

# VANGUARD

JUNE-JULY, 1936

## REVOLUTIONARY FORCES IN SPAIN

THE C. N. T. CONVENTION  
POPULAR FRONT IN ACTION  
SPANISH TRADE UNION UNITY

Recovery Ballyhoo

The Class War Front

Working Class Martyrs

The Presidential Campaign

Soviet Russia's New Constitution

*a libertarian communist journal*

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## Current Trends

OUR enlarged issue is also to some extent a Spanish issue. It contains a disproportionately large number of articles and reports on the Spanish situation. This, of course, does not point to an accidental manner of editing our magazine. It is a settled policy on our part to give the utmost publicity to events and developments in Spain. It is our conviction that of all the countries in the world Spain stands the nearest to a momentous revolutionary outburst. Its significance is the greater that from all indications the decisive role will be played by a movement which has not followed the beaten track of dictatorial organizations. The coming Spanish revolution will differ profoundly from the October Revolution in many respects—this now is gradually dawning on the minds of an increasing number of revolutionaries. To make it more than a mere dawning, to make them realize the historical background, the potentialities and the probable course of the libertarian forces now shaping the trend of revolutionary events—such is the task which this magazine has set itself and to which it is going to devote an increasing portion of its space.

IT may seem to be a long cry from the boiling revolutionary cauldron of Spain to the placid realities of American life. Political conventions, pre-election ballyhoo, meaningless platforms—nothing seems to have changed since the halcyon days of the blessed Calvin. The granite structure of political institutions, with the settled driftage of age-long customs and folkways seem to have resisted well the burrowing of

the mole of history. But those that have been following up the deeper process of economic dissolution now progressively unfolding before our eyes will not be so impressed by the political rock of ages. With unemployment still holding on to the impressive figure of 12 million, with the steadily rising cost of living, with the public debt growing by leaps and bounds, the widespread ferment is bound to take on more tangible forms, seeking new political expression. And we shouldn't be much amiss in predicting that, inasmuch as there can be any comparison with the tendencies of social revolt in other countries, the cumulative power of libertarian values operative in American history will direct the growing ferment along the Spanish rather than Russian course.

SOME people may ask themselves: And why not the German course? Can't it happen here? Isn't the Black Legion drilling the cadres of the coming army of storm troops? Haven't Townsend, Gerald Smith of Louisiana, Father Coughlin and other Social demagogues already made a united front? Isn't their language beginning to take on the familiar ring of the European adventures? International finance, communism, the protection of the little man and such other catchwords—the malange of populist phraseology and vicious demagoguery, insidious methods of exploiting the basest instincts of the mass under the cover of exalted goals,—in other words a Fascist technic in the making gradually and surely reaching out into millions of men and women,—isn't all that taking shape right be-

fore our eyes? And what's more disquieting—isn't the labor and revolutionary movement so abnormally weak, confused and hopelessly behind the need of the submerged masses for a bold leadership?

We grant all that and still we think that the potentialities of American life for the revolutionary resistance to any Fascist movement have not been touched yet. The spark will come when such potentialities will have been released. And what will follow is rather the continuation of the historical line of libertarian development than its abrupt reversal.

**O**F the several Socialist leaders that headed the first labor government of Britain, one landed safely in the House of Lords, another, cursed as a renegade by the entire working class, became the figure-head of a die-hard cabinet, advocating the most reactionary policies and falling in line with the lords, bankers and industrial magnates who made up his cabinet. And now there emerges a third victim of this "tragedy of gradualness." H. Thomas, the "Socialist" minister of colonies who clung tenaciously to his post amid all the shifts and changes within the governing clique, had to resign ignominiously after it was exposed that he sold out the advance information obtained in his capacity of a member of the cabinet.

What school of socialist struggles have those gentlemen gone through, that the first historical opportunity made them turn a traitorous back upon their own life work, upon the hopes and aspirations of millions of simple and devoted men who lifted them into power? It is the all too familiar school of labor bureaucrats, second rate politicians that came to

dominate the socialist International after the defeat of the revolutionary Bakuninist wing. It is the wingless, visionless socialism, shorn of the grander humanistic aims which catapulted it with such a power into the arena of historic action. Long before the MacDonalds and Thomases this sort of socialism became the breeding ground of renegades and ambitious self-seeking politicians. The Thomas episode is a part of a larger drama working itself out in the continued betrayals of other socialist leaders and statesman.

**W**ILL Leon Blum go the same way?

Will he land where the MacDonalds and Thomases did? Judging by the impassioned avowal to the contrary made by him at the congress of the Socialist Party he is not unaware of the historical analogy and of certain objective trends of his situation. But with all that we may believe the sincerity of his protestations. The historical fate of his regime is following an altogether different course from that of MacDonald and if there is any analogy to go by in this case it is, as one of the more intelligent observers in the New York Times wrote, that of Kerensky rather than MacDonald.

**B**EFORE the wave of general strikes which swept over France, the analogy between the Kerensky regime and that of the coming government of Leon Blum may have seemed a bit too far fetched. The masses seemed to be kept well in hand by the politicians of the Left. And if serious disorders did break out here and there, as for instance those that recently took place in Toulon, they could be easily pooh-poohed as purely local manifestations lacking national significance. There is no tendency now to belittle the great

unrest that is shaking the economic life of France to its foundations. Nor is there any doubt as to the great changes that its first elemental expression on a mass scale has already wrought profound changes in the political situation, having driven a deep wedge between the various elements making up the

Peoples Front. This cleft is growing rapidly, driving asunder the bourgeois and proletarian factions of the peoples front and reducing constantly the social support of Leon Blum's government to the zero point once characterizing the Kerensky regime.

## The New Recovery Ballyhoo

FOR three years now, we have been passing through what is euphoniously known as the recovery phase of the business cycle. As measured by some standards the term recovery is, to be sure, fitting and proper. Production, prices and profits have been increasing steadily since 1933. Industrial production, for example, has now reached 96 per cent of the 1923-25 level; the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, reporting on 909 large business enterprises tells us that profits are now eleven times as large as they were in 1932 and the estimate for 101 corporations in the first quarter of 1936 shows an additional gain of 38 per cent. The prices of stocks and other securities have increased even far beyond the rise in production and commodity prices.

But let us complete the picture of this trade cycle; let us apply other standards of evaluation of our economic progress and then see whither we are going. First, what share does the most important sector of the population, the working class, receive in this business improvement? Real wages (the buying power of the income of workers) have increased by only 3 per cent compared with the 1932 level! Over twelve million are still unemployed.

More than one-fifth of the population lives on relief; the pittance they are given is being cut to the bone and even the bone is being scraped. The most we can expect for work relief during the next fiscal year is about one and a half billion dollars, a decrease of more than 25 per cent from the amount expended this fiscal year.

Secondly, we must ask ourselves how stable this recovery is, what will be its lasting effects. The public debt of the Federal Government is now about 32 billion dollars (about 45 per cent above the amount when President Roosevelt assumed office). This large-scale borrowing for the purpose of relieving distress and paying private debts (of big corporations, utilities and wealthy farmers) cannot continue at the present rate without incurring the danger of inflation or the inability to pay the public debt. Roosevelt cuts relief costs and takes a stab at taxing the higher income brackets just because he is aware of these dangers. But the dilemma persists and becomes worse, for unemployment does not decrease, our "higher income brackets" won't let themselves be taxed and consumer purchasing power lags behind prices and production, thus preventing any stable recovery.

The growing instability of the capitalist economic mechanism is admirably pictured in the stock market boom-crash of last April. What was the source of this repetition of the 1929 financial jamboree? The normal upswing of the business cycle (yes, the capitalist system still retains some of the competitive mechanisms making for "natural" readjustments) stimulated by the small increase in consumer purchasing power resulting from New Deal spending, brought about a rise in production and a still greater rise in profits. Most of the increased consumer purchasing power was turned into profits without having stimulated new capital investments or having increased productive capacity, for, there was not enough buying of consumers goods to require the full use of even the existing capacity; and in the meantime productive capacity was being enlarged by the use of more efficient equipment and better methods of production. In 1935 over 93 per cent of the capital raised by new security issues went to pay off outstanding obligations. With much more money to invest (something had to be done with the profits) and very few new securities being offered, the prices of the existing securities on the market skyrocketed. Prices of stocks finally reached a point (towards the end of April, 1936) where they exceeded actual earnings to such an extent that "confidence" was lost and stocks went tumbling down again. Here once more we see that at the bottom of our economic instability is the glaring disproportion in the distribution of income between the owners of capital and the producers of wealth. This disproportion is not only the basic cause of the instability of the present "recovery" and of the economic insecurity, the degrading poverty of the

working masses; it is the major factor leading to the ultimate collapse of capitalism itself.

