez formed the Galician Agrarian Party whose program attacked the local feudal privileges known as "foros". This party broke up in 1934-35. But it is interesting to note that Galicia is the only province where the peasants have entered en masse the armed struggle against the insurgents and are now organizing guerilla warfare in the rear of these reactionary bandits. The Catalonian organization of sharecroppers and tenant farmers, called "Rabassaires", also has some of the distinguishing features of a political party of the peasants. And it is also worthy of note that in the Catalonian villages, where this organization is influential, the fascists have had no success whatever.

The only party which fearlessly supported the immediate demands of the peasants as well as the demand for the confiscation without compensation of all the land of the landlords, the church and the monasteries for the benefit of the peasants was the class party of the proletariat, the Communist Party. Unfortunately, it was not yet sufficiently strong to carry

with it the broad masses of the peasantry.

The Urban Petty Bourgeoisie

As far as the urban lower middle class is concerned, the vast majority of its members are on the side of democracy and the revolution, and against fascism. Here, their yearning for liberty and social progress, their hatred for the past, steeped in poverty and superstitious ignorance, plays a decisive role. This deprives Spanish fascism of the possibility of gaining mass support among the petty bourgeoisie, as was done or is being done by fascism in other capitalist countries. Its social demagoguery breaks down when the urban petty bourgeoisie, the handicraftsmen, intellectuals, scientists and artists, see the fascist leaders march shoulder to shoulder with the hated big landlords, the “casiques”, with bishops, who have waxed fat on the poverty of the people, with such crafty politicians as Lerroux and such corrupt bankers as Juan March. It is true that the political representatives of the Spanish petty bourgeoisie did not immediately take up their present Jacobin position. They wavered. After the fall of the monarchy, they supported the policy of coalition. When they entered the People’s Front movement, they stubbornly refused to put into their program the demand for the confiscation of the land. Even after February 16, the Azana government, which relied on the parties of the People’s Front, showed indecision concerning the cleansing of the government offices and the army of fascists. Many representatives of the lower middle class sought a compromise in their endeavor to avoid an open fight against fascism.

But the cruel and treacherous attack of the fascists on the lawful government caused an outburst of indignation in the ranks of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and resolved many of

their doubts. Under the pressure of events, the republican leaders took to the path of determined and consistent struggle against the fascist insurgents.

“What was left for us to do,” stated Azana, “when the greater part of the army had broken its oath of allegiance to the republic? Should we have renounced all thought of defense and submitted to new tyranny? No! We owed it to the people to give them a chance to defend themselves.” The republican petty bourgeoisie resorted to plebeian methods in the fight against fascism, consented to giving arms to the workers and peasants, supported the organization of people’s revolutionary tribunals, which are acting no less energetically than the Committee of Public Safety at the time of Robespierre and St. Just. This means that in Spain the urban petty bourgeoisie is playing a role which differs greatly from that played, for example, by the petty bourgeoisie in Germany or Italy immediately before and at the time fascism came to power. This special feature must be taken into account when describing the present stage of the Spanish revolution.

The Bourgeoisie

Lastly, the bourgeoisie. Being interested in the restriction of feudal privileges, it took a fairly active part in the overthrow of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and the monarchy. The industrial bourgeoisie expected from the republic more favorable conditions for its development. The bourgeois parties sought to reach this goal by compromising with the privileged feudal and semi-feudal castes, and, unfortunately, for over two years they influenced the republican petty bourgeoisie and even the Socialist Party to follow them along this path. The policy of the coalition government thoroughly disillusioned the masses of the people. Fascism made use of the weakened position of

democracy which resulted, and took up the offensive, mobilizing and rallying all the most reactionary elements in the country.

This strengthening of fascism brought the masses to a realization of the need to build a barrier against its advance. The masses rose in defense of the republic (October, 1934). The process of differentiation among the bourgeoisie was becoming more intense and a crisis began to develop in the traditional bourgeois parties. For example, the Radical Party of Lerroux, that party of political corruption which mirrored all the weakness and vice of the Spanish big bourgeoisie, rapidly broke up, and after the 1936 elections disappeared from the political scene. From it a group was formed which, led by Martinez Barrio, the present chairman of the Cortes, is taking part in organizing the repulse of the fascists and has entered the People's Front. The considerable success at the polls of Barrio's party cannot be explained otherwise than by the anti-fascist sentiments of part of the bourgeoisie who had nothing to gain from the reactionary designs of the fascists and their ally Lerroux. From its very inception Martinez Barrio took an active part in the formation of the People's Front. When, after the fall of Toledo, a tense situation had arisen at the front, he presided at the October session of the Cortes devoted to preparing the defense of Madrid.

