THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN

by

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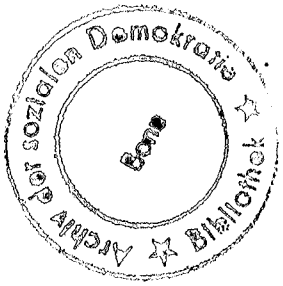

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MADRID DIGS IN

THE CABALLERO CABINET was a war Cabinet, but not the Government of the Revolution. The symbolic presence of Giral was a guarantee to the Spanish middle-classes and to international opinion. Both Caballero and Prieto agreed with Del Vayo and Araquistain that the war must be won as much in London, Paris and Geneva as in the Tagus Valley, Asturias and Aragon. Insufficiently informed of the true state of affairs in England when he attended the International Trade-Unions Federation meeting in London the previous spring, Caballero appears to have believed that the British working-class was not only willing, but also able, to force the National Government to maintain ordinary relations with the Spanish Government. Although one of Caballero's main activities at that time had been to expose the way in which the reformist wing of the Spanish Socialist Party had faked the elections for the Madrid Executive, he had failed to understand the power of similar figures in England to carry out precisely the same tactic.

Alvarez del Vayo made the same mistake about the Foreign Offices. It was a very Spanish mistake. Less cynical than Prieto and perhaps less aware of the pulling power of the world's "Two Hundred Families", he really believed that it was sufficient to be ostentatiously in the right to obtain justice at least from the big democracies. Even the Hoare-Laval Pact, which had so deeply shocked Spanish opinion, had not convinced him that justice and legality were no longer factors in practical politics. From the collection of Spanish Notes in the archives of

the League of Nations it will be possible for the future historian to compose a bitter and ugly "Don Quixote".

When the first "gentlemen's agreement" was signed, a French journalist commented: "Splendid—but who is the gentleman?" The generous illusions of the Wilson-Stresemann-Briand period had vanished from international diplomacy long before the equally generous illusion of the Spanish Republic had been broken by the Casas Viejas massacre.

The Anarchists, following their instincts, had grasped this new situation. On the evening of September 3, before Caballero had formed his Cabinet, the U.G.T., of which Caballero was General Secretary, proposed to the C.N.T. participation in the Government. A hasty meeting of the National Committee replied that the gravity of the situation was not yet sufficient for the C.N.T. to abandon its insurrectionary line. Two weeks later, the C.N.T. began a campaign for a Council of National Defence to take the place of a "Government which has not the courage to interpret the realities of the Spanish Revolution". The National Defence Council should be similar to the Generalidad Council in Catalonia, formed by the C.N.T., the U.G.T. and the fighting Republicans. The political parties as such should not be represented, but Caballero should remain. "Spain should not be called the Republic of Workers of All Classes, but the Republic of Honest Revolutionary Workers," said *Solidaridad Obrera.*

Negotiations went on throughout September, and this political tangle held up the general mobilisation and militarisation of the militias planned by Caballero from the start. It was curious that a federalist organisation like the C.N.T. should have failed to see the vast difference between conditions in Madrid and those in Catalonia, especially as the Catalan Regional Committee was taking many initiatives not dictated but afterwards approved by the National Committee.

There was a general impression that Catalonia was far more revolutionary than Madrid. This was based upon

superficial observation. In Barcelona, almost every building of importance carried a revolutionary flag or a huge banner proclaiming that the business had been collectivised, expropriated or occupied. Certainly, the capitalist had been more or less eliminated; but this did not by any means imply that capitalism had been abolished or that any other cohesive system constructed. The Catalan revolution was still in its "instinctive" stage, and, despite the fusion of the Antifascist Militias Committee with the Generalidad, it had not yet assumed any permanent political mould.

In Madrid, the process was far less obvious. Curiously Spanish was the way in which flags and banners diminished from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. Barcelona was a riot of bunting; in Madrid, flags and posters were noticeably less; in Asturias at that time there were a few flags and no posters; in Bilbao no flags or posters at all.

In Madrid the revolutionary process was slower, deeper and better directed, in accordance with the characteristics of Madrid Socialism and Castilian psychology. Before the November Siege enforced a system resembling War Communism, the traditional Madrid bureaucracy muffled the revolutionary process. Just as in Barcelona they made new trams instead of tanks, so in Madrid they built new apartment-houses instead of fortifications. A building boom is a curious phenomenon common to all social upheavals; and it must be remembered that in Madrid the C.N.T. had succeeded in organising at least 60 per cent of the building trade; in fact, of its roughly 75,000 members in Madrid, some 40,000 were builders.

The "traditional frivolity of the *Madrileños*" was still a daily topic in the Barcelona papers; and it is quite possible that this campaign was an important factor in the defeat of the rebel assault on the city. The Barcelona press arrived daily at Perpignan, where it was eagerly read by Franco's agents. It was translated into Italian and German and sent to the Foreign Offices. According to rebel admissions, Franco believed that the people of Madrid could

not possibly put up any resistance or even support heavy bombardment. It may be that the Barcelona press campaigns were one of the most valuable services Catalonia gave to Spain.

The accusation appeared justified in September and October. A portion of the civil population was still secretly favourable to Franco, or at least hostile to Caballero. Madrid had been a bureaucrats' paradise and had a considerable population of absentee landlords, businessmen, and rentiers. From these Mola could draw his "Fifth Column", and García Atadell's Dawn Patrol had plenty of work. It caught Salazar Alonso, who was shot, after a remarkably fair and good-humoured trial, on September 22. Curiously enough, the chief evidence implicating him in the rebellion was not so much the reception at Molinero's on July 17 as papers found sewn into the boot-soles of Colonel Lopez Varela when he was shot in Barcelona.

A widespread espionage organisation was discovered, with centres in Madrid and Valencia. There was another plot to assault the Madrid radio-station and the Ministry of the Interior as soon as the enemy troops had surrounded the city. Black-lists of Left-wing leaders were found. There had been isolated attempts already. A C.N.T. leader was murdered on September 9, and a few days later the child of a socialist officer was kidnapped. So complex was the situation that no one could tell whether these plots and murders were gangster, inner-political, provocatory or police jobs. García Atadell, like Rebertés in Barcelona, appeared to have a remarkably mixed idea of what constituted the "Fifth Column", and his own relation to this spy organisation—if definite organisation it was—is still completely uncertain.

In Valencia, too, the situation was peculiar. The orange capital had not experienced more of the Civil War than the drain on its produce for feeding the Army. The insurrection had never come to a head, and it was only afterwards, and outside the city, that the Civil Guard had

revolted. Disputes in the orange-fields had been frequent ever since the previous harvest, and were now translated into terms of union organisation. The day-labourers were organised by the C.N.T., who wished to set against the small producers' co-operative marketing system a form of collectivisation. The refusal to co-operate in the Majorcan expedition was one result of this tension; and it was an actual relief when, late in October, a serious shooting affray between Anarchists and Communists brought matters to a head and provided a concrete basis for unity.

There were strange movements in Portugal and Morocco. Behind the rebel lines there was a perpetual guerrilla, waged by badly-armed peasants and fragments of defeated columns. At the end of September, Prieto made a hurried and very secret visit to Tangiers.

The Cabinet made itself felt. The war communiqués began to approach accuracy and common sense. In place of the usual republican verbosity the radios began to speak curtly, seriously and soberly. A militiaman became a militiaman, no longer a "heroic warrior". This new, almost un-Spanish, sobriety became noticeable too in the conduct of affairs.