Capitalism, furthermore, cannot eliminate this fundamental self-destructive condition, even if it wants to. Each individual employer strives to gain a competitive advantage by keeping his wages as low as possible. Imagine them, then, getting together to reap the stabilizing benefits of a planned economy; imagine our masters benevolently agreeing to raise wages in order to effect a better balance between purchasing power and production! The experiences of the past few years point to something quite different. When capitalists do unite in an attempt to prevent their system from falling apart they sometimes succeed in establishing a very temporary economic stability in the form of a Fascist State. We have never yet seen the bourgeoisie or any other ruling class willingly coordinate itself for the purpose of giving the exploited a greater share of the wealth. In the final analysis, of course, the basic contradictions of capitalism prevent real recovery not only for the masses of exploited workers but even for beneficiaries of the system. The only recovery the workers will ever see is that which will come from their own organized struggle for the possession of the wealth that is rightfully theirs.

S. MORRISON.

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## The Presidential Campaign

IT is not difficult to predict the re-election of Roosevelt in the coming campaign. The President is still popular today in spite of the growth of an opposition. His rivals enter the presidential race with no outstanding candidates and with nothing but an anti-New Deal platform to oppose him.

In three and a half years of office the President has succeeded in temporarily propping up a demoralized social system. Unlike his predecessor Hoover, who kept his two ears and eyes closed to changing conditions, Roosevelt has listened to the rising murmurs of labor. The social measures taken by his administration have increased his popularity with the masses, though they benefitted little from these measures. Roosevelt's bitterest enemies, the big corporations, received the largest share of government help. Thus while the standard of living is practically the same today as it was three years ago, and at least twelve millions still remain unemployed, corporation profits increased tremendously. But nevertheless, instead of doing him injury, these developments strengthen his position. Roosevelt has cleverly shifted responsibility and shunted off resentment onto the Supreme Court. Questions of constitutionality bothered him little because their mere enactment by Congress was winning him labor's confidence, and their nullification by the High Court made that body the object of attack; and thus the true worthlessness of these reform measures became hidden.

In 1932 Roosevelt was nominated and elected as the representative of the middle classes who were feeling the debilitating effects of a crisis that was

driving many of them into proletarian ranks. It was the intention of the President in his various emergency decrees, the N. R. A., etc., to throw a life-line to his forgotten men. But the life-line proved so heavily laden with corporation bricks that many more were dragged to the bottom. In their control of code authorities, the larger corporations found an easier path by which they could drive smaller businesses to the wall, and on their backs make the climb to greater profits. Thus the N. R. A. hastened and fostered the growth of capitalistic monopoly in its attempt to defeat it.

Even the Republicans—the party of Big Business—were forced to take cognizance of the monopolistic trends today, having been compelled to cater to labor with vague statements of constitutional reform for social security. The middle classes, a great sector of the American population, will find all efforts in their behalf nugatory. They cannot battle against these powerful capitalistic trends. Their weakness in America and elsewhere is a reflection of their unstable, fluctuating position in society. But their instability, their insecurity, their disappointment in what the President is doing or will attempt to do for them, will make them the potential force for Fascist reaction. They will stand ready to flock to any group promising them melioration.

The strength of the middle classes is not organic, but rather reflects the corresponding weakness of the working class. It is this weakness of proletarian organization which has made the middle classes in Europe follow the Fascist road on the heels of finance capital. They became reactionary allies of cap-

italism rather than friends of the revolutionary proletariat.

The growing desperation of the middle classes in America is a signal for Fascist reaction. It becomes more imperative therefore for the proletariat to rouse itself from its apathy and forge a powerful revolutionary movement. The vacillating middle classes must be won over to the revolutionary cause or at least neutralized. Upon this policy depends the successful culmination of the social revolution.

But today the official American labor movement is flirting perilously

with Roosevelt, deceived by his pro-labor demagogy. In the face of approaching Fascist attempts, as yet unorganized, labor leaders are disarming the American proletariat by involving it in capitalist politics via Roosevelt or an equally useless and dangerous Labor Party. Only the formation of a powerful labor movement with consistent revolutionary principles of class struggle and democratic workers control can repel the Fascist danger facing the immediate future and presaged in the policies of the Roosevelt regime.

R. W.

### **THE MIKE LINDWAY FRAME-UP**

**R**EVERSING the decision of the Court of Appeals in the case of Mike Lindway, I. W. W. striker sentenced to serve 20 years following a farcical trial on framed evidence illegally secured, the Ohio Supreme Court sustained the trial judge who admitted in evidence a small piece of dynamite allegedly found in his home when police entered it without a search warrant while Lindway was away picketing and no other witnesses present. The Court of Appeals had ordered the suppression of the illegally obtained "evidence" and granted Lindway a new trial. Keenly aware Lindway would be acquitted unless they could use the planted dynamite, the prosecution, strongly backed by the open-shop Associated Industries of Cleveland, appealed to Ohio Supreme Court which by amazing judicial chicanery reversed two of its recent decisions on the subject of search and seizure and obeyed its master's voice. Appeal to the United States Supreme Court is the

sole hope now to free Mike Lindway through court action.

Readers of the VANGUARD will recall our previous reports of the stirring strike of 1,500 workers fought under the banner of the I. W. W. against the National Screw and Manufacturing Company of Cleveland, Ohio, in March and April, 1935, and the numerous arrests and police attacks against the strikers. Mike Lindway was a worker in the National Screw plant. He joined the I. W. W. and took an active part in strike activities. That made him a marked man and the police frame-up backed by judicial jugglery was set in operation to put Mike behind prison bars for 20 years.

The General Defense Committee urgently needs funds to appeal Lindway's case to the United States Supreme Court and for widespread publicity necessary to force favorable action. Send all contributions to: General Defense Committee, 2422 North Halsted Street, Chicago, Ill. New York City readers can leave contributions at the office of General Defense Local 8, 94 Fifth Avenue.

## Soviet Russia's New Constitution

**E**VER since the famous Howard interview with Stalin, rumors have been flying fast and thick of impending constitutional changes. Hints, guarded statements, denials and counter denials kept up the state of high political expectancy first created by Stalin's few phrases about political reforms to come.

What it was all about no one knew. The party circles were as ignorant about it as the great mass of people. The "great democratic" reform was hatched in a thoroughly undemocratic manner. There were no public discussions in the press; no popular assemblies even in the confined circles of political scientists. It was granted to the people like an imperial gift, and upon closer analysis it reveals the earmarks of a bestowed but not conquered political system of rights.

What were the exact motivating factors behind such a political move it is too early to say yet. But one thing is clear—there must have been some sort of an underground swell of mass protest which did not yet reach the articulate stage of a movement for political reform but which must have been pressing enough to force the bureaucracy to come out with a plan of forestalling any possible political expression of this rising protest. Hence the contradictory character of this constitutional reform. While possessing some undoubtedly progressive features such as the liberalization of the judicial process, the laying down of some principles of safeguarding individual liberty, it takes a considerable step backwards in respect to the basic political structure of the country.

For, had there been a genuine mass movement of a political character, it would have followed the direction of deepening the principles of Soviet democracy and not discarding them for the features of the formal democracy of the bourgeois countries. Soviet democracy, as sketched by the mighty hand of the October revolution, differs from the bourgeois democracy not only in respect to the limitation imposed upon the voting rights of the bourgeoisie. It represents a much higher political system, being in itself something of a transitional link toward a stateless society. It is a system which tends toward the gradual leveling down of the distinction between the government and those that are governed. This is made possible by opening such wide avenues of direct mass participation in the administration of things as are utterly impossible under the régime of bourgeois democracy. The later is based upon the idea of delegation of power, which in itself was only a compromise between the genuine democratic principles and the absolutist principles of individual embodiment of the general will. The parliament in its historical formation was modelled upon the power of the king which came about as a result of the deterioration of the early institutions of primitive democracy. Parliaments first served as checks upon Royalty and then gradually usurped its power, but never were they the fit instrumentalities of a genuine democratic movement.

And it is not in vain that parliamentary institutions now arise as one of the main obstacles of any profound



social changes demanded by the great masses. Such changes demand a fuller democracy based upon functional representation, wide diffusion of administrative power and the fullest application of the idea of federalism. The Soviet democracy was the elemental move of a great popular revolution in the direction of such a political system. And that is why the "great" reform, so noisily advertized by the communist sympathizers as the reestablishment of democracy, is directed in the first place against this basic principle of Soviet democracy. True, the latter existed only on paper; its living features had long ago been obliterated by the deadening hand of bureaucratic control and party monopoly. But even as such it still retained considerable force, exercising a leavening effect upon the minds of the growing generation.

The system substituted for it by Stalin's constitutional reform goes back to the orthodox ideas of the German social-democrats who remained outside the great progressive movement of modern political thought. It is a system lending itself admirably to the economic structure of State Socialism in which the distance between the governing circles and the governed is greatly increased by the concentration of economic power in the hands of the former. The fiction of delegation of power serves as an excellent justification for such a concentration of power. And where the latter reaches its logical limiting point in the emergence of and consolidation of the usurpation of the governing power in the hands of a single person, it may stand in the still greater need of this fiction of popular consent. The practice of the parliamentary democracy has shown the ease with which popular consent can be obtained for most unpopular

causes. Mere voting without actual participation in the various functions of life often leads to the travesty of the general will. And it surely reaches such a state of mockery of the basic idea of democracy where such a safeguard as freedom of discussion is absent.

