

What Is Happening In Spain Today: Recent Events

(Continued from page 1)

called the "book fair" (during the feast of St. George, who is considered here as the protector of Catalonia and who was celebrated for the first time this year since the coup d'Etat of Primo de Rivera, book expositions are organized everywhere and lectures held on the importance of books and culture in general), our comrade Nin published in Catalonia the little pamphlet of L. D. Trotsky on his exile, entitled "How Did It Happen?" (Que Hat Passat?). This little pamphlet enjoyed an exceptional success; the students and workers grabbed it up. Many workers and students came to our comrades after having read it, and expressed their . . . deception. Why? Because, they say, as soon as the red pamphlet made its appearance in front of the newstands and bookstores of the Ramblas everybody thought that comrade Trotsky explained in this pamphlet how the fall of the monarchy in Spain happened. And even this supposition was advanced: since he has succeeded so quickly in making public his opinions on the most recent events in Spain, he should certainly enter Spain incognito. But upon reading the pamphlet they found out with regret that comrade Trotsky spoke of things which are, actually, much less "interesting" than the Spanish events.

DEMAGOGY OF THE REPUBLICANS

The interest and the great sympathy for Communism does not manifest itself only by the interest in the life and the works of the great revolutionist of our epoch and of the first fighter for the Russian revolution. Already before the fall of the monarchy, the workers, the peasants and the petty bourgeois masses sympathized with the most radical and boldest social doctrine. During the election campaign, it was not enough for the republican candidates and the Catalan nationalists of the Macia type to promise the electors of the city of the country the establishment of a democratic republican régime and the national independence of Catalonia. They were obliged to resort to demagoguery by telling the credulous voters: you speak of decisive social changes, you speak of Communism? But we are Communists, we are your real defenders. Having come to power, we shall create conditions of existence of an ideal equality and we shall do it without fratricidal struggle, without the spilling of blood.

It is this social demagoguery, plus the complicity of the anarchists who recruited an electoral clientele for the party of Macia, and the absence of a unified and solid Communist party which permitted the nationalist demagogues to win over tens of thousands of peasants and workers.

How will these workers and peasants who voted en masse for the "Communism" of Macia rather than for his Catalan nationalist nationalism, conduct themselves in the future? There is the real question that one must put in order to measure the imminence of the Communist peril. Today, it is still in the depth of the roots of sympathy for Communism and for Soviet Russia that the potential force of the exploited masses of Spain must be measured. The democratic illusions still exist today; perhaps they will still exist tomorrow. But how much time will the workers and poor peasants in Spain require to find out that the advent of the republic, with the large Andalusian landowner, Alcalá Zamora, at its head, in no way signifies—rather the contrary—the advent of a social régime favorable to the exploited masses?

Comrade Nin tells you in a thorough article on the basis of precise data and a profound analysis, what are the perspectives for the development of the class struggle in Spain, given the present events. I want to dwell here only on the immediate impressions that are communicated to every conscientious observer who comes to Spain today in order to distinguish amidst the deceptive noise of the "Marseillaise" the heart beats of the exploited masses who anguishedly seek the broad road of the social revolution.

Every Communist knows that without a firm and solid unified Communist party all the potential forces of the working class are in danger of being dissipated in vain, or still worse, of carrying water to the mill of the class enemy. What is the situation here from the point of view of the Communist party?

The French workers who read "L'Humanité" are informed every day that the real enemies of the Spanish proletariat are the "Spanish Trotskyites". The articles of Juan Pérez and of Gabriel Peri (or dare not conclude?) without pronouncing a few anathemas against the Trotskyites. Those readers who are familiar with the customs of Stalinist journalism can only

come to one conclusion after reading these articles: if the bureaucrats strike so violently against the "Trotskyites", it is because they are pretty strong there. These readers will not be deceived. In fact, if we are not very strong from the organizational point of view, on the other hand, the penetration of the ideas of the Left Opposition, that is, of the Leninist ideas on the preparation of the proletarian revolution, is advancing from day to day among the masses of the workers.

When the Péri and the Perezes write that the Spanish Trotskyites are working hand in hand with the Republicans and the social fascists, the whole world knows that is a stupid and ridiculous lie. But in their information there is another lie, which the readers who are not familiar with Spanish affairs, cannot detect so readily. That is when they put into one "Trotskyite" bag all the Spanish and Catalan Communist save those two dozen appointed by the C. I. who pompously call themselves "Partido Comunista de España (S. E. de la I. C.)"