In the various republican governments formed after the elections of February 16, 1936, there were people who undoubtedly represented certain sections of the bourgeoisie. These remained on the side of the republic when the fascist insurrection broke out, e.g.) José Giral, member of the Left Republican Party and minister in the present government, a fairly big landowner whose estates had been affected by the agrarian reform in the very first years of the republic; Francisco Barnes, Casares Quiroga, Enrico Ramos and Manuel Blasco Garzon, industrialists and landowners who formed part of the

ministry of José Giral, i.e.) were members of one of the governments which organized the defense of the republic against the fascist insurgents. Had the course of events been different, some of these people would possibly have sought for a compromise with the reactionaries. By depriving them of this possibility, the fascist rising made clear to them the need to defend the republic and democracy by all the means at their disposal, and thus linked up their fate with that of the fighting masses of the people.

Numerous groups of the bourgeoisie of the nationalities that used to be oppressed by Spanish feudalism are also acting on the side of the republic. There are districts in Spain where the whole population has been fighting for centuries to throw off the yoke of national oppression. This applies principally to Catalonia and the Basque Provinces (Biscay). The bourgeoisie of these districts cannot support the fascists or even sympathize with them, as they know perfectly well that a fascist victory would reduce to naught any chance of national independence or autonomy. Such a victory would mean a return to the old regime of national oppression.

In Catalonia, the so-called Catalan League and its reactionary leaders have disappeared from the arena of struggle. But in the ranks of the Catalan Left—the Esquierres—there are still a number of representatives of the industrial bourgeoisie who occupy high places in the Catalan government. And there is no doubt that in Barcelona, and, it may be said, throughout all Catalonia, the rebellion of the fascist generals was put down more rapidly than elsewhere not only because great numbers of the Spanish proletariat are concentrated here, but also, because almost the whole population enthusiastically took part in crushing the insurrection, even some bourgeois circles being in sympathy with this.

With regard to the Basque provinces, the Basque National

Party, which has a representative, Manuel Irujo, in the Madrid government, takes an active part in the struggle against the fascists. Manuel Irujo is a big industrialist who has always fought for the national liberation of the Basques. He was against the coup d'état of Primo de Rivera, and was a determined opponent of the monarchy. In the first days of the fascist revolt, he personally led military operations against the fascist officers in Bilbao. All his relatives, including his 70-year-old mother, are held as hostages by the fascists. This Catholic and industrialist is acting loyally in defense of the republic, and declares that his party is fighting "for a regime of liberty, political democracy and social justice". The Basque National Party, of which he is the leader, is a party of the Catholic bourgeoisie which for a number of years has been fighting for the national independence of Biscay. Priests constitute a considerable part of its membership. Not so long ago the French reactionary, de Kerillis, expressed his surprise at the fact that members of the clergy in the Biscay provinces were fighting heroically against the reactionary gangs of General Mola. But there is nothing surprising in this. The part played by these groups of the Basque bourgeoisie who, arms in hand, fought side by side with all the other heroic defenders of Irun, San Sebastian and Bilbao, is undoubtedly more progressive than that played by those leaders of the British Labor Party who trail behind the British policy of "non-intervention". There is every reason for applying to these groups of the Basque bourgeoisie the following words written by Comrade Stalin in the year 1924:

"The struggle the Emir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of his country is objectively a *revolutionary* struggle, despite the monarchist views of the Emir and his entourage, for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism.... The struggle the Egyptian merchants and bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of their

country is, objectively, *revolutionary* despite the bourgeois origin and bourgeois calling of the leaders of the Egyptian national movement and despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism; whereas the fight the English Labor government is waging to perpetuate Great Britain's domination over Egypt is, for the same reasons, a *reactionary* struggle, despite the proletarian origin and the proletarian calling of the members of that government, and despite the fact that they are 'for' socialism."*

What conclusion, then, should be drawn from the position occupied by these groups of the Spanish bourgeoisie as described above?