This freedom cannot and will not be restored by formal declarations and statements. It can be won and conquered by the direct pressure of mass movements directed against the vicious principle of party monopoly. As far as formal safeguards of individual liberty go there was no need of additional declarations; the old Soviet constitutions had enough of them, including the right of every nationality to secede from the Soviet Union. What has become of those rights everyone knows. And one does not have to know much about the details of Soviet life in order to see that the new declaration will remain as much of a dead letter as the ones of the old constitution. To guarantee every worker the right to work and at the same time to deprive the worker's factory councils and trade unions of the last shreds of rights in relation to the factory management is much the same as guaranteeing to every individual the right of pursuit of happiness under a bourgeois economy. The same holds true of all the other rights under conditions where the party bureaucrat is in absolute control of every sphere of activity, where state totalitarianism has been pushed to its most absurd limit.

With all that the newly published constitutional project cannot be dismissed as a mere comedy on the part of Stalin's government. The spirit of the October Revolution is by no means dead. Its leavening force is constantly fermenting the minds of the younger

generation which sooner or later will present the full bill to the government for all the distortions and falsifications of the original purposes of the revolutions. And distorted as it may be by the bureaucratic instinct of self-preservation, by the Marxist lack of creativeness in the field of political thought, by the tendency to ape forms of de-

mocracy that suit only the more backward stages of bourgeois economy—with all that this document is forced to pay obeisance to the eternal values of freedom, democracy and humanitarianism without which socialism sinks into the rank of mere state totalitarianism and Nazi barbarism.

SENEX.

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## On The Class War Front

**T**HE Steel Union has joined the Committee for Industrial Organization and accepted the "loan" of \$500,000 offered by Lewis, the money to be used for organizing the steel workers. The steel workers are willing to join an Industrial Union and the sentiment for organization is strong. We hail this revival of class consciousness on the part of the workers in one of the key industries. A victory in steel will go far towards the further development of a powerful labor movement in America.

But this struggle could not be successful under the leadership of the Lewis machine, even if the steel workers were organized one hundred per cent. An example of what the steel workers will get can be seen from the contract signed with the anthracite coal operators on May 1st. The usual checkoff system, whereby the bosses collect the dues and hand the money over to the officials of the union, is retained and extended. The contract was signed without submitting it to the referendum of the miners and expressly forbids strikes for the next two years. The brand of "Industrial Unionism" that Lewis stands for, has

been in operation in the coal fields for many years. The union is divided into hundreds of districts and sub-districts, each of which is controlled by the handpicked henchmen of the Lewis machine. No district can choose its own officials. The betrayals, as well as the intimate relations between the coal operators and the Lewis machine, constitute one of the most disgraceful facts in the labor movement of this country.

The Lewis faction realizes that control of the Steel union is the first step toward the control of the entire Labor movement. Millions of workers in the other mass production industries also want to be organized. They would follow the example of the steel workers. With the notorious policy of class collaboration, it will be possible for the Lewis gang to use the power for the enrichment of the bureaucratic officialdom of the union controlled by his faction. The differences that will probably result in a split in the A. F. of L. are not of a fundamental nature. Both Lewis and Green are in agreement in their support of the Roosevelt regime; they are committed to class-collaboration and collective bar-

gaining. Both Lewis and Green are fully committed to the support of any war which this country may enter. Both will ruthlessly extirpate any opposition to the autocratic domination of the labor movement. It is this type of labor organization that robs the workers of all power of resistance to Fascism.

The so-called "progressives" are playing the shameful role of lickspittles to these corrupt elements when they enthusiastically endorse the Lewis policy. They have failed to take a position consistent with the principles of class struggle and the true principles of Socialism. Hillman and Dubinsky as well as Lewis and Green endorsed the Roosevelt administration. Despite the "socialistic," inclinations of the clothing unions, they have followed the principles of class collaboration, arbitration, and in many instances gangsterism. They invariably curry the favor of politicians who are supposed to be "friendly" to Labor.

The capitulation of the conservative labor movement as expressed by Lewis, Green, Hillman, Dubinsky and the others is not accidental. This is the logical result of principles and tactics based upon opportunism, contempt for direct action, abhorrence of strikes. Labor movements not based upon the principles of revolutionary class struggles and solidarity must of necessity turn to politics, corruption and betrayals, the outward signs of a long process of degeneration and decay.

The past two years have witnessed a revival of militancy in the marine industry on the Pacific Coast, the Gulf and in British Columbia. Many strikes were started by militant minorities of sincere workers. They hoped to realize real unionism in place of the political corruption and betrayals that

characterize the International Seamens Union and the International Longshoremen's Association of the A. F. of L. The Maritime Federation of the Pacific was organized by various political parties and local A. F. of L. officials of the west coast, because they saw that the sentiment of the workers led away from the A. F. of L. towards the establishment of independent unions based upon the principles of the I. W. W. or outright affiliation to the I. W. W. They devised a system of craft unionism as a substitute. They said that the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, "is as militant and draws equally hard bargains as the I. W. W. ever did." However, the progressive claims of the federation are found to be false when we see that the past two years have demonstrated its complete bankruptcy, when it involves the defence of the interests of the marine workers. We challenge the federation to disprove the following facts:

It withdrew its support from the strike of marine workers of British Columbia.

The Federation handled and released scab cargo destined for the strike area.

It refused to take a stand against flagrant race discrimination involving Filipinos and Chinamen.

Whatever gains were made in the struggles of the marine workers were due to the initiative and militancy of the rank and file, and in spite of the Maritime Federation and the Bridges leadership. The seamen on the steam schooners pulled strikes for the 6 hour day and wages of one dollar per hour, and the Bridges leadership refused to support those job action strikes on the grounds that job action strikes were detrimental to the agreement made between the steam schooner men and the shipping masters. The agreement was

for eight hours per day and the job action strikes were called because the men had already won the six hour day on some of the ships. Yet the Bridges leadership failed to give support to this action of the men. However, the steam schooner men succeeded by the use of direct action on the job, in winning their strikes. The victories of the men inspired a desire on the part of the rest of the marine workers for direct action methods. The pressure of this rank and file action compelled the Federation to issue a circular calling upon the men to stop work after six hours.

As a result the steam schooner men were locked out by the ship owners. The answer to this challenge of the bosses should have been the circularization of a referendum calling for a general strike to support the demands of the steam schooner men. The general strike supported by the 35,000 members of the federation would have been able to back up the demands of the striking steam schooner men. Yet the leadership without a referendum of the membership capitulated to the owners by calling the men back to work, on the basis of 8 hours per day instead of the six hours per day which was supposed to be guaranteed by the agreement. The reason for this capitulation can be understood only when we remember that the object of the federation is to win recognition from the shipowners and the officialdom of the I. S. U. To take a militant stand would involve the establishment of a union which would be completely independent of the A. F. of L. This step the leadership would not take because they would rather bore from within, "capture" the I. S. U., than stand up for the principles of revolutionary labor unionism.

The reasons for this inability to fulfill the demands raised by the rank and file of the marine workers are apparent when we consider that the Federation is not constructed to call effective general strikes. The unions affiliated to the federation are craft unions. Separate agreements with the shipowners prevent the unions from acting in common. The leadership is not interested in direct action on the job because they fear that they will lose control if power to act was vested in the hands of the men on the job. In order to control the men the District Council of the San Francisco Bay Area has forbidden job action on the part of the rank and file unless sanctioned by the executive council. This destroys democracy in the union and on the ships.

The strike of the rank and file committee in N. Y. came to an end on May 28. The committee, having received the support of liberals like Marcantonio, Knickerbocker democrats, League of Women Voters etc., thought that this was sufficient to win strikes. The caliber of these would-be leaders was revealed when they protested against "alien" seamen, when they refused to allow the I. W. W. to take part in the strike, picket the ships. While they did not allow the I. W. W. to address the seamen, they did give the floor to ambulance chasing lawyers, and accepted the support of the Catholic Workers, a Fascistic outfit that is trying to reconcile the doctrines of the Catholicism with the Class Struggle.

The activity involved in the strike was transferred to the field of winning recognition from the Int. Seamens Union, rather than the winning of the strike. Thus the leadership of the strike who would not consent to take the consequence of militant action,

which involved the realization of true labor unionism outside of the A. F. of L. were compelled to crawl back to the I. S. U. there to continue their "boring from within."

The I. W. W. has been making great headway in the lumber camps of the Northwest. Fifteen strikes have been won so far and more strikes are being fought now. Great progress is

also being made in Lorain Ohio and in Phila., Pa.

The future of the labor movement, its basic orientation, depend on the extent to which class conscious workers build revolutionary unions now. To depend upon the "progressive" tendencies of a defunct A. F. of L. kept alive by an indulgent government is suicidal.

