

Basque Chiefs Fear Workers

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owners when the war was over, even if they had been on the wrong side for a time.... Apart from this certain prospect, there may even have been an understanding on this point with Franco; for the absolute uniformity of the Basque policy of surrendering all industrial cities intact has no counterpart in any modern war, not to speak of civil wars!

Double Treachery

The "iron ring" defending Bilbao had been built months previously under the direction of an engineer who had shortly escaped to fascist territory. The fascists, then, had the plans of the fortifications and could skirt and flank them, as they actually did. But the treachery of the engineer was only made public after the fascists had broken through the fortifications; it was then adduced as the alibi of the Basque government. But months had intervened since his flight. Why was nothing done to construct a new system of fortifications in the interim?

Furthermore, no offensive was begun on the central front to force Franco to divert troops from the Basque front. Nor were airplanes sent from Madrid, then quiet, to defend Bilbao. Why? Had the Negrin government information which made it certain that Bilbao would surrender? Was it, perhaps, a party to the decision? Certainly no other hypothesis explains the passivity of the Negrin Government, during the march on Bilbao during June. The Stalinist alibi that the Negrin cabinet (established May 17) had not had time to organize a campaign on the Madrid or Aragon fronts is absurd on the face of it; no military man worth his salt would deny that three weeks—not to speak of preparations by the Caballero cabinet in which the Prieto-bourgeois-Stalinist forces had the commanding voice—was enough to organize a large-scale offensive.

Our suspicions are completely justified by the manner in which Bilbao surrendered. No attempt was made to defend the city. Not a single factory or wharf was damaged by fascist shells before its fall. The Asturian miners managed to dynamite some of the bridges; but when they sought to destroy supplies which were being left behind, and factories manufacturing war-materials, they were driven out of the city at gun-point, or, worse, disarmed by National Republican Guards and Basque soldiers of the regular army and held so that they might fall into the hands of the fascists! The Guards "maintained order" until Franco's forces arrived; patrolled the streets while the fascist troops marched in; then most of them donned Carlist red berets and went to work for Franco!

These unquestioned facts do not come from any private source. Most of them were reported by the regular news-correspondents, including the London Times' G. L. Steer, a Loyalist sympathizer. Neither here nor abroad did the Stalinists deny these facts. They "ignored" them as did the Negrin government. With the result that the Basque Government has consummated its treachery by similarly surrendering Santander and fleeing the country. This outcome was inevitable: for the "liberal" bourgeoisie has no basic stake in fighting fascism. As agents and partners of British and French

capital in Spain, the Basque bourgeoisie had no enthusiasm for joining Franco, with his German and Italian commitments. But more than they hated Franco, they hated the masses of the UGT and CNT. They supported Prieto and the Stalinists in reconstructing the bourgeois state, in depriving the workers of the conquests they had won in crushing the fascists in the chief cities. But despite all repressions, the bourgeoisie had no guarantees that a victory over Franco would not galvanize the workingclass into taking complete power. Against this eventuality only Franco could guarantee them.

Nothing Learned

Neither the treachery of the Basque bourgeoisie, nor the continued blockade of Franco and English imperialism, serve to convince the bourgeois-Prieto-Stalinist bloc that their course is false. Nothing can convince the Peoples Front coalition of this. They are determined to win, if at all—and not a few of the government leaders prefer a compromise with Franco to the possible dangers of proletarian power after victory—on the basis of so thoroughly consolidating a bourgeois regime that Anglo-French imperialism, reassured, will come to their aid.