One disadvantage of this new policy was that no one had any idea about how the war was going, with the result that Madrid could pass without transition from wild optimism to the blackest panic. The fall of Badajoz had created no particular sensation in Madrid. Its full implications were not then understood, and the defeat had been compensated almost immediately by the victory at Medellin on August 17. But the effect of this victory had been over-estimated, and the rebel advance continued. By the middle of September, Madrid began to become alarmed.

The tragi-comedy of the Alcazar was studied in Chapter VI. It is only necessary here to place it in its perspective from Madrid.

The final bombardment, after Moscardó's refusal to treat with the Diplomatic Corps, began on September 14.

On September 18, the huge mine went up, and nothing more happened. The battle went on with varying intensity, until the rebel troops marched in on September 27.

Toledo had become the centre of the whole world's attention. Madrid eagerly read the accounts of dramatic interviews between the besieged and the besiegers, was assured every morning that the Alcazar could not hold out one day longer. Meanwhile, Yagüe's four columns were moving up the Tagus Valley, the loyalist counter-offensive did not begin, and Madrid became conscious of impending disaster.

El Socialista began the campaign in mid-September with a much-commented leading article, "Victory or Death!" The whole Madrid press took up the theme. Discipline was essential, and it must be strengthened. Desertion from the firing-line was not uncommon; for the opposing odds, especially the straight-shooting Moors, were too formidable for untrained troops. Mile after mile was lost, and the threat to Madrid became greater daily. "The moment has come for the heroism and self-sacrifice of the militias to be put to the test."

The press demanded the revival of the enthusiasm of the early days. "Rearguard heroes" were not wanted. Fighters were wanted, and any militia man who retreated should be expelled. The old rhetoric, not devoid of content, reappeared: "Those that fall, not those that live, will bring us victory!" "We need 5,000 desperate men," said *El Socialista*. "Five thousand determined men are worth more than 25,000 deserters."

"Madrid must and shall be the Grave of Fascism," declared the militia High Command. All Madrid took up the cry.

Trenches were dug on the Toledo front at last. "You cannot run away from trenches," said one officer, not cynically. Far more important was the great mobilisation of September 22 and 23.

For no apparent reason, Madrid had been plunged in the blackest pessimism, amounting almost to panic,

on the night of September 19. It was Sunday evening and there were no newspapers. Sunday evenings throughout the war were always emotionally critical, for the *paseo*, the evening stroll of the whole population, was a great breeder of rumours, not entirely unfomented by *agents-provocateurs*.

News from the front was rare, and, in those days, no news was bad news. Actually, the official communiqués' reserve was equal, whether there had been victory or defeat. There were the usual Sunday-evening fears of inner-political struggles. The C.N.T. was urging a governmental reorganisation in which it would hold very strong positions. The slogan, "Win the war first!" was perhaps partly a defensive manœuvre against these demands. But the situation at the front was in truth critical.

Early in the morning of Wednesday, September 22, new reserves arrived from the provinces. Durruti's Catalan columns had come on the 9th, greeted rather sourly by the *Madrileños*, who knew nothing of their worth and temperamentally disliked Catalans and Anarchists. The new troops, with the Madrid reserves, were flung straight into the Tagus Valley. Hour after hour they went out, amid frantic cheers.

This had been made possible by the arrival of arms from Mexico. Ironically enough, they were of German manufacture, excellent rifles, lighter than the Spanish Mauser-type, carrying two magazines of five cartridges.

On the Thursday morning, Madrid resembled an armed camp. That day brought the first republican victory, at Alberche. The reservoir had been opened and the cataract had cut the main rebel concentration from the other sectors. Rumour spoke of thousands of dead. This was untrue, but the tactical success was enormous. The strongest part of the rebel army had been immobilised while a successful counter-attack had been made against the other sectors.

Although the victory at Alberche could not prevent the fall of Toledo, it did hold up the attack on Madrid until

the city had time to build its defences. The rebel columns needed time to rally and reorganise. Had they been able to concentrate sufficient effectives immediately after the fall of Toledo, they might well have marched straight into Madrid.

The official communiqué did not mention this important victory; but the news spread round all Madrid. *Politica* gave a broad hint to those who knew: "The irresistible onslaught of our troops is acting like a great flood to drown the enemy's attack."

The official reticence was justified, for the rumours, magnifying the victory, aroused such optimism that the press had to damp it down at once; for, despite simultaneous successes on the Asturian and Basque fronts, result too of the arrival of new arms shipments, the war was far from won.

It is interesting to note that in the Battle of Alberche, the Republicans had met Franco's revival of Ludendorff's massive-penetration plan used in France in 1918 with Ludendorff's plan used at Tannenberg in 1915, when he drove his opponents into the marshes.

The Alberche reservoir had for the first time been of use to the Spanish people. It had been started some time before the Primo de Rivera military dictatorship by a group of private capitalists whose funds proved insufficient to finish it. The works gradually rotted and the shares became valueless. As usual, Señor Ruiz Senén, the Jesuits' agent, turned up. On the day before Primo granted the bankrupt company State aid to the total of 90 million gold pesetas, Senén picked up the shares for practically nothing. The work was finished; but as a matter of fact it never did more than provide light and power for a few small villages in the provinces of Madrid and Toledo, and really only became useful when it drowned out the Jesuits' Moorish allies.

The optimism caused by the victory at Alberche appeared well-founded. It was overlooked that it was water, not men, which had gained that battle. But, in the third week

of September, the news from all fronts was at last favourable. Moreover, arms deliveries were satisfactory, and it appeared that that great problem had been settled.

The moral factor was exaggerated; and it was pointed out that on all fronts Franco was using little but Moorish and Foreign Legionary material. These had been in the line for over six weeks, and there appeared to be no reserves.

The rebel air force had at last been mastered by the loyalists. Despite the addition of forty new German and Italian planes, the human factor was decisive. The loyalist pilots were men who had come to Spain to fight for a home, to gain their revenge against Fascism. The rebel pilots were mercenaries. It was thought that relative equality of armament and the superior morale and reserves on the Governmental side would be decisive. Even well-informed foreign correspondents cabled that there could now be little doubt that the Spanish Government had won the war, and that the decisive victory was only a matter of time.

This was on September 23. On September 26, the rebels reached the outskirts of Toledo. Low-flying planes machine-gunned the militias as the infantry entered the town from an unexpected quarter. This was the first time in history that this tactic had been used, and it was a complete success. The militias, abandoned by their officers and entirely unprepared for the assault, ran for miles, throwing into confusion the second-line defences at Olia and Barga on the Madrid road. The defeat was as complete as it was sudden.

The Government had not wished to raise hopes by the news of Alberche. Equally, it was silent about the catastrophe at Toledo. A speech by Pasionaria might have changed the whole situation; but the radios were silent. Nothing was said, and Madrid lay despairing and helpless. If Alberche had not scattered the main rebel force, Madrid could have been taken by the beginning of October.

Luckily for the Republic, Yagüe stopped to consolidate his victory. There was a whole month's breathing-space.

The defence became organised, whole battalions of voluntary workers going every evening to dig trenches. The city was so efficiently barricaded that it would literally have to become Fascism's Grave before it could be taken, for every house was a fortress. Gradually, the Defence Committee co-ordinated the system, centralised the new initiatives which had arisen in the House and District Committees. The evacuation began, for Madrid was no place for children, and it could not feed them. Valencia and Barcelona received them. Madrid evolved, by force of circumstances, towards War Communism. The direction was taken over by those most competent and most energetic: in general, the Unified Socialist and Communist Youth, who had sent, far back in July, the first columns into the Sierra.

