

A New Age Begins in Spain

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Preceding the French Syndicalist delegation composed of members of the C.G.T.S.R., and the C.G.T.I, I went to Puigcerda on December 10, together with some comrades from the Local Federation of Barcelona and the Regional Confederation of Catalonia. The welcome organized by our friends in Puigcerda was most cordial.

The following day we visited the dairy, a magnificent plant established last August, which is producing at present nearly 10,000 cans a day of condensed milk for the front, the hospitals and the babies.

This enterprise, collectively at the beginning of the civil war, is run by the workers. Though the technicians left the factory, production is orderly and methodical, from the making of the cans to the packing of the finished product. Production has increased by a good third; the wages, which are the same for everybody—men and women—have been raised 30 per cent, yet the "profits" amount to 30,000 pesetas per week. The working week is forty hours.

Barber shops, tailor shops, everything has been collectivized and is running under workers' control. In general Puigcerda is a center where the intense effort of all makes a little of the past disappear everyday, and everyday makes the real figure of the new order appear more distinctly. We returned late at night to Barcelona by way of Ribas and Vich.

The following day in the morning, guided by our Catalonian friends, we visited the artillery barracks in San Andres, the first barracks captured by our comrades of the CNT-FAI. It was there that they found the arms to put down the fascist uprising quickly. Though the walls show the marks of the fight that took place then, they are still in excellent condition. Everything is in order; the recruits and those on leave are taken care of and are given abundant meals¹, and we often had lunch with our comrades there.

1. The C.G.T. is the General Confederation of Labor, the major union organization in France; the C.G.T.S.R. is the left-wing Social Revolutionary General Confederation which split from the foregoing when it grew conservative and pacifist during the war.

2. According to later reports the war has reduced the food supply to a dangerous low since that time.

In the afternoon we visited the Portland Cement plant in Moncada. This establishment, of Europe-wide importance, has been collectivized and runs under union control. Although the technicians with the exception of an engineer who has been won to our ideas, left the factory, its operation is perfect. The output has increased by 25 per cent, and the salaries by 30 per cent. Everybody works with joy for the revolution, and the workers put in an hour a day extra for their peasant comrades.

In Mollet we visited the largest Spanish leather factory. Production there is also intense; stocks representing nine months work by 800 workers now await export to France, England, Holland. Here in this accumulation of leather there are millions of pesetas temporarily idle, but they will be exported shortly and turned to use. In the same locality we visited a factory that makes both natural and artificial silk, employing 650 workers. Modern equipment, full sunlight, cleanliness and order as everywhere else, and of course, collectivization and union control.

On the 13th, we left for the Aragon front to visit the agricultural towns. We passed through Lerida, capital of one of the four provinces of Catalonia, and the frontier between full libertarian communism and collectivization, for Lerida is the last locality on the way to Aragon where money still circulates.

From Lerida we went to Fraga, a city of 7,500 inhabitants, where we were received by our comrades of the local committee. They explained to us how from the very beginning they have socialized the lands, organized the work and the distribution of goods, and done away with the use of money. They showed us their consumers' books, their work cards, and explained the operation of the practical organization of work by groups.

All the able-bodied men and women work without exception. The sick, the old, and the children have all their needs fulfilled.

The next day in Bujaralos, former general headquarters of our unfortunate Durruti³, we found the

3. Durruti, an outstanding anarchist syndicalist military leader, was shot from ambush while in the defense of Madrid.

same evidence of libertarian communism. Consumers' books and work cards were shown to us there. We took some specimens for documentation, while they explained to us how the interchange work. The interchange of products is arranged in kind, as no money is used. With towns where money still circulates the interchange is made on the basis of the current exchanges and the supply is made through purchases made direct on the spot. The articles and products are immediately sent on to the towns which distribute them among the inhabitants against the presentation of the consumer's books. In short, the interchanges take place in the same manner as they would between two countries one of which had suppressed money and the other had not. This system gives full satisfaction to all those involved. This winter for the first time, we are told, the women of Aragon don't cry. Formerly the product of the harvest was not enough to pay the debts to the political bosses and the clergy. The Aragonese will defend their conquests and give their lives if necessary, but they can not turn back. The past for them is dead, forever.

Irrigation on the Aragonese plains by demanding the Ebro will increase productivity considerably, and material well-being will soon be a fact in these poor lands inhabited by men hardened by labor.

Returning to Barcelona we went across a section both rich and rough, where the efforts of man mark his conquests step by step over a difficult terrain, sparsely inhabited regions, towns that yesterday lived in fear but that today breathe freely the air of the libertarian revolution.

In Barcelona we again saw the immense beehive teeming with activity, with its transportation, its ports, its factories, its shipyards. We went to visit all that. One after the other we saw the surface transportation system, the underground system, the marine transportation, the moving pictures, the water, gas, and electricity, the collectivized shops from barber shops to soda water plants. All were running under union control. Everywhere men were active working to win the war and consolidate the revolution.

That the technicians left? It makes no difference! They are replaced. The mind discovers something new; new applications are made, new realizations, new co-ordinations, and without masters, without parasites, and the new social order is being created, developed day by day, hour after hour. The average working week is 40 hours. There are no unemployed, and more hours will be worked if it is necessary in order to crush fascism and establish a new social order.

Actors who earned 2000 francs per night, moving picture stars who earned as high as 100,000 francs per month in the Paramount studios are

now working here for 15 pesetas a day, and they work with joy. They create real art, freely for the people who will no longer be forbidden from the full enjoyment of the spirit.