The most striking confirmation of this is seen on the Aragon front. The Catalan militias, predominantly CNT, and with ten thousand POUM militiamen among them, made the most important military gains in the first months of war. They re-conquered almost all Aragon and immobilized Zaragoza, seat of one of the biggest garrisons and heavily fortified, which was to have been for the fascists what Burgos was further west. Once the fascists began receiving arms and planes from abroad, however, the ill-armed CNT-POUM militias could not take Zaragoza without planes and artillery. But they received none of these materials which were arriving from Russia, Mexico and other sources. While the Civil Guards, Assault Guards and Carabineros (who were not sent to the front, but were used to "preserve order" by cowing the workers) were armed with brand-new Russian rifles, automatic pistols, machine guns and artillery, and fleets of warplanes stood idle on the Madrid front between offensives, the Aragon militias had worn-out Mauser rifles, one machine-gun to fifty men and one revolver to about thirty men. "A Government which sends boys of fifteen to the front with rifles forty years old, and keeps its biggest men and newest weapons in the rear, is manifestly more afraid of the revolution than of the fascists. Hence the feeble war-policy of the past six months, and hence the compromise with which the war will almost certainly end," writes George Orwell, soldier with the I.L.P. contingent on the Aragon front.

War Sabotaged

When Santander fell and the government sought to make a showing by initiating the present Aragon offensive, the main forces, those of the CNT, were not entrusted with the artillery; instead, some "International Brigades"—Stalinist-led—were given the artillery and machine-guns while the CNT troops manned the trenches with their inadequate weapons. As a result, the offensive never developed any power. While the war is thus sabotaged, the government continues

Mc. Grady Lands Job as Radio Company Boss

Edward F. McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor, former president of the Newspaper Printing Pressmen's Union, of the Boston Central Labor Union and of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor, and for fourteen years thereafter the legislative agent of the A. F. of L., is resigning to become vice-president of the Radio Corporation of America, "in charge of labor relations."

McGrady is distinguished from the other "Labor leaders" together with whom he ruled the destinies of the organized working class for decades, only by his superior vigor and shrewdness. For nearly two decades he determined the A. F. of L.'s policy toward legislation. That he now drops all pretense of serving labor and becomes vice-president of one of the biggest employing corporations, is a revealing insight into the class-outlook of the men who dominate the American labor movement. They are in the old American radical's phrase, "the labor lieutenants of American capitalism."

unabated the reactionary offensive against the proletariat. Another POUM leader has been killed, this time by "legal" execution: Mena, Political Commissioner of the POUM militias at Lerida, charged with "inciting to revolt." The French press, with the exception of L'Humanite report this.

Even more significant is the arrest of Joaquin Ascaso, president of the Council of Aragon. Ascaso formed the Council in September, 1936 and shortly thereafter it was enlarged to include representatives of the Popular Front parties, but it remained predominantly CNT in composition. It organized on a collective basis the economic life of re-conquered Aragon and made possible provisioning of the Aragon front by the neighboring villages.

With the establishment of the Negrin government on May 17 a rabid campaign was organized against the Aragon Council. Stalinist spokesmen, at the PSUC Congress in Barcelona at the end of July, openly called for a repetition of the Barcelona repression in Aragon. All attempts to organize a strong Stalinist movement within Aragon failed, for the peasants are in favor of the collectives. Now the government has struck from outside. Ascaso is held on the preposterous charge of "embezzling jewels." Although only thirty years old, Ascaso is one of the most popular CNT leaders.

Thus the war against fascism is sabotaged by the government, while the latter incessantly wars against the revolutionary workers.

Admiral's Vote

Sandwiched in between the chauvinistic speech of a Rear Admiral and the smug prayer of a naval chaplain, was none other than Fiorello H. La Guardia, at the launching of the new cruiser in the Brooklyn Navy Yard last Thursday. The naval officers gave him a genuinely enthusiastic welcome to the launching party.

As the ship down the ways, the loudest cheers of all came from little Fiorello.

If the Mayor should ever get his dates mixed and read a boiled shirt speech to an overalled audience, some of his naive supporters would get jarred out of their seats.

EXPULSION DRIVE IS UNDER WAY IN MASS.

Alfred Baker Lewis has filed charges against the 7 Appeal members of the State Executive. The specific charge was that they jointly signed a statement in the name of The Appeal Association which "condemned and rejected" the gag rules and the Spanish resolution of the N.E.C. The 7 members are: John Hall, John Dwyer, Wm. Adam, Walter Birch, Antoinette Konikow, Augustus Mason and Lawrence Trainor. Charges were filed also against David Udell, of the Appeal, for stating at an S.E.C. meeting that "we want to drive a wedge between the C.I.O. leadership and the rank-and-file."