The Mexican arms had enabled Madrid to throw the reserves against the Tagus front and to hold the rebel advance for a month. Mexico had always stated quite openly that it saw no reason whatsoever not to supply a legitimate and friendly Government, and the Spanish Republic upheld its right and its intention of buying arms from anybody who would sell.

Antifascist volunteers were flocking in from all over the world, come to this war to fight for liberty as they had come to so many other civil wars in the past. Many of them were exiles from fascist countries and eagerly took the chance of revenge. Fascism had, by its own action and later, declaration, become an international force, and by fighting Fascism in Spain these volunteers were fighting it in their own countries also.

These few thousand men had travelled to Spain as best they could, some sent by their political organisations, some come on a sudden impulse, men with problems to solve, clear-headed antifascist fighters, romantics, a certain number of the idle and the desperate, men of every class, party, nationality and religion. For some Antifascism had hitherto been a vague feeling of dislike for castor-oil politics; for others it had been a burning desire to avenge

their comrades tortured in concentration camps or "shot while attempting escape". For most, it was a clear-cut ideal.

At Albacete there were Political Commissioners of the calibre of Fox, Nicoletti and Beimler. In a few weeks, this heterogeneous mass became the finest fighting force in Spain. The Political Commissioners gave the brigades a discipline and explained the meaning of the struggle. Any man who wished to return home could do so. There was no compulsion to go to the Madrid front; but once a man had taken the engagement to go, he went. Very few did not go.

The tragedy of it was that many of the men who had come as individuals belonged to those very parties whose acquiescence was the strongest guarantee of success to those who wished to sabotage all discussion of the raising of the embargo upon trade with the Spanish Republic. It was possible to find a man who had been an important member of a local Labour Party which had most strongly supported the refusal of aid to Spain, risking his life to reverse that policy.

The experience of individual members of such parties would be of historical importance when they returned to their own country—if they did.

The International Brigades were to act as shock-troops and their casualties were extraordinarily high. But they saved more than Madrid: they saved the honour of the international antifascist movement. As Dimitrov said, they were the true antifascist united fighting front.

V

THE WAR GOES ON

COLONEL YAGÜE'S COLUMN drove on up the Tagus Valley. The Asturians were pressing Oviedo, but relieving columns from Galicia were coming up in their rear. The Catalans were not progressing in Aragon. The rebels had the initiative.

Their second offensive was reaching its culmination: the assault on Madrid. Strategically, the capital was a liability to the Government, for supplies were a perpetual problem and a drain even upon the rich Valencia *huerta*. But the war was becoming increasingly a matter of international politics.

In Paris, they were discussing the report from underground sources in Rome that Catalonia was to be attacked on November 6. The plan, it was said, was for a landing-party to cut communications with France near Port-Bou while a string of German submarines would prevent any interference by the Governmental fleet. A fierce attack in Aragon would open the way for raiding parties to penetrate into the Catalan countryside.

The simple but rather impractical plan had in it a certain element of truth. The big clash was at hand. All the Governmental papers announced, as they had so often done before, that the coming week would be decisive.

In Madrid, Caballero called his men out to the big attack. "People of Madrid," he cried, "The decisive hour has come. . . . The Government, closely linked with the fighters at the front, appeals to them not to yield an inch of our soil, to fling themselves into the attack with

the violence which can assure victory. When the Government demands this, it also assures the fighting forces that it has now at its disposal all the means necessary for gaining the victory. . . . On to the attack for the final liberation of Madrid, supreme fortress of the world struggle against Fascism!"

Huge reserves of the most modern material had been accumulating at Albacete. The militias from inside the capital swept forward, clearing the road and line to Valencia. The Albacete columns moved northwards to take Yagüe in the rear. Prieto's air force, now equipped with planes at least as good as the rebels' Junkers, Fiats and Capronis, swung out to bomb the enemy bases and aerodromes.

The line swept on, so fast that for five hours the cars following it had no chance of stopping for one moment. The famous Fifth Regiment drove the rebels back and back. Pasionaria, Antonio Mije and other Communist leaders went into action with their men. "Now that we have tanks and planes," Caballero's voice came over the radio in the dawn, "Forward, comrades!"

For three days, the advance held, slowing after the first savage thrust, but moving steadily towards its objectives. Then it began to falter, hesitate. Positions had to be fortified, trenches dug. Offensive positions became defensive.

The word had been given too soon. Again and again it had been made clear that the citizen militia was dependent upon political conditions. A People's Army must necessarily be a political army; but as an army it must have, as all parties demanded, unity of command. However loyally the fractions worked in the Antifascist Front, military success was impossible until the militias had the full consciousness of unity behind them. The enemy, using non-political Moors, Legionaries and regular soldiers, organised by regular discipline, could make up for what they lacked in individual enthusiasm by organic cohesion. For weeks past, the C.N.T. had been demanding

the formation of a National Defence Council, somewhat on the lines of the Generalidad Council in Catalonia. Negotiations had been going on since early September; but the position was a deadlock. The Anarchists would not join a "Government", especially one in which bourgeois parties participated; but the legitimate Caballero Government could not turn itself into a "Council" which would appear to the world as a Committee of Public Safety, thus giving Germany and Italy an opportunity to recognise Burgos. Already, the Italian press spoke of the "vile Soviet Republic of Catalonia".

Amplifications of the plan for rebel attack upon Catalonia were known in Madrid and Barcelona. After Grandi had declared his refusal even to speak with any Power which did not consider itself bound any longer by the Non-intervention Pact, there seemed little doubt that recognition was merely a matter of choosing the appropriate moment. With the frontier cut at Irun and Port-Bou and the probable blockade of Barcelona, foreign aid to the Government would be impossible. The military peril, when the advance wavered and halted, suddenly redoubled. The need for unity was pressing.

The C.N.T.'s pact with the U.G.T. in Catalonia had expressly demanded "the creation of a basis of political, economic and military collaboration with the Government of Spain as soon as it is composed of all the organisations represented in the Generalidad Council". "All the organisations" could refer only to the inclusion of the C.N.T. and the FAI, or, since every member of the FAI was, by hypothesis, a member of the C.N.T. as well, of the C.N.T. alone. By this, the anti-political Anarchists could salve their more doctrinaire followers' consciences and simultaneously not alarm foreign and domestic bourgeois opinion. It was probably Juan Peiró, former leader of the "Thirty" schism, or Mariano Vasquez, the young and intelligent Secretary of the Catalan Regional Federation, who suggested this astonishing solution—astonishing in that the FAI still prided themselves on

their fundamental intransigence.' But the new current in the C.N.T. had united both the older tacticians and the rising young men in the conviction that any concessions could be justified by the paramount necessity of winning the war. A few days later, Jacinto Torhyo, the young and indefatigable director of the C.N.T. propaganda, replaced Liberto Callejas in the editorship of *Solidaridad Obrera*, after Companys himself had complained of the papers' growing irresponsibility.