I have also seen the jails. To safeguard the revolution jails unfortunately still have to be maintained. They will be abolished later when the fascist enemy is crushed, when nothing opposes any longer the application of our philosophy, and our comrades can begin to prevent crime, and to care for and re-educate those who are deficient, dishonest, and dangerous, instead of condemning them and locking them up.

For the present it is necessary first of all to assure the safety of the revolution, to watch over it, and make sure that no harm can be done by those who conspire to make it fail. I have visited the old Montjuich prison and the Model Jail. In Montjuich, an old fortress that threatens with its enormous mass the red Barcelona, in Montjuich where Francisco Ferrer⁴ was executed, we found fascists of all kinds, some of them accused, others already condemned. They all live in common, they smoke, play cards and dominoes. We questioned them. None complain of the prison regime. The meals, they say, are acceptable; the cells are clean; their families visit them every day if they care to, and can bring them in anything they want from the outside. Everything is delivered to them twice a day.

In Montjuich there are practically none but fascist elements; old officers, old functionaries, former priests, merchants, members of the so-called liberal professions who have participated in the movements against the working class. All have been able to secure adequate legal defense. I found only one Frenchman, a militiaman who had left the front and had not returned to his column. His case is not grave and it will be examined and decided shortly.

In the Model Jail there are several divisions. I was particularly interested in visiting the foreign divisions, where there were approximately 100 prisoners, belonging to all nationalities. As in Montjuich they live in common; none complained of mistreatment, or of the meals. I was assured that their cases would be taken up immediately; that the carrying out of justice would be done in a normal way, and that all guarantees of defense would always be afforded the prisoners.

There is under consideration a project to give the prisoners held and those sentenced, the benefits of modern comforts, and above all, the possibility of re-education. I want to add that I have

⁴ Ferrer, noted libertarian educator and exponent of doctrines that are more and more accepted in educational technique, was executed in 1909 chiefly because he had aroused the animosity of the clergy who sought to retain a monopoly on teaching, and did not welcome the spreading of education in working class circles.

had the satisfaction of not finding in jail a single anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist!

On leaving Spanish soil for a while I want to take this opportunity of thanking all comrades for the facilities allowed me in fulfilling my purpose. I leave under the impression that since my last visit in October, the revolution has taken an enormous step forward. Tasks which are hardly outlined at that time are now fully realized. The socialization of the land is almost complete, the collectivization of the industrial enterprise is being carried out rapidly, and the union control of production is more and more pronounced.

Of course there is much yet to be done . . . much to be done! The food industry appeared to me

particularly behind the others, especially as regards the habits of waiters in a great number of restaurants, cafes and hotels. Some have remained obsequious and servile; others show themselves arrogant with the humble and submissive towards those whom they think rich or powerful. But I am sure that the CNT will know what to do about this.

The Spanish revolution represents more than an immense hope. It is already a living, concrete, indisputable reality. It is our revolution, the revolution of all the workers of the world, to be defended by us in all our strength, and by every effort possible to compel the governments of the world to do their duty with regard to antifascist and revolutionary Spain.

So You Need A Maid!

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could not. The noon I reached the Misses Talbot's home we had tea and toast and lettuce. For supper we had tea and toast and a little cold meat. *(pause)* Later I found an old grocery bill—it was seven dollars and fifty cents for the whole month. *(the others gasp)*

BROWN: Seven-fifty!

BASCOM: They looked like two skeletons. *(Silence. The women look inquiringly toward Miss Brown)*

CARVER: *(leaning forward, looking more excited)* We must have some kind of an organization to help us and to protect ourselves.

BROWN: Yes, whether you're employed or unemployed, you need an organization of some kind.

BASCOM: I'm putting my pride away—I'm taking relief. I will not starve.

SCHMIDT: We gotta organize and get other girls not to go out and work for these women for such low wages. I got too much pride to seab like that. I'll take relief any time.

SWENSON: And we vill hev to fight for decent relief, too.

FIORELLI: Alla time we gotta organize and fight. *(The women's faces as they sit these grow more hopeful)*

BROWN: That's it, you've got to fight. *(picks up slip of paper from desk)*

CARVER: If there isn't an organization for us, we'll have to build our own. *(shakes her head)* We've certainly learned a lot.

BROWN: So have I—and there is an organization already in existence. A friend of mine has been telling me about it—she's joined herself.

FIORELLI: Eeen eet da place wid da sign—wan beeg union?

SWENSON: Everyvun shude stick togedder —

BASCOM: I guess we can't do anything for ourselves alone. *(There is a slight pause)*

SCHMIDT: *(rising)* Well, I'm going down to that place. *(turning to others)* How about the rest of you dames? *(Women rise)*

TOGETHER: *(voices mingling)* We'll go—at course, we'll go—What's the number?

SCHMIDT: Yes, what's their address, Miss Brown?

BROWN: It's 25 South Main Street. *(Women move toward door at left)*

CARVER: 25 South Main? *(Miss Brown nods)* We'll go down right away.

SWENSON: Ve'll see you agsin, Mrs. Brown. *(Miss Brown goes to door, stands near it as they leave)*

SCHMIDT: Goodbye.

BASCOM: Goodbye, Miss Brown.

FIORELLI: Goodbye, Miss Brown.

BROWN: Goodbye, everybody. *(Women leave through door at left. Miss Brown resumes seat. With chin cupped in hands, she staves thoughtfully into space. Finally, she gets up, crosses room, and disappears through door at right. A second later she reappears with her coat and hat in her hand. For a moment she pauses in center of room, looking about her. Then, spying the placard on the wall, ACE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY—SUPERIOR JOBS FOR SUPERIOR PEOPLE, she walks over to it, turns its face to wall, and goes out quietly through door at left)*

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