Comrades Dwyer and Adam, members of over 5 years' standing, will be the first two who will feel the traitor's axe, as Dwyer is a member-at-large and Adam is a member of Worcester local where the majority of the activists are Appealites, but for fighting against Socialist principles the dead-wood will be rounded up. Lewis named two members of his stooge S.E.C. majority to sit on the trial board trying Dwyer: Pineo, who has been on Lewis' personal pie-card payroll for years, and Mary Dickson, a Fabian Socialist professor, who has stated time and time again that she wants the Left-wing expelled.

The remaining five will have to be tried in their Locals which are solidly Left-wing, namely Lynn and Boston Central.

This is the first decisive attempt by Lewis to split the Mass. Socialist Party. Needless to say, over 90% of all active members are Appealites and regardless of the expulsion drive, we shall continue to solidarize ourselves with all those expelled and refuse to recognize any expulsions.

Lewis Pays for Votes

How the Right wing gathers up the necessary amount of dead-wood is revealed in a letter of July 14 which Lewis sent to two ex-members of the party:

"Joe Salerno, Charlotte Marchese, 5 Conduit Street, Lawrence, Mass.

Dear Comrades:

I earnestly hope that you will both re-register for membership in the Socialist Party.

I am enclosing check which I hope you will cash and send in for your back dues which are now a full year in arrears each. I want you to do this as there has been criticism of you by the Trotskyites, and I have no patience with that sort of vicious criticism knowing the services which you have given to the Party in the past.

One of their criticisms, which is technically correct, is that you have not kept in good standing. I know your situation and I am taking this method of helping you to keep in good standing.

I would appreciate hearing from you.

Fraternally yours,
Alfred Baker Lewis"

The Last Supper

The kiss of Judas was no sweeter than the "intimate", "friendly" invitation extended by the Lewis old-ladies' expulsion club to John Dwyer. With no further comment, we publish in full the chatty epistle inviting him to have his head chopped off!

Dear Comrade Dwyer:

"I'm sorry about the change in the date of the 'hearing' if it

inconveniences you at all. Comrades Lewis set the first date as 11 a. m. Sunday, which is inconvenient for me; since it was to be at our house I complained to comrade Lewis and he suggested Friday evening as he plans to be in Western Massachusetts for a meeting late Friday. He suggested either Friday evening or early on Sunday morning—I have an important examination at the college on Saturday morning, so Friday evening was decided on, tho' it doesn't seem very convenient for anyone.

"I have invited Comrades Lewis and Pineo to supper promptly at six, on Friday, am writing Dr. Konikow inviting him, and hereby invite you. If Mrs. Dwyer can come and would like to, bring her along. We'll have a simple quick meal as Comrade Lewis may have a meeting later in the evening.

"Tell Mrs. Dwyer I have the Burbank Book and find it Delightful.

Be sure to come promptly to supper on Friday.

Fraternally

Mary Dickson"

T. U. "Discipline"

"There was a national progressive group—the "unity caucus"—of the United Auto Workers, meeting in Toledo. Before this group met, there was a meeting of the Socialist League. Several motions were adopted: One of them: for the right of groups to exist in the auto union. Another: for independent political action on condition of no connection with Republican, Democratic or any other capitalist parties.

"Bert Cochran raised these two points, in according with the League decision, as motions at the caucus meeting. The Stalinists bitterly opposed and defeated them. Walter Reuther (party member) openly sided with the 20

Stalinists, speaking and voting with them.

"We raised the question of discipline on the party branch floor afterward, and the only answer forthcoming from Ben Fisher (county organizer) is, "Why don't you prefer charges." We have pointed to the fact that Ben Fisher (who is also a NEC member), Hy Fish, state secretary, and Alan Strachan, NEC member, were all present and as leaders of the party it is their responsibility to exact discipline. But they fail to do anything whatsoever except shrug their shoulders."—From a Detroit letter.

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