S. WEINER.

## Working Class Martyrs

**U**NTIL all systems of political and economic exploitation and oppression have been removed from the face of the earth the fight for freedom and defense of political prisoners must continue. Today in all countries the desire for a freer and better life has landed class conscious workers into jails and concentration camps. As long as one small voice cries for socialist justice we are in bondage. Our voice of protest must be clearly heard! To be free while others are thus bound can only mean that we are either slaves or exploiters.

To those names which have become famous in the fight of the working class against its oppressors—MOONEY and BILLINGS, ANGELO HERN-DON, the SCOTTSBORO BOYS, THAELMAN and RAKOSI—must be added a host of unknown others.

The fight against the deportation of the anti-fascist Italians, FERRERO and SALLITTO, is gaining the steadily increasing support of the American proletariat. The case grew out of the attempt of the U. S. Dep't. of Labor to suppress the Anarchist Journal "Man," first by intimidating its readers, failing which, it then sought to

deport these two anti-fascists who had rented space in their little restaurant to the editor of the journal. It was plainly an attempt to suppress the freedom of press. It is only the support of organized labor which has thus far stopped their deportation. In the face of tremendous protest the government has backed up, but the case is not nearly over. Protests and demonstrations must continue if FERRERO and SALLITTO are not to suffer the same fate as ADAM MUELLER and OTTO RICHTER, anti-nazi's who are ordered to be ready for deportation into the arms of Hitler.

The list of anti-Fascists fighting against deportation is a long one and although space allows us to mention just a few of these heroic workers each case has its own tremendous importance and no efforts should be spared in striving to gain freedom for all of them: WALTER SAUPE, 21 year old anti-Nazi ordered deported; BENNO MARTINI, ordered deported to Germany by June 15; CASIMO CAFIERI, anti-fascist trade-unionist, ordered deported to Italy; ALEXANDER GARBAL, ex-president of the Hungarian Workers Republic, who is here on a

Nansen Pass and was ordered to leave the country, has been given a sixty day stay; JOHN LIND, editor of Industrialistie, I. W. W. Finnish language daily newspaper, is facing deportation on the charge of illegal entry. He has been living in this country since infancy.

Of exceedingly great importance to the American labor movement is the frameup of MIKE LINDWAY. The Ohio Supreme Court has admitted as evidence against him bombs "found" in his home without witnesses present and without a search warrant. This case is reviewed elsewhere in the VANGUARD.

The case of the seven HARLAN MINERS serving life sentences for daring to defend themselves against company gunmen is entering, we hope, its last stages. Already, HIGHTOWER, HUDSON and PHILIPS have been released (December 1935) due to labor pressure and the heroic battle of the General Defense Committee of the I. W. W. Still in prison are W. B. JONES, C. POORE, J. REYNOLDS and AL BENSON. A majority of the jurors in all four cases have signed petitions for their release. These petitions will be presented to Governor Chandler when the Legislature adjourns in July. Meanwhile labor must deluge the Governor with letters and telegrams demanding the release of the prisoners. Aid the General Defense Committee financially so that its splendid work may continue.

News reaches us that despite the victory and promises of the Peoples Front Government, prisoners still fill the jails in various parts of Spain. This condition persists where the working class did not have the strength to storm the jails after the February 16th election.

It is not often that one escapes the clutches of the Nazis and the release of HEINRICH BELL, anti-Nazi refugee who was handed over by the Belgian Border to the Gestapo, is an occasion to rejoice. Bell's freedom was obtained through the efforts of the International Conference for Right of Asylum who protested to the Belgian Minister of Justice. At the same time the Dutch authorities handed over JOHANN SCHWITTAY, anti-fascist, who escaped from a German Concentration Camp in 1935, to the Nazis. It will in all likelihood mean his death.

An outstanding Chinese Leader who has been neglected is CHEN DU HSIU. He formerly belonged to the Communist Party but in 1933 went over to the Left Opposition. He has now been sentenced to a thirteen year term of imprisonment by the Kuomintang Government. It is impossible to mention the countless thousands of working class martyrs rotting in the prisons of China and Japan.

In India also there are recurring waves of arrests of working class elements. The cases of SAVARKAR; the GARWALLI RIFLEMEN; R. S. RUIKAR, SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE demand our attention and support.

In France, Rumania and Jugoslavia numerous instances of war resisters sentenced to prison come to our attention. No sooner do they serve their term than they are resented. Letters must be written demanding the release of A. ARCHIDEAN, J. SCHIOPU, A. TIHON, G. SUMETRU, B. PASCU, V. NAGH, V. COSLOV, B. DUMITRU of Rumania, G. VIDAL and E. VENZIAN of France, as well as of all other war resisters.

The recent revelations of Dr. A. CILIGA have failed to move our liber-

als and radicals. The sacred cow must not be touched. Throughout Russia there are working-class heroes who wish to put Russia back on the path of Social Revolution. For this crime they are clapped into jail and sent into frozen exile. ANARCHISTS, TROTSKYISTS, SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS, SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARIES, MENSHEVICKS, right COMMUNISTS, left COMMUNISTS fill the jails and suffer starvation, misery and death. Two cases are particularly interesting, those of PETRINI and GAGGI. A. PETRINI, an Italian Anarchist, was forced to flee from Italy for his anti-Fascist activities in 1926. He sought refuge in Russia. Shocked by the oppression of the masses in the "Socialist" fatherland he began to agitate for simple working class rights. Hounded and disillusioned he decided to leave the country. He was prevented from doing so by the O. G. P. U.

In 1929 he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for being a "Fascist Spy." He was driven almost insane by the absurd accusation. The climax came towards the end of 1935 when PETRINI was handed over to the Italian Fascist officials. He is now residing in the dungeons of Ancona, Italy. The case of GAGGI is similarly that of an Italian Anarchist who, forced to flee from Italy after resistance to Fascism, sought refuge in Russia. In 1935 GAGGI was exiled to Yarensk for refusing to cater to the services of the Secret Police. A short time later he was also exiled to an outlying district in Russia.

We are happy to learn that VICTOR SERGE has been freed by the Russian Government. He entered Russia as an intellectual worker and a Communist. He did intensive study

in the history of the Russian Revolution and wrote several noteworthy books on the subject. Dismayed by the economic and political oppression existing in Russia he soon moved over to the Left Opposition and then found himself in prison. Thanks to international pressure the Soviet Government had to release him. He writes, "I have left behind me in Russia, numerous militants terribly, endlessly, implacably oppressed for the sole 'crime of thinking,' because they live only for the revolution. They fill the prisons, the concentration camps, the deportation posts. They die there . . . ."

How long will these crimes be permitted in the name of Socialism, thereby maligning and perverting it? Can this be the final meaning of United Front?

According to the latest newspaper reports, the Blum government in France is making a drive against the "extremists" who instigated the strikes and attempted to turn them into revolution; and the Popular Front government in Spain is now trying to force the C. N. T. underground. We can therefore expect a new list of political prisoners, this time the work of "socialist" and "radical" politicians elected as the result of indignant mass protest against the Fascist menace. The meaning of the "United Front" becomes clearer as the betrayals begin to take their toll hardly after the votes have been counted. All political systems based on class domination must try to suppress "extremists." Freedom for the working class can be achieved and maintained only by the action of working class itself. We cannot know too well that "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

JACK WHITE.

## The Popular Front In Action

IT was to be expected that the danger of annihilation of cultural values revealed by the Nazi rule in Germany would produce a leftward swing on the part of the middle classes. It was also natural for the realistically minded revolutionists to try to make the utmost of this spontaneous reaction against Fascism. It was, however, an utter travesty of revolutionary common sense to regard this state of anxiety produced among the cultured section of the middle classes not as an incidental aid in the struggle against Fascism, but as its main determining factor. The tactics pursued by the Communists and Socialists in building the so-called Peoples Front represents such a travesty. In shifting the center of gravity of their struggles against Fascism from organizing the masses for a revolutionary assault upon the bourgeois regime to the winning over of the sympathies of the middle classes, they showed their inability to distinguish between the last dying gasp of bourgeois liberalism and a real resurgence of popular resistance to Fascism.

And if at the very beginning of the movement of the Peoples Front the blustering talk of the bourgeois radical, his express willingness to embark upon a policy of radical social reform and a resolute struggle against Fascism could mislead some naive people—that is those to whom the lessons of the Kerensky regime and the tragic impotency of the German social-democracy were a closed book—the timorous, vacillating policy of the Peoples Front in Spain where it had already obtained power gives ample proof of the contention that objectively the

social-democratic and bourgeois liberal regime must pave the way for the victory of Fascism.

Several months ago the Popular Front was swept into power on the crest of a mighty wave of anti-Fascist feeling. The mandate given to it by the people was clear: in the first place—to extricate the actual Fascist danger and then to strike against the social basis of its power. The mandate was accepted and elaborated in numerous pledges and speeches of the election campaign. What has already been achieved in this respect during the last few months?

