

WHO IS GIROLAMO VALENTI?

The Financial Wizard of the Socialist Right Wing

At almost every membership meeting of Local New York, S.P., prior to the expulsion of the left wing, Girolamo Valenti took the floor as spokesman for the right wing to demand ousting of the revolutionary socialists because they introduced into the party, according to Valenti, the "communistic germ".

Some ten years ago Valenti participated in the launching of the Avanti Publishing Co., which was to issue the "anti-fascist" daily paper, *Il Nuovo Mondo*. Supposedly, it was under the control of the Socialist Party but in fact it was in the hands of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers official, Augusto Bellanca, whose brother, Frank, became its first editor. Issued at the height of the Italian anti-fascist movement in this country, the paper was used to advance the position of the Bellanca family in the ACWA and the ILGWU and constituted the most shameless exploitation of the anti-fascist sentiment of the Italian workers in this country. The fact that the communists were at that time being "liquidated" by Hillman in the Amalgamated and by Schlesinger in the ILGWU, determined the crudely vicious red-baiting campaign conducted against the Communist Party by *Il Nuovo Mondo*.

Valenti the Fixer

The financial mismanagement of the paper was scandalous. Although it received large sums of money, including \$10,000 from the Garland Fund, it was penniless at the end of its second year. Even the \$9,000 taken from the fund collected to erect a monument to the great martyr Matteotti, did not help. Thereupon, Valenti appeared as the editor, manager and fixer of the paper, and the confidante of Bellanca. Through Valenti, a new corporation was organized, shares were sold in the name of the fight against Fascism and more money was collected. Accountings were scarce, but as a result of the Valenti-Bellanca manipulations, the Italian Socialist Federation was left high and dry, with plenty of debts, in a state of disorganization and—with no paper.

Here a new "side" speculation was undertaken, with the then Muste group called into the combination for the purpose of getting out a "labor paper". When the money contributed by it was gone, the Muste group was not very politely ousted.

Valenti's Partners

Again no money? Very well, then a new combination. Thinking of re-furbishing a tarnished reputation, the former minister of Giolitti, Arturo Labriola, was called here. He returned shortly thereafter and entered the camp of Mussolini, as a fascist retainer.

Meanwhile, Frank Bellanca, having resigned as editor and gone into business with his brother, was having banquets with the fascists and the Italian Consul and Ambassador. Bellanca used his reputation as editor to organize in New England an "industrial corporation" for the building of airplanes, in which the innocent participants shortly lost some \$200,000.

Valenti proceeded to re-launch the paper—with a new combination. A new corporation was formed with the Tammany lawyer, Bongiorno, and the Tammany politician, Modica. The paper was sold to this new corporation. As heads of the Sons of Italy, Modica and Bongiorno were presented to the anti-fascist workers as "liberals", "anti-fascists". Valenti remained silently in the combination while Modica, at the head of the Sons of Italy, had it send telegrams of devotion to King Emmanuel and to Mussolini. When Dino Grandi, the Fascist leader, came to this country, Bongiorno and Modica showed their colors plainly and sought to use *Il Nuovo Mondo* to exalt Grandi and the fascist newspaper boss here, Generoso Pope. This was the only thing Valenti couldn't sell his readers and he then began to shout: "Down with Modica and Bongiorno, traitors and fascists!"

The two Tammany men imperturbably continued the publication of the paper, issuing it during Grandi's stay as the "only good anti-fascist" periodical. Thereupon, Valenti organized another combination, to publish a "new and real" anti-fascist paper—the present *Stampa Libera*.

Money Tight Again

As usual with Valenti, money again became tight: subsidies from Antonini of the ILGWU and others of the Amalgamated covered the deficit. In return, the paper would give column upon column of blurbs for Antonini, what he said, what he did, what he planned to do. When he withdrew his financial aid, the paper suddenly discovered that he should be sharply attacked for this, that and the other thing, which caused Antonini to say, far and wide in the labor movement, that Valenti was nothing but a common blackmailer.

Stalinists Become Partners

Two years ago, the first page of *Stampa Libera* announced that the official organ of the Communist Party, *Unità Operaia*, would cease weekly publication and throw all its support to *Stampa Libera*, which would become the official organ of the People's Front. Two or three Stalinists were put into the editorial and circulation departments. Valenti had succeeded in establishing "organic unity" on the Italian field. The fact that this was in violation of the SP line, mattered not at all to him. What was important to this adventurer was the fact that with his paper in the red again, he hoped that the deal with the Stalinists would net him \$10,000 with which to pay debts and wages.

The *Stampa's* views became the Stalinists' views. It agitated loudly for the People's Front. Following Dimitroff, it promoted the theory that peace and reconciliation must be effected between the "honest fascists" and the "anti-fascists". Is that the SP policy? The *Stampa's* united front policy demands unity between the anti-fascists, the Italian consul, Generoso Pope and the Mother Superior of the Catholic Carmelites in the building of

Our Duty in Spain Is Aid To 4th Internationalists

The Spanish events once again underline the central lesson of our epoch. This lesson can be put in either positive or negative form, and is equally true in both: without a revolutionary party the proletariat cannot take power, the socialist revolution cannot succeed; with a revolutionary party, victory is assured. Now, in the decline of capitalism on a world scale, all of the material conditions making possible the success of the revolution are present. A dozen times since the War, in Germany, Hungary, China, Austria, Spain, history has placed the conquest of power within the grasp of the working class. But, tragically, there has not been present a leadership, a party, capable of living up to history's requirements.