POUM, which had "refused" to participate in the Government simply because it had not been asked to do so, complained bitterly that the "Revolution" was being stultified by these concessions. It still held the curious idea that the issue was the seizure of power by the workers, the "Revolution". To talk of making the "Revolution" in the midst of the capitalist offensive, when its soldiers were at the very gates of Madrid, was little short of counter-revolutionary. "Some people may say that our attitude is due to the fact that we are not represented in the Government," said *La Batalla*. "But we attach no importance to what such people may say." Unfortunately, by far the majority of those who were interested in POUM's opinion at all did say precisely that, especially when this attitude was coupled with a strong protest against the new militarisation of the Catalan troops, decreed by the Generalidad Council on the day of the great Madrid offensive.

The militarisation was somewhat hurried, in that it had not yet worked out a new code of military law, submitting the citizen militias to the old discipline. It was to apply to all citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five; those older or younger were allowed to leave the militias if they did not wish to accept this discipline.

The decree brought out the conflict between the civil and military predominance, said the POUM, whose small columns would lose their freedom of action, since the ultimate wielder of the code could be none but their political opponents. In point of fact, the question of a

conflict between the civil and military control was a mere schematisation, not in the slightest in accordance with the facts. The Catalan General Staff was either non-political or omni-political; its members were subject to the approval of the Generalidad, the new Commissioner for War, Alvarez del Vayo, and of Caballero himself. There could not be unity of command if POUM or any other organisation refused to obey military orders in the name of political supremacy.

Some weeks later, Angel Galarza, Minister of the Interior, said that the Civil War and the Revolution were two quite different things. "This," said *La Batalla*, "is essentially a reactionary formula. By separating the war from the revolution, he is going against not only the revolution but against the war itself." "It is obvious," replied *Solidaridad Obrera*, "that no one but *La Batalla* knows the true way. On which we congratulate it cordially and wish it a Happy New Year."

It was shown that the reactionary position was that of the POUM. All the disasters of the Civil War were due to the one factor which had allowed the war to break out: lack of unity. POUM, the Party for Marxist Unification, refused to adapt itself to reality. With only 8,000 men in the field, POUM remained nothing more than a useful example of how a movement may be sabotaged by those who cannot adapt themselves to reality.

Undoubtedly, as the C.N.T. repeatedly stated, the Caballero Government needed the injection of some invigorating force. How far it could absorb and use that force would be the measure of its strength. The problem was not so much that of the unity of the C.N.T. and the Popular Front in Madrid, although, by their own showing, the Anarchists there had 4,000 well-armed men in reserve; it was rather the problem of the unified command over the whole country. Some formula must be found which would allow a combined offensive and an interchange of command. Above all, a common ground must be found between the two most important centres

of the antifascist movement: Madrid and Barcelona. For there remained little doubt that Franco was planning a combined offensive; and, his communications clear, he could transfer shock troops from one front to another with disconcerting rapidity.

These considerations induced the C.N.T. to take a step of immense historical importance. The C.N.T.–U.G.T.–FAI-PSUC Pact had united the two great sections of the Catalan working-class on a common minimum basis, not, it is true, devoid of speculation, but at least ratified by common accord among the rank-and-file. The C.N.T. had given the U.G.T. parity on the old Militias' Committee in return for a tacit agreement that Caballero would do the same in Madrid. The U.G.T. had attracted sufficient new adherents to justify parity in Catalonia; the C.N.T. in Madrid had not been so successful. The entry of the C.N.T. into the Madrid Government therefore was nothing more than a step towards the unity of Catalonia and Madrid, with little reference to mere syndical unification, although holding out promise of it.

The C.N.T. members entered the Government on November 3. There were three from Catalonia and one from Valencia: Juan Peiró, the warning voice from Mataró, García Oliver, secretary of the Catalan Defence Council, Federica Montseny, Spain's first woman minister, one of the big driving forces behind the Catalan Regional Federation, and Juan Lopez head of the Valencian Regional Federation. The C.N.T. took the Ministries of Industry, Health, Commerce and Justice, but this had no particular significance; the attributions extended further, although the Ministers of Industry and Commerce, Lopez and Peiró, were to give to their ministries a new direction, more closely allied to those of Terradellas and Fábregas in the Generalidad. The Government was now composed of seven Socialists, two Communists, four members of the C.N.T., three of the Republican Left, one Basque Nationalist and one member of the Catalan Esquerra.

The C.N.T. explained its position. It had long demanded a National Defence Council and every antifascist force had agreed in principle, but it had been impossible to bring it into being. "The situation created by the incomprehension of certain sections and by our firm conviction decided us not to postpone our entry into the Government, although we, as the largest antifascist force, might have maintained an intransigent position. We desired equal representation of the Marxist parties and the C.N.T., but we were willing to reduce the number of our representatives to four. . . . The main reason why we made this sacrifice is the difficult situation on certain fronts, especially in the Centre, where the enemy is at the gates of Madrid." The C.N.T. maintained its view that it was necessary to reconstruct national economy no less than win the war. In this reorganisation consisted the revolution.

As ever, the C.N.T., directed here by the FAI, was the expression of the popular instinct. There was a tremendous desire for unity; but there were two ways of achieving it: by fusion or by elimination. The rearguard must be freed from individual indiscipline and, even more, from objectively hostile attitudes. If the war were to be won, it could be fought only by those whose prime interest was the winning of the war. The C.N.T.'s "organisation of the rearguard" contained advantages and dangers. Advantages, in that it made possible the creation of an efficient war-industry; dangers, when it led to untimely economic experiments, as when, for example, the worker-controlled machine-shops turned out two magnificent new trams before they started making armoured cars.

Parallel with the militarisation of the militias, a measure suggested chiefly by the Communists, whose Fifth Regiment in Madrid was already a model of what a People's Army division should be, went in Catalonia the decree for "municipalisation" of the land and the "collectivisation" of big industry and commerce. The land was to belong to the Municipalities, formed by representatives of all

the antifascist organisations. It would be worked for the profit of the whole village or town. At the same time, small property would be respected.

"Municipalisation" was a form of "collectivisation", since the Municipality was a representation of the "collectivity". But there were also "collectivised" areas in the Russian sense; and the whole problem remained confused. The peasants had lost a certain amount of their early enthusiasm, chiefly because the villages had been overrun by what could be described only as roving bandits. Juan Peiró had had the courage to describe them thus in his paper, *La Libertat* of Mataró in articles reprinted gladly by the Barcelona press. Requisitions, pure armed robbery, open mockery of the peasants' religious feelings, murder of rich men simply because they were rich men, seemed to point the way to a premature "liquidation of the *kulaks*". This was not the intention of any party. Even POUM was eager in its protestations that the small farmer should not be harmed. But the fact remained that the peasants were discontented and were abandoning, gradually, quietly, without open hostility, the antifascist front. In some places, they refused to work the fields, alleging that they were allowing them to lie fallow for maize.

The "collectivisation" of all industry employing more than a hundred workers had been the consistent aim of Juan Fábregas, the Councillor for Economy. This curious figure, quoting obscure Brahmin philosophers, Plato, Herodotus and Ricardo Mella, had certainly thought deeply about the reconstruction of Catalan economy. He was in no sense wild. He was, indeed, intensely serious, preoccupied not only in carrying out his plans but in explaining them. The Economic Council was a model of good administration, cutting all superfluous expenditure, permitting no *enchufistas*—relations, friends and friends of friends—that legacy from the Esquerra days which was the curse of the whole Catalan administration.