In Spain the actual danger of a Fascist upheaval lies in the fact that the military power is lodged in a group that is imbued with the greatest hatred to everything republican and democratic. The army is still controlled by intransigent monarchists and Fascists. On the very eve of the elections that clique made full preparations for the seizure of power. It was checked in its attempt by the fear displayed in the leading industrial and political circles of a vigorous reaction on the part of the revolutionary elements of the country. But it is not disguising its avowed intention to attempt the same under more favorable circumstances. And if the power of the officers and generals of the army is somewhat restricted by the revolutionary ferment permeating the rank and file of the Spanish Army, there is no doubt of the perfect fitness of the so-called Civil Guard for the purposes of a Fascist upheaval. The Civil Guard is a special body of military mercenaries picked for the special pur-



pose of suppressing any rebellious move on the part of workers and peasants. It was organized by the defunct monarchy for that purpose and it remained intact in its personnel and unchanged in its dominant spirit and ruthless methods of dealing with popular movements. Already during the first period of the Spanish Republic it became the hotbed of Fascist intrigues and plots, which finally ripened into an open rebellion against the Republic.

It is logical therefore to expect that a government which came into power with the express purpose of a resolute struggle against Fascism would disband this powerful military body, would institute some sort of popular control over the openly hostile commanding staff of the army and would stamp out any organized manifestations of Fascist belligerency. In reality, the course followed by the government of the Popular Front is so cowardly and pussyfooting in this respect that had we not had the classical example of the Kerensky and Scheidemann governments in their respective countries, it would seem utterly incredible that a sincerely democratic and republican government could play so openly into the hands of viciously reactionary forces.

The first public utterance of one of the pillars of the Popular Front, M. Prieto, a reptilian Socialist of the Scheidemann cut, was to reassure the governing classes that no tampering would be permitted with respect to the Civil Guard. And keeping step with this solicitous attitude of the Socialist leader to the most powerful military arm of Fascism, there is the policy of "going easy" on the army—that is on the monarchistic and Fascistic elements that control it now. No attempt is made to wrest control

from their hands, to enlarge the scope of freedom of the rank and file to build up some sort of counterweight to the dangerous power of the high command of the army in the form of soldier's committees. While such an elementary duty of a presumably anti-Fascist government as releasing prisoners who were jailed by an aggressive counter revolution had to be extorted from the government by the pressure of mass action, the Fascists are allowed free unhampered scope in their activity of openly preparing for the overthrow of the democratic regime. The occasional arrests of some Fascists are never undertaken upon the initiative of the government, but always come as belated acts of propitiation toward powerful movements of revolutionary protest against some act of Fascist aggression. The Fascists are openly organizing under the powerful protection of the army, the Civil Guard. The methods of Italian Fascism in its early period are followed whenever the revolutionary elements do not show sufficient vigilance to check them by force. Prominent people in the labor movement are assassinated, headquarters of labor organizations are attacked and demolished, a policy of terrorization of the rank and file of the labor organizations is instituted with the view of demoralizing their fighting capacity and leaving them as helpless before the final Fascist assault as the Italian labor organizations of fifteen years ago. This policy has heretofore met with little success not because of the vigilance of an anti-Fascist government but because of the fighting spirit of the Spanish workers and peasants, who retaliated every act of Fascist aggression with heavy blows at the reactionary forces.

What accounts for the utter helplessness of this anti-Fascist government?

Certainly the people at its control realize the danger of leaving the power in the hands of military cliques who openly hatch plots and conspiracies against the Republic and who by their powerful support enable the Fascists to gradually consolidate their power?

It isn't of course the lack of personal understanding and vision, which in view of the striking lessons of the German events would be tantamount to sheer stupidity. It is the social position of the middle classes which determines the sterility of the Peoples Front. To hit out at the military Fascist cliques of Spain is to strike at the basis of the rotten social structure. It means to break the stranglehold which the Catholic Church has upon the country by virtue of its educational monopoly and the tremendous power of control over many a branch of the national economy. It means also to dispossess the feudal barons of their immense estates—and it is the nobility that is in control of the higher command of the army. And it goes without saying that some measure of social security must be vouchsafed the masses of people in face of an ever growing economic breakdown. Can such tasks, each and every one of which leads to a serious dislocation of the economic life, be undertaken by the middle classes?

It is enough to pose this question to see why an anti-fascist movement that centers around middle class tactics is bound to prove so ineffective in its basic aim of checking the growth of Fascist power. Like in every other country, the middle classes of Spain are bound up most intimately with the present social structure. The Church may be objected to on cultural grounds, but the powerful financial institutions controlled by it are held sacrosanct and

inviolable. A more equitable distribution of land property may be desired, but a policy of land expropriation would plunge the country into a temporary crisis, intensified by the sabotage of the ruling industrial and financial oligarchy. And if richer countries failed to obtain results in grappling with the problem of social security and higher wages under conditions of a deteriorating economy, what could be expected from a backward and poverty-stricken country which stands first of all in need of a complete overhauling of its basic social structure before it can allow the masses a higher standard of living?

It is sheer folly to expect a movement headed by the middle classes, sincere as they may be in their desire to check the power of Fascism, to embark upon such a radical course of social reconstruction. And without such a policy of reconstruction the struggle against Fascism becomes removed from social realities to that of noble sentiment and pious aspirations, which will be left to run out their full course of vain gestures and showy attempts at resistance until brought to a logical end by the brutal march of Fascist legions. And if in Spain the distant rumbling of such a march are drowned by the thundering of a rapidly approaching revolutionary storm, this is due to the fact that the true revolutionary vanguard of workers and peasants organized into the anarcho-syndicalist C. N. T. did not fall for the naive arithmetic of the advocates of the Peoples Front, who by harnessing the constructive forces of a brewing social revolt to a socially sterile and impotent bourgeois liberalism hoped to achieve the momentous result of turning back the tide of social decay and dissolution.

SENEX.

## Anarchists And Elections

By EMMA GOLDMAN

**F**IRST, the question as to whether the abstention from participation in elections is for Anarchists a matter of principle? I certainly think it is, and should be for all Anarchists. After all, participation in election means the transfer of one's will and decisions to another, which is contrary to the fundamental principles of Anarchism.

Secondly, since Anarchists do not believe in the Jesuitic formulas of the Bolsheviki that the end justifies the means it is but logical for Anarchists not to consider political participation as a "simple question of tactics." Such tactics are not only incompatible with Anarchist thought and principles, but they also injure the stand of Anarchism as the one and only truly revolutionary social philosophy.

Thirdly, "can Anarchists, without scruple, and in the face of certain circumstances exercise power during a transition period?" I confess I was surprised to see such a question come from Spain which had always stood out to us in all countries as the high water mark of Anarchist integrity and consistency. Even without the experience of the Russian Revolution and Soviet claims for the transition period I should not have expected the Spanish Anarchists to be carried away by that term in the name of which every crime against the Revolution has been committed by the Communist Party in and outside of Russia. They claim that power is inevitable during the transition period. Unless the comrades in Spain now in favor of the same Jesuitic contention imagine that they are so much wiser and less corruptible

than others, I cannot understand how they can possibly aspire to power.

From its very inception Anarchism and its greatest teachers have maintained that it is not the abuse of power which corrupts everybody, the best more often than the worst men; it is the thing itself, namely power which is evil and which takes the very spirit and revolutionary fighting strength out of everybody who wields power.

There is ample excuse for Marxians (to take power—ed.) since they believe in and propagate the state, they believe in and propagate power, but how can the Anarchists whose social philosophy repudiates the state, all political power all government authority, in short, every sort of power and authority over fellow man? To me it is a denial of Anarchism and a most dangerous tendency which if carried out is likely to undermine whatever advance and recognition as a revolutionary fighting force the Anarchists in Spain represented for so long.

Does this mean that I do not recognize the danger of Fascism, or do not appreciate the imperative necessity to fight it to the last degree? Nothing is farther away from my thoughts. What I do mean to say is this: if the Anarchists were strong and numerous enough to swing the elections to the Left, they must have also been strong enough to rally the workers to a general strike, or even a series of strikes all over Spain.

Now, the psychological moment for all Anarchists in Spain to use their economic and direct action was during the revolt of October 1934. It was

their bounden duty to join the workers and fight with them to the end. The excuse given at the time by the C. N. T. for leaving the heroic masses in the Asturias to their fate was that it did not want to affiliate itself with the Socialists, with men like Caballero who had so often stabbed our comrades in the back. It was a poor excuse. But granted, for arguments sake, such an attitude was justified. How then could some of the Anarchists join the Socialists in elections?

The comrades were actuated in their participation in the elections by their solidarity with the 30,000 political prisoners. That was undoubtedly a very commendable feeling. But at the same time their amnesty was merely a short breathing spell. For it is already apparent that the new rulers in the saddle will not leave the prisons empty for very long.

In conclusion let me say, that though some of the Anarchists in Spain may be dazzled by the success of the Communists in different countries it is yet true that they are but of the hour. The future belongs to those who continue daringly, consistently to fight power and government authority. The future belongs to us and to our social philosophy. For it is the only social ideal that teaches independent thinking and direct participation of the workers in their economic struggle. Nor it is only through the organized economic strength of the masses that they can and will do away with the Capitalist system, and all the wrongs and injustice it contains. Any diversion from this stand will only retard our movement and make of it a stepping stone for political climbers.