In reality the Catalan Federation, which has been expelled from the C. I., and which numbers nearly a thousand members and issues a few publications, is far from being completely won over to the Left Opposition. We can even affirm that in this Federation, which is the nemesis of the whole C. I. bureaucracy, there is a goodly number of Centrists (sincere and honest, because they are less corrupt than the Péri and the Perezes) who do not accept our criticism of the mistakes of the Comintern and of centrism in the U. S. S. R. But what keeps them in the Catalan Federation side by side with Left Oppositionists and semi-Oppositionists is their agreement in principle with regard to bureaucratic methods of the C. I. in relation to the Spanish Communist movement. They

The Tasks of the Communists in Spain

(Continued from page 1)

the slightest intention of touching either the sacred rights of the large landowners or the feudal survivals except in the form of "foros", "metayage", "rabassa morta", and so forth, which exist in the country.

In the question of nationalities, one of the most serious in Spain, the attitude adopted by the government of Alcalá Zamora is no less significant. It is indisputable that the proclamation of the Catalan republic, which preceded that of the Spanish republic at Madrid, was the most revolutionary act accomplished on April 14. An authentic democratic government would have had to recognize without reservations an act which was supported by the overwhelming majority of the Catalan people. However, the new central power stood up against the young republic and demonstrated a chauvinist, absorptive, assimilative spirit, in no way more preferable than that of the central power which has disappeared.

As to the relations with the church, the provisional government has confined itself to decree the liberty of cults and the secularization of cemeteries, without saying a word about what constitutes one of the traditional demands of democracy—the separation of the church from the state—nor of the confiscation of the wealth of the religious congregations nor of the dissolution of the latter.

And the state apparatus? It remains the same as under the old régime, the most ardent partisans of which continue to occupy the most important positions.

Finally, what has the provisional government done to parry the probable blows of the reaction which conspires and which finds itself in an extremely advantageous position since it has in its hands the decisive levers of the state apparatus? It allowed Alfonso of Bourbon as well as the leaders of the organizations of assassins founded by the former governor of Barcelona, Martínez Andio to escape; it takes no measures against the army officers who are conducting open and conspirative monarchist propaganda against the new order of things: it leaves intact and fully armed, the "Guardia Civil", those butchers of the working class, deeply hated by the masses: it refuses, finally, to take any swift and energetic measures capable of disarming the enemy and rendering impossible every attempt at restoration.

WHO WILL CARRY THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION?

All this goes to show in a striking manner what we have constantly contended in these recent months: that the bourgeois-democratic revolution cannot be accomplished by the bourgeoisie, that it can only be the work of the proletariat in power sup-

ported itself upon the peasant masses who, in Spain, represent seventy percent of the laboring population. More concretely: the bourgeois democratic revolution can be realized in our country only by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But can the dictatorship of the proletariat be the slogan of the Communists in the present stage of the revolution, or, to put it differently, can it be not a slogan of propaganda but a slogan of agitation? In our opinion, it would be a profound error in tactics which would be in manifest contradiction to all the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

Our fundamental task must be that of winning the decisive majority of the worker and peasant masses. These masses are at the present time hypnotized by democratic illusions. It is on this ground that we must win them, showing them, by their own experience, the incapacity of the bourgeoisie to solve the problems of the democratic revolution, and thus winning them, always on the basis of experience, by means of a constant criticism of the work of the republic, to the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our slogan, then, must at the present moment be the complete realization of the democratic revolution, solving the agrarian problem by the unindemnified expropriation of the large landed estates and the distribution of the land to the peasants; the recognition of the right of Catalonia and the other nationalities to dispose freely of their destinies, without excluding separation if that is their desire; the separation of the church from the state and the expropriation of all the wealth of the religious orders; the destruction of the state apparatus; the disarming of the "Guardia Civil" and the arming of the workers and peasants; the trial by a revolutionary tribunal of all the avowed enemies of the people.

Parallel to this, we must work energetically to organize the masses and effectively direct their struggle, by strengthening the revolutionary trade unions, by creating factory councils, by establishing everywhere revolutionary Juntas of workers, peasants and soldiers, and above all, by unifying all the Communist forces that exist today in the country. The organization of the revolutionary vanguard into a powerful Communist party is a question of life or death for the Spanish proletariat. The Communist Left Opposition will spare no effort nor sacrifice to contribute towards furnishing the working class of our country with the weapon of struggle which it needs so urgently. This weapon must be forged at all costs. The whole future of the Spanish revolution depends upon it.