"Collectivisation" will be examined more fully in Appendix II, for it is the most important new form evolved

during the Spanish Civil War. The decree of October 28 legalised an existing state of affairs and extended it. Several trades had already been collectivised with extreme violence, by the process of eliminating all enterprises engaged in that trade except one, and thus combining them around the survivor. Not unnaturally, this quite unauthorised procedure caused considerable discontent among the middle-class.

There was thus a danger that both the peasants and the shopkeepers might prefer even Fascism to what appeared the unbridled excesses of the antifascist movement. More than ever was the repression of such abuses essential if the single command were to be effective. There was no use whatever in Catalonia offering the Government a support based on a rearguard rotten with dissensions. It would merely give the enemy a second and weaker front inviting the attack already planned in Rome.

The plan was being worked out. Dencás, ever restless, ever sure of himself as the providential saviour, was in Paris. In Paris, too, was Juan Casanovas, President of the Catalan Parliament, popular with the Estat Catalá. And the attack on Catalonia, said the Paris papers, was planned for November 6.

Waiting in the Balearics was the Italian Count di Rossi who was neither di Rossi nor Count, but an adventurer called Bonacorsi. With him were several thousand Italians and Falangists, whose "purification" of the town of Palma sent nearly 2,000 Majorcans, mostly middle-class Republicans, to the cemetery in six weeks. Cruising in Majorcan waters was the rebel cruiser *Canarias*.

The Rome plan was known to the crew of the *Canarias*, who were chiefly Falangists. Once again, their peculiar lack of a sense of timing destroyed a careful combination. The *Canarias* sailed up the Catalan coast and dropped a few shells on the peaceful village of Rosas.

The reaction in all Catalonia was spontaneous, even too spontaneous. One hundred and fifty thousand men poured up the coast to prevent or repel a landing. All the

province of Gerona came in arms. The *Canarias* had not landed any men.

The effect of this false alarm was crucial. Not only did it show that Catalonia was prepared to resist any attack—for rumour had increased the *Canarias* to a whole fleet—but it brought to a head all the latent antagonisms. All the arms kept for political intrigues were visible in the night, and with consternation the Generalidad and the parties discovered how many rifles had not been sent to the front and why they had not been sent.

There were two dangers which might be brought into the open by a rebel landing: a rising of the "Fifth Column" or the outbreak of bloody disputes between the various organisations. In Catalonia irresponsible groups who had been unable to see the necessity of forgetting old vendettas always profited by any general disturbance. The aggressors had more than an even chance of escaping, and the murders could always be attributed to Fascists or *agents-provocateurs*. It was indeed extremely difficult even for those most interested in knowing the truth to discover the exact significance and authorship of such incidents.

The patrols were out; and in the far streets, in the villages and in the fields rifles cracked, not only at shadows. Next morning, Companys, the one authorised figure who exercised in Catalonia a unifying and moderating influence, complained bitterly of the waste of energies and the complication of public life by commissions, committees, delegates and so forth. "We have got to end the irresponsible initiatives of these groups which seem to think the Generalidad is simply one group more. I tell you that either the Generalidad directs the life of Catalonia or it cannot accept any responsibility for what may happen. The sole Government, or Council, or directing instrument is the Council of the Generalidad of Catalonia, and if it is not, it has no reality."

The FAI had caught Ramón Salas, the famous—or infamous—secretary of the Free Syndicates which had

murdered so many working-class militants in the days of Anido and Arlegui. *Solidaridad Obrera* laconically reported that he had been shot by "those who had most suffered from his atrocious activities." Next day, the Generalidad asserted itself with even more vehemence. "I will say nothing," Companys said bitterly to the reporters. "If I said anything, I should say too much. We are holding a Council this afternoon, but it will not issue many decrees. It would be best to do no more legislation and turn our whole attention to seeing that those already passed are carried out. There are too many words here, too many committees, commissions, rifles, theatrical posturings, which are certainly not those of our old militants and the real people which fought on July 19. We have come to the time when the victory must be won by a joint effort in which everyone must have his say and his responsibility. I have been silent, I have suffered, but I am determined that this irresponsibility, this confusion shall not go on."

The Council was of the highest importance. The leaders of all the antifascist organisations attended, as well as all the Councillors. They decided to "ratify their full confidence and support of the Generalidad Council whose measures they promised to assist by every means at their disposal; and to appeal to the people of Catalonia to carry out all the decrees issued by the Generalidad, the only way of winning the war and continuing the social transformation already begun."

The first result of this Council was the creation of a new body to study the death-sentences dictated by the People's Courts. It was to be composed of the Presidents of the People's Courts and two Public Prosecutors alternately. They would study the cases, report to the Councillor for Justice who would in turn refer to the Generalidad. The decree had actually been drawn up as early as October 24, so that it was no improvisation due to the immediate circumstances; but these circumstances dictated its immediate publication. "The notion of acts juridically

anti-social," said Nin, "must be in intimate connection with the politico-social life of the people." Six death sentences were commuted that night and the others suspended until the new body had been definitely constituted. This put an end to the abuse of which the Anarchists continually complained: the non-execution of death-sentences passed long ago.

On November 1, Estat Catalá had held a big meeting, at which Juan Casanovas, recently returned from Paris, was asked to speak. His words were brief and ambiguous. His conclusion: that the sole guarantee of a free Spain was a free Catalonia.

The precise meaning of this was not explained; but many, especially the FAI, saw in it the expression of a desire to revive the Estat Catalá which Dencás and Badia had built up on a class, anti-anarchist, basis.

Estat Catalá was the only really militant section of the middle-class Esquerra, although many workers belonged to it. Estat Catalá was in a very curious position, a visible demonstration of the conflicts within the middle class. Some sections had actually joined the PSUC, others were able to march in line with the FAI, so that the Maciá-Companys columns could parade down the Ramblas with one red-and-black banner to every three of the silver star and the four bars. Another section, led by Torres Picart, the party's secretary, were hostile to both the FAI and the PSUC, because it thought that the "specifically Catalan" aspect of the movement was being submerged, submerging with it the Estat Catalá itself. Party ambition coincided with offended nationalism and class contradiction.

Durruti, back on one of his rare visits from the front in the most ramshackle car he could find, broadcast a speech on the 5th; and all Barcelona was out under the loudspeakers on the Ramblas. Already he had sent a message of greeting to Stalin with the Spanish delegation to the celebrations of the nineteenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. No one had realised better than

he the necessity for unity. Some of the more doctrinaire Anarchists considered that he, their most publicised, and most deservingly publicised, figure, was going too far in concessions to what POUM called the "Stalinist bureaucrats".

Durruti's voice was that of the front; he was authorised to speak in the name of all those in Aragon. "We ask the people of Catalonia to cease their intrigues, their internal quarrels. We shall have to mobilise everyone; and don't suppose that it will always be the same people who are mobilised. We at the front want to know what sort of men we can count upon in our rear." The militias blush, he said, when they see the subscriptions and rhetoric in the Barcelona papers because they see just the same in the papers dropped on their lines by the enemy planes. "Don't worry. There is no lack of discipline, no chaos at the front. We are all responsible men. Sleep quiet. But we left Catalonia relying on your economic reconstruction. Get a sense of responsibility, get disciplined. Don't let us provoke a new civil war between ourselves by our incompetence after we have won this war. If everyone thinks his party is the most capable of imposing its policy, he is wrong; we must oppose the enemy's tyranny with a single force, a single organisation, a single discipline. If we want to smash the fascist danger, we must form a granite block."