There can be no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the bourgeoisie sympathizes with the insurgents, and supports them, but there are bourgeois groups, especially among the national minorities, which, although they do not play a leading part in the People's Front, took part in the anti-fascist People's Front before the insurrection and continue to do so to this day. Therefore, these groups must not be left out of account in the anti-fascist camp, for their participation in the People's Front extends it and thus increases the chances of victory for the Spanish people. In times of so sharp a conflict, a wide social basis is one of the main factors guaranteeing the successful outcome of the revolution.

In 1927, Comrade Stalin, that master of the art of revolutionary strategy, wrote that correct leadership of the revolution is impossible unless certain tactical principles of Leninism are taken into account:

"I have in view such tactical principles of Leninism as: (a) the principle of never failing to take into account the national peculiarities and specific national features in each individual country,... (b) the principle that the Communist Party of each

* Stalin, "The National Question", Foundations Leninism, p. 67.

country must never fail to make use of even the slightest possibility of securing for the proletariat a mass ally, though he be temporary, shaky, unstable and unreliable, (c) the principle of never failing to take into account the truth that propaganda and agitation alone are not enough for the political education of the millions of the people, but that this requires that the masses acquire political experience of their own.”^{*}

The Spanish People’s Front

Guided by these principles, the Communist Party of Spain has fought not only to bring about joint action by the working class, but also to establish a broad anti-fascist People’s Front, which reflects the peculiar form of development assumed by the Spanish revolution at its present stage.

This front embraces the working class and its organizations, namely, the Communist and Socialist Parties, the General Workers’ Union and the Syndicalist Organization of Pestana; it is now supported by the Anarchist National Confederation of Labor. Furthermore, it covers the petty bourgeoisie through the Republican Party of Azana, and the Catalonian Party Esquierra. It also includes the groups of the bourgeoisie represented by Martinez Barrio’s party, the “Republican League”, and by the Basque nationalists; it is supported not only by the Catalonian “Rabassaires” organization, but also by millions of Spanish peasants who have no party of their own, who hate fascism and are hungry for land. The Spanish anti-fascist People’s Front, as the specific form of union of various classes, in face of the fascist danger, differs, for instance, from the French People’s Front in

* Stalin, *About the Opposition*, p. 615, Russian edition.

that it operates and carries on the struggle in circumstances of a revolution, which solves its bourgeois-democratic problems in a consistent, democratic way, in circumstances of a civil war which demands exceptional measures to ensure the victory of the people.

Similarly, it does not explain the real character of the Spanish People's Front to define it simply as "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry". In the first place, the People's Front in Spain bases itself not only on the workers and peasants; it has a broader social basis. In the second place, under the pressure of the civil war, it is adopting a series of measures which go somewhat further than the program of a government of revolutionary-democratic dictatorship. It is a further peculiarity of the Spanish People's Front that the split in the ranks of the proletariat, the relatively slow pace at which the masses of the peasantry are being drawn into the armed struggle, and the influence of petty-bourgeois Anarchism and of Social-Democratic illusions which have not yet been outlived, which are expressed in the endeavor to skip the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, are all creating a number of additional difficulties in the struggle of the Spanish people for a democratic republic.

The democratic republic which is being established in Spain is unlike the usual type of bourgeois-democratic republic. It is being born amidst a civil war in which the working class plays the leading part, at a time when socialism has been victorious on one-sixth of the earth's surface, while in a number of capitalist countries conservative bourgeois democracy has already been routed by fascism. It is a distinctive feature of this new type of democratic republic that fascism, which has taken up the struggle against the people, is being suppressed by the armed force of the people, and that in this republic there will be no place for this chief and bloodthirsty enemy of the people. Should the people be

victorious, fascism will never be able to enjoy there such freedom as, for instance, in France, the U.S.A., or England, where it makes use of bourgeois democracy and the rights granted under it to destroy democracy and establish completely arbitrary rule. Secondly, the material basis of fascism will be destroyed in this republic. All land, all enterprises belonging to participants in the fascist revolt have already been confiscated and handed over to the Spanish people. Already the Spanish government has been compelled by the military situation to institute the control and regulation of the country's economic machinery in order to promote the defense of the republic. And the more obstinately the insurgents carry on the war against the lawful government, the further will the latter be forced to go in the direction of strict regulation of the whole economic life of the country. Thirdly, should the people be victorious, this new democracy cannot but be alien to all conservatism; for it possesses all the conditions necessary for its own further development, it provides the guarantees for further economic and political achievements by the working people of Spain. And it is precisely for this reason that all the forces of world reaction desire the defeat of the Spanish people.