Barcelona, April 1931.

have been expelled from the C. I. in an arbitrary fashion and they protest against this expulsion. But in their naiveness, they believe the expulsion was only the result of misinformation on the part of the leaders of the C. I. and a misunderstanding. They refuse to believe that the C. I., created by Lenin and Trotsky, can expel a whole organization and its most prominent militants, comrades esteemed by the workers like Nin and Maurin, solely because they have refused to carry out word for word the stupid directives of the narrow minded bureaucrats in Moscow.

A whole series of experiences is still necessary for these sincere Centrist comrades to arrive at our conclusions in our whole criticism since 1923, to this day. At present, when the awakening of the masses and their spirit of combativity is at its highest, it is important to come to an agreement on a program of struggle for the proletariat. This community of ideas between ourselves and the Catalan Federation already exists in a large measure. The "Batalla" [Organ of the Catalan Federation—Ed.] of this week has issued and broadly expounded in its articles the slogans of Revolutionary Juntas, rights of self-determination for the various nationalities, arming of the people, the destruction of the old administrative apparatus, confiscation of the great landed estates, separation of the Church from the State, etc.

The program by comrade Trotsky three months before the fall of the monarchy has proved to be the most adequate for the revolutionary situation in Spain. The conscientious Communists of the Catalan Federation have understood it and are adopting it in their actions. They have also understood that in order to put this program into application it is necessary to

unify all the Communist forces in the country. They have issued the slogan of the unification of all Communists, expelled and not expelled from the C. I. They have put themselves to their task and have begun to prepare the unity congress.

Péri and Doriot with their delegation have come here with the distinct mission to disrupt this action of the Spanish Communist movement. With their presence, they have hoped to raise the fallen morale of the C. I. functionaries in Spain. They want to make of them a real Communist party. But they realize that this impossible, and consequently they are attempting to "destroy" the "Trotskyites", that is, the only serious Communist group that the working class of this country has.

This is a crime that we must denounce before the working class of all countries. Barcelona, April 26, 1931

J. OBIN.

P. S. In the next letter, we shall deal with the situation in the rest of Spain.

Times and the Daily

(Continued from page 6)

see, is supposed to be the opinion of Trotsky! Can there be any doubt in any sane individual's mind that a person capable of writing such tripe must be a half-wit himself? Continues Jorge: "And without one word of condemnation [of the Czar]—except that of weakness . . ." This is such an idiotic, palpable stupidity that it would be of no purpose to mention it, were it not that it appears in the official organ of the Communist party. This, in a little cruder form, typifies the whole content and method of the slander unceasingly hurled at the Left Opposition on every possible occasion.

Jorge raves further: "All about the scandals of the Czar's family . . . he can explain endlessly how the Czar's secret police reported The night of 25-26 was spent by the actress V. with Rasputin' and 'He arrived at the Hotel Astoria with Princess D.'" Endlessly! It is astonishing: do these people really think that they can slander with impunity when anyone can satisfy himself so easily as to the truth? It is all very symptomatic. Just as the few citations by Trotsky from the reports of the secret police portray the decay of a ruling clique doomed by the progress of history, so the disgusting remarks of Jorge reflect the political degeneration of the Stalinist bureaucratic clique now strangling the life of the party, and also condemned by history.

Jorge concludes his slander for the time being with the legend manufactured and circulated by the Stalin school of fabricators that during the civil war in 1919 Stalin was appointed to reorganize the southern front while Trotsky was forbidden to interfere. The full account of the origins of this legend Trotsky relates in chapter XXXVI of his autobiography. For our purpose it will be sufficient to quote from the resolution of the Central Committee adopted July 6, 1919 (Real Situation in Russia, page 259-60): "The Organization Bureau and the Politburo of the Central Committee will do all that they can to make more comfortable for comrade Trotsky and more fruitful for the Republic, that work on the southern front which comrade Trotsky himself has chosen, and which is the most difficult, the most dangerous, and the most important at the present moment. In his position as People's Commissar for War and President of the Military Revolutionary Soviet, and as member of the Military Revolutionary Soviet of the southern front, Yegorov, whom he himself nominated and the Central Committee has confirmed, comrade Trotsky is free to act.

"The Organization Bureau and the Politburo of the Central Committee give comrade Trotsky full authority by every means whatsoever to achieve what he considers a necessary correction of policy on the military question and, if he so desires, to attempt to hasten the congress of the party."

The resolution was signed by Lenin, Krestinsky, Kalinin, Serebriakov, Stalin and Stasov.

Let the slanderers slander. In the end it will only help to annihilate them. The work of comrade Trotsky on the Russian Revolution through its analysis of the victory of 1917 will help prepare the international victory of tomorrow. Toward this end we will direct our energies.

—GEORGE RAY.