(EDIT. NOTE: This article is an extract from a letter written by Emma

Goldman in response to a questionnaire sent out by the "Mas Legas" group in Spain. The questions asked will be apparent from Comrade Goldman's answer. We should like to point out that we are not in agreement with Comrade Goldman's evaluation of the stand of the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists during the elections. If there is any criticism to be leveled in their direction, it should be based upon an analysis of the concrete situation with which they were faced and not abstract principles. Anti-electionism is not a dogma, but a revolutionary tactic the effectiveness of which may occasionally be qualified by unusual conditions and factors. Whether such an unusual situation did arise in Spain is not for us to say, but, agreeing in this respect with Malatesta, whose opinion was printed in the last issue of our magazine, we have to admit the possibility of such a situation arising at a critical juncture of events whereby a departure from a too rigid anti-electionist attitude may be on the order of the day.)

#### THE VANGUARD LIBRARY

With the present expansion of the educational and propaganda activities of the Vanguard Group we find that the resources of our library at the Free Workers Center, 122 Second Avenue, New York City are insufficient to satisfy our needs. There are not, for example, enough copies of the Libertarian Classics to go around (especially those which are out print). If you or your friends have any suitable books, pamphlets or periodicals to donate or lend please write us at once and we shall make any arrangements you may see fit.

Communicate with Vanguard, 45 W. 17th St., New York City.

## The International Movement

### THE C. N. T. CONVENTION

(EDIT. NOTE: *The report of this convention was made up on the basis of information obtained from Spanish and French newspapers. If anything, this report errs on the side of underestimating rather than overstating the importance of this event. Even hostile newspapers had to pay unwilling tribute to some of the features of the convention, expressing in some manner the sense of tremendous historical significance with which this convention impressed them.*)

THE outstanding event of Spanish life of the last month was the extraordinary congress of the C. N. T., (*Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo*) held in the city of Zaragoza during the first week of May, 1936. It was extraordinary in more than one way. The first to be called since the Madrid Convention of 1931, it riveted the attention of the country by its decisions, its bold revolutionary challenge to the existing regime, the quiet strength displayed and the tremendous response it met on the part of the Spanish proletariat. While the Madrid Congress was largely ignored by the bourgeois press, belittled and derided by the Socialists, this one obtained the widest publicity and recognition, commensurate with the great revolutionary role the C. N. T. is now playing in the life of the country.

It was attended by seven hundred delegates representing every trade and industry. Almost all of them came directly from the factory bench and office or the fields of the country.

(Agricultural laborers and poor peasants were strongly represented at the convention). There was also a great number of recently released political prisoners, militants who went through the revolutionary struggles of the last few years and who had paid for it with long prisons sentences and the harrowing experiences in the torture chambers of the Republic. And though predominantly young in age (the prevailing age of the delegates as well as of the enthusiastic crowds of workers that filled up the convention hall is from 25 to 35 years), the delegates showed in their attitude and deliberation the high degree of maturity which characterizes militants with long years of revolutionary experience. "When one speaks to them one meets with the kind of maturity of thought found among the revolutionary vanguard of a country that is on the eve of profound revolutionary changes." That is how the correspondent of "Le Liberaire" characterizes them. And it is enough to compare this characterization with the one given by a reporter of a local Spanish bourgeois paper, "The Aragonian Daily," to see that the former description is not prompted by kinship of ideas but by an objective appraisal of a journalist. "There were," writes that bourgeois paper, "no gigantic, overtowering individuals among the delegates, but we have yet to see any congress or parliamentary session the proceedings of which showed such a high level of intelligence on the part of the general body of delegates as this convention of the C. N. T. Serious discussions, a serious attitude throughout the proceedings. Clear

speeches, social doctrines expounded without any undue effusiveness, a noble self-effacement on the part of the delegates."

The dominant mood of the convention was determined by the awareness, widely diffused in the country, of impending revolutionary changes. It is this feeling, expressed by the key-note of the convention in the stated hope that "this convention may be the last one to be held under capitalism" that impressed itself on all the proceedings and decisions, striking even the bourgeois journalists with the awesome sense of some radical historical turn in the process of preparation. Needless to say, the resolutions were keyed up to the same tone of revolutionary expectancy which characterized the mood of the convention.

It showed itself in the spirit of harmony displayed by the convention in its work of reuniting the syndicalist forces. Five years ago, immediately following the establishment of the Republic, certain elements within the C. N. T. began to show signs of opportunistic wavering in respect to the basic revolutionary policy of the organization. Instead of pursuing a policy of immediate struggle against the Republic, these elements came out for a conciliatory policy toward the newly established regime (The attitude of this group was formulated in a manifesto signed by thirty prominent representatives of this view, hence the name "the thirty"). The strategic position held by that group at the beginning of the revolution (the secretariat and the official publications of the C. N. T. were at one time controlled by it) gave it a prominence much out of proportion to the actual influence within the organization, and although soon swept out of controlling

position by a wave of resurgence on the part of the rank and file of militants who remained true to the basic line of an uncompromising struggle against bourgeois democracy, it still succeeded in making use of some of its former standing by organizing an opposition movement within the C. N. T. This opposition was camouflaged by allegedly pure syndicalist slogans of trade union autonomy precluding any interference on the part of such "extraneous" bodies as the F. A. I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation), but its practical program soon reduced itself to a struggle for trade unionism pure and simple, free from the great ideological heritage of the C. N. T. (It was the activity of this group, its supine attitude toward the bourgeois democracy that gave rise to Trotzky's vilification of the C. N. T. as a whole, predicting for it in one of his snappy judgements the rapid degeneration into a reformist trade union body.)

However, the revolutionizing effect of the events of the last few years, the implications of the tactical position of this group as revealed by the renegacy of its leaders, most of whom became politicians of the most vulgar type, had their sobering effect upon the rank and file of those syndicates. At the convention the representatives of the latter expressed their full agreement with the revolutionary policies of the C. N. T., asking for reentrance into the organization on the basis of full acceptance of the line of orientation upon an immediate Social Revolution. The significance of this act of reunion lies not in the numerical augmentation of the ranks of revolutionary fighters (the membership of those opposition syndicates is only 60,000) but in the manifestation of the general tendency toward unity and the rapid process of

radicalization wiping out the slightest trace of opportunism within the ranks of the militants of the Spanish proletariat.

The tendency toward unity was also given expression in the important decision taken by the C. N. T. in regard to a united front with the Socialist trade unions. The decision was to form a revolutionary alliance with that body provided the latter break away completely from any collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The approach to this problem of revolutionary unity was determined by the basic principles of revolutionary syndicalism as well as by the supreme necessities of the moment. The militants of the C. N. T. are neither sectarians nor puppets in the hands of a sacrosanct hierarchy. Their intimate contact with the masses of workers, the independent quality of their revolutionary thought makes them elastic in their approach to revolutionary realities. They do not stand in need of any mystical party line for any new orientation in the light of newly changed conditions and imperative demands of reality. The revolutionary ferment, sweeping ever wider circles of Spanish workers and peasants within its sphere, has finally reached the more backward section of the Spanish proletariat organized in reformist trade unions under control of the Socialist Party, and inasmuch as this ferment is not shunted into the channels of a political party, and keeps to the course of an independent mass activity, confused as it might be in its initial phase of development, it helps to swell the tide of a syndicalist revolution advocated by the C. N. T.

That is why the C. N. T. came out strongly for a common revolutionary front with the socialistic trade unions but not with the Party. There is no

room in the revolutionary scheme upheld by the C. N. T. for a power-usurping party that stands above and claims control over the mass organizations of workers and peasants. Its clearly avowed objective is to demolish the State and not to build up another State power through the medium of a Party dictatorship. This can be done by securing for the revolution a genuine basis of mass activity freely expressing itself through appropriate organizations. In Spain such organizations do not have to be improvised by history. The C. N. T. and the U. G. T. (The Socialist trade unions) embrace almost the entire working class and a considerable portion of the peasantry. A revolutionary alliance between both will safeguard from the beginning the essentially democratic character of the revolution without which no further development along libertarian lines becomes possible.

Of similar import was the resolution adopted on the agrarian problem. There is hardly a country in the world in which the agrarian problems are posed with as much sharpness as in Spain. Predominantly agrarian in its economic structure (70% of the population is peasant), the country is still dominated by an archaic feudalism. Vast latifundia in the South and Central parts, an impoverished peasantry in the rest of the country finding itself in the remorseless grip of the city usurer and state tax collector, such are the dominant features of the agrarian structure of Spain. The new government of the so-called Popular Front tries to remedy this situation by its picayune agrarian reform which at best would only benefit the upper layer of peasantry and saddle the rest of it with an intolerable debt burden. And judging by the past performances of the same

government even this petty scheme will remain on paper, to be dragged out of the parliamentary archives only as demagogic vote catching programs for the politicians of the Left.