"Sleep quiet!": it was all very well for Durruti to say this in Barcelona, where "a civil war amongst ourselves" might be provoked by "incompetence"; but it seemed that Largo Caballero's Government in Madrid was also sleeping quiet although faced with far more imminent danger. As for the General Staff, it was either incapable or treacherous. Jesus Hernandez, Minister of Education, stated publicly later that one member actually told Caballero that all the militias were good for was to solve the unemployment problem and only fought for their 10 pesetas a day. This unworthy cynicism was soon to be contradicted in the most emphatic manner, but there

is no doubt that such defeatism was widespread among the regular officers and was at least not contradicted by the Minister of War, the secretary of the U.G.T.

In the ten weeks since the fall of Toledo nothing whatever had been done to fortify Madrid. The Communist Party and the Fifth Regiment had been insistent on the necessity of building an "iron belt" ten miles from the city so that it would at least not come under artillery fire. Caballero replied that "Madrid was being defended in the Tagus Valley", and refused to order the builders off their jobs to build fortifications. The Communist cells organised thousands of Madrileños to dig trenches, but it was an isolated effort, without co-ordinated plan and the Government looked askance at this encroachment upon its prerogatives. It was not until October 16, only three weeks before the Government quitted Madrid, that *Claridad*, Caballero's organ, said: "This is no time for generalised slogans, but for very concrete ones. It is no good anyone saying 'we ought to dig trenches,' until a co-ordinated plan has been drawn up by technicians in accordance with the rules of modern warfare."

The offensive in the third week of October had failed to check or divert the rebel offensive up the Tagus Valley and on, in a bold detour, to Seseña, north of Aranjuez, and into the very suburbs of Madrid. The great wedge, neglecting the Madrid-Valencia road where the attack had been expected, battered Madrid with its broad end, exposing its flanks and its base at Toledo to the planned counter-attack by the new International Brigade from Albacete. The tactic was more dangerous and luckier in its effects than Colonel Yagüe could have known, for the very name of Albacete had been silenced and hardly anyone knew of the great new base formed by Martinez Barrio, the Delegate to the Valencia Defence Committee, who had at last found an opportunity for exercising his undoubted talents.

The thrust, however, had been quicker and the Madrid

defence works more neglected than had been anticipated; and the projected flank counter-attack had to be transformed into a desperate and hasty defence of the Casa del Campo and the banks of the River Manzanares, that "rivulet with a river's repute", as Cervantes called it.

On November 7, the twentieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, Madrid fought for its existence while Barcelona, ignorant of Madrid's danger, gave the biggest demonstration of antifascist solidarity yet seen. The International Columns paraded hurriedly through Madrid, greeted as saviours; but the rebel troops were in the outer suburbs and for seventy-two hours it seemed that all was lost.

It is still difficult to reconstruct the events of those three days, when, against all hope and all the probabilities of modern warfare, the rebels were held. It was a nightmare of a hastily-improvised defence, the whole population going out to make of Madrid "the grave of Fascism".

The Government, realising its impotence if shut up in a besieged city and fearing even the possibility of capture, moved to Valencia. At Tarancon, a committee using the name of the FAI stopped the Ministers, except Caballero, whom they did not recognise, and sent them back. Later, however, the Cabinet reached Valencia and the committee was liquidated.

There was no question of cowardice in this withdrawal. There were many precedents, the most obvious being the French Government's retreat to Bordeaux when the German armies threatened Paris during the Great War. It was essential to carry on the business of government and to organise the counter-offensive unhampered by local military inconveniences.

What was bad was the manner of Caballero's going. The parties and unions heard only indirectly of the proposal to evacuate, and at once went to protest against this slinking away. They realised the necessity for withdrawal

but demanded that the direction should be handed over officially and publicly to a Defence Junta and that a public proclamation of the reasons for the evacuation should be made to maintain the morale of the militias and civilian population. The Cabinet practically denied their intention and left only a brief note charging General Miaja with the defence of the capital. Alvarez del Vayo, General Commissar for War and delegate to Geneva, was an honourable exception.

Del Vayo now had an opportunity for diplomatic counter-attack on a big scale.

The rebels had not doubted that they could easily enter Madrid, and big celebrations of the victory were held in most of the large cities in their power on November 7. Germany and Italy had shared this impression—and London and Paris had not been unimpressed by the possibility—and hastened to exploit an accomplished fact by recognising officially the Burgos Junta in simultaneous notes with identical wording dictated in Berlin. But Madrid did not fall, and Germany and Italy were in an awkward and possibly humiliating position. They had now committed themselves.

Such had been the confusion in Madrid that this opportunity of exploiting an absurd situation and at least ensuring that the British Government's disapproval should harden and become transformed into active support of the Republic was lost. Protests were of course made, but nothing concrete was achieved. The Madrid Defence Junta was left to fight its own battle.

There was no question of the Defence Junta being a spontaneous Committee of Public Safety. Caballero and Alvarez del Vayo reiterated that the Junta had been formed with their entire approbation, while the Junta repeatedly assured Valencia that it considered itself merely the body delegated by the Government for the specific purpose of defending Madrid. The Supreme Court recognised the Junta, and messages of adhesion came in from all over the country. Companys broadcast

the entire solidarity of Catalonia with Madrid as well as Valencia.

The Junta, an even more remarkable body than the Generalidad Council, still preserved the representation of the Antifascist Front; it was the National Defence Council which the C.N.T. had so long demanded. Its President was General Miaja, commander of the First Division, replacing General Pozas, until then commander of the Centre front. Miaja was called specifically the "Governmental Delegate", the Secretary was a Socialist. The eight councils were directed by two members from the parties and organisations. War by the Communists; Police by the Unified Communist and Socialist Youth; Production by the C.N.T.; Supplies by the U.G.T.; Communications by the Republican Left; Finance by the Republican Union; Information by the Anarchist Libertarian Youth; Evacuation by Angel Pestaña's Syndicalist Party.

Miaja at once issued a proclamation of the Junta's policy: "There is only one order for all parties in the Junta and all our fighters: to resist without yielding an inch more ground. I am sure that all will carry this out. I also expect from the civil population effective, active and unselfish co-operation. All Madrid should feel the unanimous and firm desire to win at all costs, and I warn all those who show lukewarmness in the fulfilment of their duty or those who with bastard aims try to cause internal confusion to the enemy's profit or spread panic among the civil population by crimes and looting, that I will apply to them the harshest penalties. With the loyal co-operation of all Madrid, our victory is assured."

POUM's Executive Committee seemed hardly to have understood Miaja. "Almost all workers are represented in the Junta," it said. "When the FAI and the POUM also participate, it is quite certain that the workers' revolutionary enthusiasm will grow to such proportions that no one will be strong enough to resist it. No one is authorised to say that divergences exist among the workers.

Just because we are united we must be represented in the Junta. Whoever opposes that opposes the victory over Fascism and the victorious course of the Revolution."

The FAI was not represented as such in exactly the same way as it was not represented in the Cabinet: it simply called itself the C.N.T. POUM was not represented because it represented nothing whatever in Madrid except a small body of persons whose chief activity appeared to be making unpleasant remarks about the Soviet Ambassador, hardly a helpful attitude. POUM's previous behaviour was anything but a guarantee of the necessary unanimity within the Junta, especially when the key-Councils, War and Police, were held by what POUM called "Stalinist bureaucrats" and "social-reformists". The Unified Youth actually had to dislodge the POUM Youth Movement, the Iberian Communist Youth, from its headquarters and suppress the POUM paper. POUM of course cried to the Barcelona heavens, but it was no time for even objective coincidence with the "Fifth Column", whose liquidation was the Junta's immediate task. No doubt innocent persons perished, as they did in every similar situation; but later discoveries of arms in the German Embassy, in houses under the protection of the Finnish Legation, the shooting of Durruti, the hand grenades thrown from windows into food-queues during air-raids fully excused undue severities.