German and Italian fascism not only organized the revolt of the Spanish generals, but are now giving every possible support to the insurgents, and are working for the defeat of the republic. All parties of extreme reaction and war in all capitalist countries are sympathetic to the insurgents and ready to support them. The fighting Spanish people is faced not only by the insurgent generals, but by the whole front of world reaction. Hence the difficulties encountered by the Spanish people in suppressing the revolt. These difficulties are further enhanced by the pressure of parties in the capitalist countries which formally endorse bourgeois democracy, but actually support fascist intervention under the cloak of "neutrality". This second camp, to which belong, for instance, the British

conservatives and the French Right Radicals, is essentially in league with world reaction. In fact this camp has the support of certain reactionary Social-Democratic leaders as well.

Lastly, there is the opposite camp, the camp of the working class, the camp of democracy. The foundation of this camp is the working class of the world, which wholeheartedly sides with the Spanish people. This camp includes all honest anti-fascists, all true democrats, all those who realize that to allow the Spanish republic to be crushed means to suffer a blow to be struck at the entire international anti-fascist front, means encouraging fascism to make further attacks on the working class and on democracy.

Playing With Fire

Fascism is playing with fire. It set the war machine going not only against a people of distant Africa, but is now attacking one of the peoples of Europe. It cannot now cover up its predatory actions with cries about Versailles. It is tearing up not Versailles, but the liberty and independence of the Spanish people, and is thereby letting loose against itself a new flood of hatred among the working people. By this fascism is giving the impetus to a new wave of anti-fascism throughout the whole world. When German fascism came to power in Germany, it also counted on intimidating the nations by staging the Leipzig trial. It achieved the opposite. Fascism's wild frenzy in Germany made it easier to form the People's Front in France and Spain, inaugurated the movement for the People's Front throughout the whole world. But the Italian and German fascists are pursuing imperialist and annexationist aims, as well. They want to crush the Spanish revolution so as to seize part of the colonies of Spain, occupy part of her territory and convert it into a base of operations for their further onslaughts

on the peoples of Europe. The insurgent generals are agents of foreign imperialism, which is threatening the independence and integrity of the country. In 1919, Lenin, speaking about the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, said: “With us the difficulty in the situation was that we had to bring Soviet power into being against patriotism.”* The struggle of the people against the insurgent fascist generals in Spain has the character of a national struggle in defense of the country against foreign enslavement, and this factor still further extends the basis of the revolution. The People’s Front not only continues the revolutionary traditions of the Spanish people, but also the glorious traditions of the struggle of the peoples of Spain to rid their country of foreign oppression and barbarism.

Thus, we are faced in Spain with a situation which, in the fire of revolutionary struggle, supplies proof of the historical correctness of the political line mapped out by the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. This correctness is being confirmed not only by the scope of the anti-fascist struggle which has developed in Spain, but also by the part being played in this struggle by the young Communist Party of Spain. At the Seventh Congress Comrade Dimitroff said:

“We want the Communists of each country promptly to draw and apply *all the lessons* that can be drawn from their own experiences as the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat. We want them *as quickly as possible to learn how to sail on the turbulent waters of the class struggle*, and not to remain on the shore as observers and registrars of the surging waves in the expectation of fine weather.”

In the turbulent waters of the class struggle, the Communist Party of Spain is being transformed into the stalwart pilot of the destinies of its people. With every day that

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV, p. 219, Russian edition.

passes it is gaining increased authority among the masses by its whole-hearted devotion to the cause of the revolution, by its strict adherence to principle, its steadfastness at the front and in the rear, the discipline of its commanders and fighters, and its profound conviction that the road outlined is correct. Organizer and inspirer of the People's Front and fully conscious of its own historical responsibility, the Party is fighting for the final victory of the People's Front over fascism.

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