The C. N. T. came out resolutely against the continuation of the same political fraud. The first step toward the solution of the agrarian problem, it declared, must be the forcible seizure of the large estates and their equipment by the syndicates of peasants and agricultural laborers. Then follows the abolition of taxes, imposts, levies and mortgages now weighing down upon the peasant economy. An intensive propaganda for communal ownership and cultivation of land must be inaugurated; the process of collectivization must not be forced upon the peasants, but helped along by the various agencies of the new social order. Those decisions were the more significant that they were framed by a resolutions committee specially chosen in such a manner as to give the representatives of syndicates of peasants and agricultural laborers a dominant voice.

In regard to the problem of the growing unemployment the C. N. T. took the same uncompromising revolutionary stand. It rejects the idea of any possibility of alleviating unemployment under the present regime. But revolutionary struggle against unemployment must be approached from the point of view of concrete possibilities, such as the struggle for the 36 hour day, the forcible requisition of any plant that is being shut down, organized pressure by the unemployed and employed workers upon the authorities with the aim of securing some livelihood for the unemployed workers through some form of public works. Those methods are only valuable in-

asmuch as they train the workers in direct action, leading to the final act of social revolution without which no tangible improvement in the lot of the unemployed is possible.

The last sessions of the C. N. T. were devoted to the reformulation of the constructive ideal of the organization. The awareness of an impending revolutionary upheaval forced to the foreground the issue of clearly formulating the basic principles of libertarian communism in terms of concrete solutions. The resolution adopted contains a declaration of principles setting forth the larger aims of the organization as well as a concrete plan of reconstruction. The emphasis in both is laid on individual rights within the new social framework and a federalistic structure of economic and political life. Communism is upheld not as a distant ideal to be achieved after a millenium of social development, but as the point of departure of revolutionary reconstruction which must place the principles of fullest equality and justice at the very basis of the new social structure.

The convention was wound up by a gigantic celebration which by its proportions and spirit displayed took on the dimensions of a national event. Toward the close of the sessions, thousands of workers began to arrive from all parts of the country in order to take part in the celebration. Train after train packed with enthusiastic workers; automobiles, lorries and other vehicles of transportation kept on pouring into the city amid the shouting and singing crowds. More than 60,000 workers came from various parts of the country and taking into account the poverty of the Spanish workers for whom a trip to a distant city represents a considerable item of



expense, this number is much more impressive than what it may look, representing the aspirations and the devotion of hundreds of thousands of proletarians who could not afford the luxury of a distant trip.

Gigantic mass meetings were held in the circus arena. More than 200,000 workers crowding the adjoining streets and squares listened to the speeches carried to them by amplifiers. Monster parades and demonstrations were held after the meeting. "Long live the C. N. T. and the F. A. I.! Long live the Revolutionary Alliance!" resounded throughout the entire day. The official life of the large city shrunk into insignificance. Everything was dwarfed in comparison to this vast outpouring of crowds. Sailors, soldiers (the soldiers of the Spanish army are permeated with revolutionary propaganda and that is why the government has to rely upon special troops such as the Foreign Legion and the Civil Guard to maintain order within the country) workers and peasants mingled in one continuous stream sweeping through the streets of that ancient city.

The workers of Zaragoza aided by numerous contingents of militants from all the rest of Spain celebrated the first step of the C. N. T. toward the organization of the coming revolution. It celebrated the crystallization of the hopes of the class conscious workers of Spain taking shape in the resolutions, decisions and proceedings of the C. N. T. and perhaps very soon the momentous significance of the convention will become clear not only to the revolutionary workers of Spain. Great events are in store in the unfoldment of which the last convention of the C. N. T. constitutes by now the most important landmark.

## SPANISH LABOR MOVES TOWARD UNITY

**B**OTH the C. N. T. (the anarcho-syndicalist confederation of labor) and the U. G. T. (the socialistic trade union body) are now actively engaged in widespread strikes throughout the nation on a cooperative basis. There are many observers who are sceptical as to possibility of a militant, revolutionary organization like the C. N. T. ever uniting the Marxists on a revolutionary program. But rapid social and economic changes in the past few years have, indeed, made such things possible.

On several previous occasions the C. N. T. had appealed to the U. G. T. for united revolutionary action and had always been turned down cold.

It was the Asturian revolt and the failure of this magnificent demonstration on the part of the workers, and the cowardice of the leaders of the U. G. T. and the Socialist Party that made the members of the U. G. T. and the youth of the Socialist Party realize that unless more drastic tactics are adopted and a closer relationship with the C. N. T. is established, Spain would be faced with Fascism.

The Catalonian region of the C. N. T. was the first to realize that something must be done and it had the assurance from the workers of the U. G. T. in that region that cooperation was necessary and possible. It was to the Catalonian regional Plenum of the C. N. T. that representatives from the U. G. T. were invited to discuss an alliance upon a revolutionary program. The two bodies debated the question without passion or antagonism to each other and finally came to an agreement, signing a pact, which became the first documentary proclamation of unity between the two forces

that really represent Spanish labor. This accord was celebrated by a huge mass meeting of both sides, after the closing of the four day Plenum at the Olympic Theatre, on January 27th, 1936.

Although all organizations in the C. N. T. are autonomous, and the action in Catalonian region did not bind other regions or the National Federation as a whole, nevertheless it was the first signal for unity, and discussions in every section of Spain spread in the various syndicates and met with almost unanimous approval. It was obvious for those who know the Spanish movement that once adopted by one of the largest regions of Spanish revolutionary workers, the rest would fall in line with a complete feeling of moral discipline and voluntary action at the coming Congress.

In the meantime although this pact had not officially reached the Congress of the C. N. T. and the executive committee of the U. G. T. there was the immediate response of nationwide strikes, in which both organizations shared the responsibility. The manifestation of unity on a local scale inspired the Second Extraordinary Congress of the C. N. T., which was held in Zaragoza beginning May 1st, to earnestly treat this question on a national scale. The proposal to write to the Executive Committee of the U. G. T. was met with great enthusiasm and passed by a vote of 95 per cent.

At the Congress acceptance of the anarchistic philosophy as a revolutionary program was unanimous. It can be summarized in three points: First, the aim is Libertarian Communism; Second, to attain this form of society a Social Revolution is necessary, and the present order must be completely

destroyed; Third, in order to make a revolution, the unity of the workers is absolutely necessary, and inasmuch as the U. G. T. and the C. N. T. are the only forces that actually represent the masses of workers, they must unite upon a revolutionary program, and discourage the workers from further activities along political and parliamentary lines. The letter addressed to the Executive Committee of the U. G. T. is being carefully studied and it will be necessary to call a national session of the unions in order to decide upon the proposal from the National Congress of the C. N. T.

The five points upon which the letter is based are as follows:

1. That the U. G. T. approve the pact for a Revolutionary Alliance, and explicitly recognize the failure of a system of political and parliamentary collaboration.

2. In order to effect a Social Revolution, it is necessary to completely destroy the existing social and political order.

3. The regulation of the new social order created by revolution shall be determined by free elections of the workers freely assembled.

4. United action is indispensable, to preserve the interest of each particular tendency and to defend the new social order. Only by united strength will it be possible to defend the Revolution from national and foreign capitalist attacks.

5. The approval of the present agreement signifies the implicit duty of the National Committee of the U. G. T. to accept this pact, to enter into relations with the C. N. T. in order to regulate and advance the pact as mentioned above, and also agree upon already existing revolution-

ary matters of vital concern to both parties.

An additional article states: This basis represents the sentiment of the majority of the C. N. T. and it has a provisional character in order to serve the immediate entente with the U. G. T. until they call a National Council of all their syndicates to formulate a basis which they believe is to their convenience for the realization of the **ALLIANCE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS**. In order to effect this goal two Committees of Relations representing both bodies will have to be elected, and they will jointly work out a concrete revolutionary program in accordance with the proposal. This is to be elaborated in a report by both sides and each is to submit it to their respective syndicates for discussions and referendum.

The result of the referendum will be accepted as final and definite on the usual principles of the expression by a majority of not less than 75 per cent of the votes of each organization. In this manner all future transactions and the relations initiated will be entirely based upon the votes of all unions through a referendum.

The growing united strike action of the U. G. T. and the C. N. T. already indicates the power of the drive towards trade union unity. And the revolutionary potentialities implicit in this unity are already beginning to make the bourgeoisie of Spain quake in their troubled boots.

LEON GREEN.

### **THE ANARCHIST UNION OF FRANCE**

*The following is the gist of some of the discussions which took place at the*

*Congress of the Anarchist Union of France on April 12, 13:*

### **FASCISM**

**T**HE discussion on Fascism was initiated by Comrade Epsilon. He explained the conditions under which Fascism was born in France and reviewed the historic events of the sixth and twelfth of February, when the masses were keenly aware of the dangers of Fascism. To this peril the workers responded spontaneously and the unity of action was realized. However, this magnificent demonstration of solidarity has been impaired by the Peoples Front, some of whose leaders take their orders from Moscow. The other leaders have to a large extent followed the policies of the British Labor Party. These policies weigh so heavily on the Peoples Front that they render the movement incapable of preventing war. In effect, the Peoples Front may lead to war.