The rebel armies drove on and on, right into the suburbs of Madrid. But the capital reacted against all expectation. Hitherto, the authorities and military circles in Valencia and Madrid had put up a brave show of believing that Madrid would not fall, but their lips quivered as they said it. Now, all Madrid went out to fortify the town. Every house became a fortress. The gay city, despised of Catalans, became sober, stubborn, of the Saragossa tradition. "Imperial and crowned, very noble, most loyal, most heroic and very excellent" is the style of Madrid's ancient arms.

Madrid was bombed. It was bombed as no other town had ever been bombed, for the material was more modern and heavier than anything used against a civil population during the Great War. Children, women waiting in food-queues, places of no military importance, were smashed and mangled. Three hundred and forty-three persons perished in a single house. And Madrid held on grimly.

While Madrid held, while the International Brigades intended for the flank counter-attack had to be hurled into the Casa del Campo against Franco's Moors, while German and Italian planes mercilessly bombed, the slow transformation towards unity went on amid all the appearances of diversity.

In Aragon, Joaquin Ascaso, the cousin of that Francisco Ascaso who had died on July 19, formed an autonomous Junta, militarily subordinate to the Generalidad Defence Council of Catalonia, but directed by vaguely libertarian communist principles; in fact, by a necessary form of war communism. Reyes, the commander of the Aragon Air Forces, dictated Draconian measures against rumour-spreaders and saboteurs. Aragon was free, but it assured both Catalonia and Valencia of its full support. The Federal Republic, the logical form of Spanish organisation, was being imposed by the sheer necessities of the Civil War.

Supplemented by the most modern arms, the governmental air-forces raided enemy aerodromes as far afield as Seville and Palma. Prieto began the reconstruction of the Navy, somewhat chaotically commanded by amateurs. Valencia began to look like a capital, crowded with refugees, darkened after ten at night, tense, but busy. The Moors failed to make their diversion in Aragon and were hurriedly brought back to the Madrid front. The *Canarias* raided and roved, striking Palamos, a harmless summer resort on the "Wild Coast" north of Barcelona. The rebel relieving columns from Galicia were caught and massacred by the formidable Asturian *dinamiteros*. Yagüe, making no progress against Madrid, was relieved

of his command. The Government sent their better men to direct the front. General Llano de la Encomienda to the Basques and Gomez Garcia, a police-commissioner, to relieve Colonel Villalba, whose tardiness in taking Huesca was by some attributed to the fact that his wife and children were held hostage there. Durruti's column swung from Bujalaroz in Aragon to the Casa del Campo in Madrid.

The international situation was growing tenser; so tense, indeed, that Spain was remembered only as a small potential issue. In the U.S.S.R. another plot had been discovered. A German engineer was involved. Hitler tore up the last shreds of the Treaty of Versailles by denouncing the Navigation Clauses, thereby seriously threatening the U.S.S.R.'s ally, Czechoslovakia. A new wave of internal repression, always the forerunner of some startling move in foreign policy, was begun. The Herrenklub and the General Staff began a new drive against Goebbels and the petty bourgeois wing of the National-Socialist Party. In Rome, Mussolini spoke ambiguously to the hastily-summoned Fascist Grand Council. In Milan, recruiting offices were opened for "volunteers" for Spain, and those who had enlisted for Abyssinia but had not been sent were drafted into training camps before they were sent to Majorca or Cadiz. The German-Japanese "Anti-Communist" Pact was signed, and Japan, preparing new aggression in China, was able to employ some of Krupp's most recent patents.

A parachute floated over Madrid, a wooden box attached to it. Inside was the horribly quartered body of young José Antonio Galarza, a Government flier forced to land in the enemy's lines the previous day.

The same day, November 16, José Antonio Primo de Rivera with his brother, Miguel, and his sister-in-law, were tried in Alicante. They had been imprisoned before the outbreak, but it appeared extremely probable that José Antonio had been in communication with his Falangists since then. At any rate, he was the leader of the party which was famous even among the rebels for its jackal work.

Such incidents, the whole vast atrocity of the war, persuaded the Ambassadors to suggest that Geneva should be asked to intervene to "humanise" the war. The lolling grins of the children killed at Getafe had shocked the whole of Europe. But "humanising" the war seemed to the Spanish Government a poor substitute for the possibility of importing the arms and planes it so badly needed; and Non-intervention was permitting Franco to make his biggest bluff, the threat to blockade the Spanish coast with three cruisers and a few miscellaneous smaller craft.

The weather broke suddenly in Barcelona, and the crowds standing beneath the loud-speakers on the Ramblas shivered as they heard nothing good. There seemed no one to talk to them, for Durruti was in Madrid and Companys was afraid to speak lest he say too much. Germany and Italy had recognised Burgos at last. The mangled children, the quartered airman, the heroism of Madrid should be having their effect upon English public opinion, which still could decide the issue. Franco's threat to blockade Barcelona, whispered along the Ramblas in the twilight of November 17, did not seem serious; the temperamental Mediterranean city was uneasy, vaguely apprehensive. The first air-raid practice had been announced for that evening "before midnight". Uncertainty, the reports of the wild shooting on the similar night in Madrid weeks before drove people to crowd the cafés, standing beside the tables to mutter. The French fleet, from Brest to Toulon, was mobilising. *Solidaridad Obrera* asserted that Radio Moscow had said that the U.S.S.R. was sending thirty-seven ships through the Dardanelles and "hoped that no one would put any obstacles in their way". Two thousand volunteers from France, fine material, marched up the Ramblas like a relieving army. It was muttered that the Anarchists were

not pleased with this Communist reinforcement and had placed difficulties in their way at Port-Bou.

There were more red flowers below the typescript epitaphs on the walls commemorating the dead of July 19. There was a feeling of isolation, of insecurity. All rifles should have been sent to the front, but there were still only too many in the city. Maciá's son, Juan, returned from Mexico, told reporters that "Spain aspires only to a federalist regime".

The German and Italian Consulates had gone. The German Anarchists of the DAS (*Deutsche Anarcho-Syndikalisten*) interrogated the few remaining Germans none too gently, working on the margin of the police and the Investigation Committee which had now become the Junta for Internal Safety. The British Government demanded zones of safety for its ships in Spanish harbours. In the House of Commons, Eden almost openly stated that the U.S.S.R. had been guiltier of violating the Non-intervention Pact than Germany and Italy, while there was no proof whatever against Portugal.

Still Madrid held, while Franco redoubled his attack, preparing the second great offensive for November 25. There was little news of the war. Madrid was holding, was not yet taken. That was the great thing. The International Brigade was doing wonders in the Casa del Campo. The militias, inspired perhaps by the Russian film, "The Kronstadt Sailors", performed fantastic feats, such as that of young Antonio Col, who single-handed destroyed four enemy tanks with hand-grenades.

On the afternoon of November 20, very bad news came to Barcelona. Buenaventura Durruti had been killed; shot in the back from a window, said *Solidaridad Obrera* next morning, hurriedly retracting the following day and declaring that anyone who did not believe as an article of faith that Durruti died in the field was a traitor and a Fascist.