Nowhere is this clearer than in Spain during the time since the outbreak of the Civil War. In the weeks immediately following the Fascist coup, and again in the Barcelona events, power was but a step away; and yet there was no force capable of taking that final and decisive step.

It is this fatal lack and this terrible need which gives the Bolshevik-Leninist (Fourth Internationalist) group of Spain so mighty an importance, an importance out of any proportion to its present numbers. The Bolshevik-Leninists in Spain emerged as a separate organization only in the early Spring of this year. Since then their activities have steadily continued and expanded. They were in the forefront on the workers' side of the Barcelona barricades. They alone, in those days, presented a program answering to the revolutionary needs of the workers' action. Though driven into illegality by the repressive measure of the People's Front government, they were prepared for the deepening of the reaction, and they functioned actively and persistently in spite of the terror of Negrin and the G. P. U. They are aggressively carrying out common activities with the left wing

anarchists of the Friends of Durruti, and with the left wings and groups of the POUM.

Above all, the Bolshevik-Leninists understand the fundamental requirements of the Spanish crisis, and express that understanding in a clear, comprehensive and unassailable program. As the key task, focussing all the rest, they pose the question of the new party, without which all the rest is vain. Unceasingly they call upon the left wings of the POUM and the socialists, upon the militants of the anarchists and the trade union federations, for a fusion of forces on the basis of the revolutionary program, the indispensable condition of victory.

Their task is our task. We must not forget for a moment that the defense and advance of the Spanish Revolution, the building of the new party in Spanish are inseparably linked to the American revolution, the building of the revolutionary party in this country. Our solidarity with the Spanish Bolshevik-Leninists is expressed first of all in our adherence to the same program, to the program of the Fourth International. But our solidarity must also include active propaganda in their behalf, and concrete and specific aid for them, in particular financial aid. Under the conditions of the illegality and persecution, the technical tasks of the Bolshevik-Leninists are incomparably difficult. Every dollar, every quarter of aid can be translated into revolutionary results.

Means have been and will be found to make certain that such aid reaches its proper destination. It is for us to give it, and to utilize to this end every public meeting and lecture on Spain, as well as special collections in the branches and locals. Funds, marked for the Spanish Bolshevik-Leninists, should be forwarded to James P. Cannon, at 116 University Place, New York. Let us demonstrate that internationalism is for us something more than a verbal slogan.

an Italian hospital (article of June 7, 1937). Is that the SP policy? It doesn't matter. The editor's column (June 30, 1937) justifies the mass executions conducted against revolutionists by the reactionary bureaucracy of the Soviet Union. Is that the SP policy? No, it is the CP's and that's what matters to Valenti, the financial wizard of the right wing. Valenti speaks in Newark, as a leader of the SP, and hails the suppression of the POUM in Spain, only deploring the failure to suppress them long ago.

Takes Up La Guardia

Now Valenti is having some difficulty with the Stalinists. The latter, having used the *Stampa* for all it was worth, are now contemplating the publication of their own paper. Valenti immediately turns to his old love and becomes an ardent *La Guardia* supporter. The closed membership meeting of the SP at which the question of the ALP and *La Guardia* was discussed, is reported in full (and falsely!) by Valenti in *Stampa Libera* (July 30), with these headlines: "Towards a Sincere Cooperation Between the SP of New York and the ALP in the coming Municipal Election. The Socialists Favor the Re-election of *La Guardia*. Outline a Mutual Support for the Candidates to the Municipal Council." He reports especially the speech he delivered "in the name of the Italian socialists" in favor of *La Guardia*.

Why does he take internal party matters before the public—and present them falsely and factionally—before a decision has been reached? Because his bosses, the real owners of *Stampa Libera*, Sala and Bellanca, are close friends and sponsors of *La Guardia* and the ALP. The pipers call the tune and Valenti does his jig.

Here you have a brief sketch of the recent career of this unprincipled demagogue. It is no accident that he should be one of

the main prosecutors of the revolutionary left wing. It is no accident that the opportunists and bureaucrats of the right wing should have this personage, whose name is odium among the advanced Italian workers, as a prominent spokesman. The Valentis characterize the leadership and the politics of *La Guardia*-socialism!

Our Astoria comrades will tender a grand social effort for the benefit of the *Socialist Appeal*. Dancing, refreshments and kibitzing will be part of the evening at Frances Wallachs' home, 5023—61st Street, Woodside, L. I. Present yourself on Saturday, Oct. 16th, with the price of 15 cents. The Flushing Line from either Times Square or Grand Central to Woodside Station will bring you there

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