Only a social revolution can stop war and fascism. The first step is to alienate the troops of the Peoples Front from their chiefs. The Anarcho-Communists must denounce the political game of the leaders, expose the false policies of the Peoples Front. They must warn the workers of the dangers of war and induce them to unite with us against this crime.

The Congress declared that the task of the Anarcho-Communist is to fight against Fascism; that the United Front is necessary and that in this United Front we will work together with the workers, whether Socialist or Communist, our object being to influence the workers in the direction of revolutionary action.

### **TRADE UNION QUESTION**

Unity is more than ever desirable.

The desire for unity has been exploited by the leaders of the C. G. T. for their political aims. The anarchists should work in the unions not only to expound their doctrines but to propagate the tactics of direct action. Their place is in the reorganized C. G. T.

The Anarchists can carry on an intensive propaganda in the locals of the C. G. T. The interests of the workers in the C. G. T. and the realities of the class struggle will oblige the workers to sever all connections with the Peoples Front.

The C. G. T. S. R. (Anarcho-Syndicalist Union) has a strong influence in a number of locals. It is necessary to carry on the fight for the immediate interests of the workers not only in the locals but in the individual syndicates as well.

#### WAR

The position on war as expounded by the social democrats and communists is denounced. There can be no choice between German and French imperialism; both must be fought. The idea of the General Strike must be propagated in order to stop war. If, despite all efforts, war comes then the tactics of sabotage, refusal to fight and the disorganization of the Army of the bourgeoisie must be used.

*From "LIBERTAIRE."*

#### IN THE REMILITARIZED ZONE.

*The following letter comes to us from a German frontier town:*

**“WHEN** the soldiers entered the town their knees were shaking and their faces were pale. None of them knew what was going on or why they were sent here. Neither the

troops nor the civilian population displayed any enthusiasm.

“Despite all the demagogic and false declarations for peace on the part of Hitler, Goebbels and Co., the masses have realized for some time already that the masters of the Third Reich have no other outlet but to foment a war in the near future.

“For, if the Nazis want to prevent a revolution the only thing left for them to do is to deflect the ever growing internal discontent into hatred for foreign peoples.

“Many workers have already been fired in a large number of factories and new mass discharges are imminent. Now the brown shirt ‘saviours’ know only too well the fatal consequences that such actions involve. For when poverty becomes too intense not even the most frightful sort of terrorism can prevent the masses from revolting...

“There are numerous facts known to us which prove that Hitler and his criminal gang are fully aware of the imminence of war. Since the occupation of this zone both trucks and drivers have been requisitioned and the military posts of all men between 25 and 40 years of age have already been decided upon.

“The frontiers are guarded with unusual vigilance in order to prevent any possible desertion in time of war. This situation has the effect, however, of forcing the worker who does not wish to be crushed to undertake himself the struggle against the criminal regime.

“At present there is developing an ever growing passive resistance. The meetings of the Labor Front, for instance, were not well patronized by the masses; this resulted in a decree imposing a fine of 100 Marks on all those

who failed to accept invitations to be present at such meetings.

"In spite of the terror prevailing there is an intensive anti-militarist propaganda being carried on . . .

"We feel confident that if the ruling clique foments a war to save capitalism, the tortured and oppressed working

class will confront it with a surprising resistance, notwithstanding the deceptive appearances of the current scene.

"We the anarcho-syndicalists of Germany are cooperating in this task with our utmost strength."

I. W. M. A.

## Notes On New Books

RULERS OF AMERICA: A STUDY OF FINANCE CAPITAL, by *Anna Rochester*. *International Publishers*, \$2.50.

**T**He publishers boast proudly that Miss Rochester's family tree may be traced back to the earliest pilgrim fathers. Shall we boast too . . . The forbears of Sacco and Vanzetti discovered America! The book is an expose of the industrial and commercial power of the large corporations, chiefly these controlled by the Morgans, Rockefellers, and Mellon. Her statistics are exact and the book is extremely helpful if you discount that fact that Miss Rochester adheres to the C. P. line of the moment in her "way out" remarks.

A NOTE ON LITERARY CRITICISM, by *James T. Farrell*. *The Vanguard Press*. \$2.50.

**J**IM Farrell, the Peck's Bad Boy of the Marxist literati, has written a provocative series of essays taking his Communist pals to tasks. His main theory seems to be that "Critics" like Prof. Hicks, Prof. Burgum, Isidore Schneider, Mike Gold, et al. write the garbage that they do because they are ignoramuses, not because there is any thing wrong with the social philosophy

that they utilize. The professional Marxists are very angry with Studs Lonigan Farrell . . .

JEWES IN AMERICA, by the editors of *Fortune*. *Random House*. \$1.00

**T**He editors of *Fortune*, a magazine for bright young Wall Street executives, inform us that some of their best friends are Jews and that Hitler is wrong when he says they control all the commerce of the universe. Thanks, Mr. MacLeish.

CREATIVE AMERICA: ITS RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL SECURITY, by *Mary Van Kleck*. *Covice-Friede*. \$3.00.

**M**ISS Van Kleck, who heads the Russell Sage Foundation covers 353 pages of beautiful white paper with assurances to prove that this country has sufficient resources both natural and technical to overcome the recurrent industrial depressions and insure social security. This is an example of how very very valuable an endowed research organization like the Russell Sage Foundation can really be. We might have gone on for years believing that American workers go hungry because our fields and factories are incapable of supplying enough food.

JOHN REED: THE MAKING OF A REVOLUTIONARY, by Granville Hicks. Macmillan. \$3.50.

THE usually stuffy Prof. Hicks comes off rather well in this work by cramming the book full of Reed's own writings . . . sometimes he uses quotation marks and sometimes he doesn't. Consequently, the book is full of the glowing life that Reed possessed to overabundance in his own personality. The fascinating, impetuous character who was John Reed is made to appear a little more rational than he really was, but withal it is an unusual book to find on list of a bourgeois publisher, and will repay reading.

HEARST, LORD OF SAN SIMEON, by Oliver Carlson & Ernest Sutherland Bates. Viking. \$3.00

IMPERIAL HEARST; A SOCIAL

BIOGRAPHY, by Ferdinand Lundberg. Equinox Cooperative Press. \$2.75.

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST, by Mrs. Fremont Older.

THE best of the three books is the Lundberg opus in which we get a fine indignant portrait of the California octopus. The Carlson and Bates book is marred somewhat because of the desire of the always scholarly authors to be "fair" to Mr. Hearst. Nevertheless, it is a good study chock full of factual details of the career that made Hearst the most despised man in America. Mrs. Older likes Mr. Hearst! We suggest that Mr. Lundberg now write a biography of Mrs. Older. Anybody who can write in praise of Hearst deserves a biography all of her own.

DAVID LAWRENCE.

### A LETTER FROM EMMA GOLDMAN

We have received a letter from Comrade Emma Goldman, extracts of which we reprint herewith:

"I was delighted to receive the April-May issue of VANGUARD. I had been wondering what had happened to it. I was afraid you might have to give it up. That would be a great pity. First, because the magazine contains splendid material and secondly, we are so poor in English propaganda.

"I can imagine the struggle you are having. I know from years of experience what it means to get out a magazine without any income from advertisement. My yearly lecture tours

enabled us to keep *Mother Earth* going twelve years. How I wish I could be with you to help through lectures to maintain the VANGUARD. I like the current issue of VANGUARD better than the former. It is alive and deals ably with some of the pressing issues. — You will see by my last statement about my final lectures in England just what has been achieved — not much to boast about. Yet, enough to warrant my return.

It will now depend on the condition of Comrade Berkman whether I can go away. Just now our comrade is still in the hospital and his recovery is very slow. But we must hope for the best.

"I am sorry you have such difficulty in raising the cost of the pamphlet

'Two Communisms.' But I suppose most of our comrades are poor."

We earnestly hope that our readers will take Comrade Goldman's message to heart and come to our support. We again urge our readers to respond to our appeals and raise the money to publish Emma's excellent pamphlet. We still feel that our comrades and friends, poor as they are, can raise the small sum necessary for the publication of this pamphlet.

### TO OUR READERS AND FRIENDS

Groups and individuals that have contributed funds to the Vanguard will soon receive through the mails a detailed report of the financial standing of the magazine. The reason why such an accounting has not been printed recently is that we have been cramped for space.

The present 32-page issue is only the beginning of a larger, more improved and regularly appearing monthly journal that we plan to publish. Needless to say, these plans will not be realized without the continued and increasing support of friends and readers in the form of subscriptions, donations and monthly pledges.

Libertarian organizations wishing to publicize their activities, affairs and plans will be given space free of charge in the pages of the Vanguard if we are informed sufficiently in advance of publication.

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