Who killed Durruti was a mystery. Who was thought to have killed him was anything but a mystery. On the night

of the 22nd, the bodies of Martinez and Escobar, both high officials in the Catalan Defence Council, were found in a lonely field outside Barcelona. They had left a café on the Ramblas in a car, the number of which was not noticed.

The responsible leaders of the FAI made enormous efforts to restrain their followers, and probably succeeded. Worse than the death of Durruti would have been the breaking of the unity he had always demanded: "Only by union shall we win."

Remembering Tarancon, recalling the "Fifth Column", recalling, too, the lack of development of the Madrid branch of the FAI and its jealousy of Catalonia, the possibilities were numerous. The very fact that they were so numerous made for extreme danger.

Durruti's funeral on the 23rd was huge and strained. All Barcelona was out to pay their last homage to a man. The crowd filed past, without order, chattering, smoking; but, underneath, there was a feeling of real sorrow and of apprehension. No demonstration had been so perilous since the funeral of the Badia brothers in the spring; and for precisely the same reason.

The banners carried by the FAI and especially by the Libertarian Youth augured no good for anyone suspected of the shooting. *Treball*, the organ of the PSUC, demanded immediate vengeance for Escobar and Martinez. "We must show Fascism that we are not to be attacked with impunity!"

The day before Durruti's death, the FAI circularised all its Catalan sections denouncing the activities of various groups which usurped their name and committed "murders and robberies, with the sole aim of discrediting the FAI, which is one of the organisations which march at the head of the Catalàn revolutionary movement". "We are decided partisans of justice," the circular stated, "but of justice in the strict sense of the word. If we must kill, we will kill, whenever the killing is justified. But to kill a man for the sole reason that he is a Catholic does not fit our

ideas in any way. It is completely repugnant to us to avenge ourselves on the defeated. We are determined to wipe out these groups, hurt whom it may."

Treball greeted these vigorous declarations with pleasure. It stressed too similar declarations by Peiró in *Solidaridad Obrera*. Terrorism, crime, personal vengeances and attacks upon small proprietors had "become the nerve-system of a vast conspiracy". Three unities were needed: unity of action, of command, of responsibility. The Collectivisation Decree was becoming an excuse for all sorts of individual actions by irresponsible committees. Both the big organisations, the Marxist and the Anarchosyndicalist, had the means at hand to enforce discipline and order: the Generalidad Council in which both were represented and the U.G.T.–C.N.T. Pact, with its minimum platform. A new pact, between the Unified Socialist and Communist Youth and the Libertarian Anarchist Youth was well on the way to completion, demanding chiefly the nationalisation of the metallurgical industry on a war basis and the regulation of other industries in accordance with war necessities. From this would result collectivisation only where it was essential—both organisations declared that this system was a means, not an end—under proper control.

There was, therefore, a wide basis upon which a really constructive reorganisation might be settled. It demanded really serious sacrifices of principle, but sacrifices which would prove that an unparalleled effort was being made to understand the true nature of this strange situation in Catalonia. That effort was being made just by those parties which were strong enough to have imposed their own line in full, at the cost of dangerously weakening the front, it is true, but with every chance of temporary success. It appeared, therefore, simply intolerable that small groups who had no means of imposing their criterion should remain intransigent, acting as *agents-provocateurs* for the "Fifth Column".

This was the reason, far more than old rancours, for the savage dispute carried on between the PSUC and the POUM. POUM did its best to shelter behind the C.N.T., but *Solidaridad Obrera* rather avuncularly told them that this was no time for wrangling.

Here was the nerve-centre of this whole phase of the Spanish Civil War, the phase in which it was becoming what *Solidaridad Obrera* called a War of National Independence, a second Peninsular War. Catalonia became not only the centre of the Spanish antifascist movement but the real political centre of the non-intervention struggle. The question was therefore posed in two ways: the relations between Barcelona and Valencia and the relations between Catalonia and the U.S.S.R. Germany, more accustomed to diplomatic puzzles than Italy, stated the matter thus: Catalonia is separatist; Catalonia, therefore, can be accorded a treatment different from that given to the rest of Spain; because of this separatism, the U.S.S.R., the only antifascist Power likely to object effectively to German designs in Spain, is creating a separate Soviet State in Catalonia.

The data to support this accusation would be provided by proofs that the U.S.S.R. was tightening its hold on Catalonia either by direct intervention or by the intrigues of the PSUC, member of the Third International.

La Batalla, the organ of POUM, provided these data, said *Treball*, by "making common cause with the international fascist press in representing Catalonia as dominated by the U.S.S.R.; by making common cause with the anti-Communist Pact between Germany and Japan; by making common cause with the Fascist International against the U.S.S.R."

There was reasonable cause for this accusation. *La Batalla* published daily attacks on the U.S.S.R., which, even if they had been based on truth, would have been distinctly untimely. It was no moment to speak of the "Communist ex-International". It was no moment to talk of "the strange change in the revolutionary policy of Catalonia since the U.S.S.R. denounced the Non-intervention Pact".

This policy was carried so far that, finally, on November 27, the Russian Consul, Antonov Ovseenko, one of the most popular figures in Barcelona, had to send an open letter to the press: "One of the manœuvres of the press sold to international Fascism consists in slandering the Soviet Union's accredited representatives with the Spanish Government, alleging that it is in fact they who are directing the domestic and foreign policy of the Spanish Republic. The reason is clear. In the first place, they desire to undermine the Spanish Government's prestige abroad; in the second, to weaken the fraternal solidarity between the Spanish people and the U.S.S.R.; thirdly, to strengthen the disorganising tendencies which might divide the United Republican Front. There is a sheet among the Barcelona press which has undertaken the task of aiding this campaign. *La Batalla* has tried to supply material for these fascist insinuations. The U.S.S.R. Consulate-General in Barcelona rebuts the lamentable insinuations of this sheet with contempt."

POUM complained bitterly of the "savage campaign against the only party which has understood the revolutionary significance of our civil war".

As early as November 19, the Radio News Agency had reported that "the Catalan Generalidad had agreed with the FAI to proclaim the Independent Catalan Republic". This remarkable statement was based on the fact that five Catalan Anarchists had repeatedly demanded the handing-over of the Spanish Consulate in Perpignan "in the name of the Catalan Generalidad", and that Barcelona was insisting on the dismissal of the Spanish Consuls at Sète, Toulouse and Port-Vendres and their replacement by Catalans. Then Catalonia would declare its independence and would be better placed to obtain French recognition since the Consuls would already be there.

There was a grain of truth in this. The Catalans were best qualified to know the lukewarm, if not positively disloyal, behaviour of certain Consulates, and *Solidaridad Obrera* repeatedly denounced them. But there was no particular question of insisting upon Catalans to replace them, although Lluhi, ex-Minister of Labour, did go to Toulouse. In point of fact, the anarchist paper always demanded action by Alvarez del Vayo, the Madrid Foreign Minister. Catalonia might have taken action on its own responsibility, for the matter was urgent. The same apparently separatist steps had been taken by Tarradelles in creating a Catalan Foreign Trade Committee and ordering that all Catalan exports should be stamped "Made in Catalonia", simply because Madrid was extremely slow in granting credit from the reserves of gold and valuta owned by the Bank of Spain and later shipped in frail fishing craft to places of safety all over Europe.

Havas replied to the Radio note by stressing the fact that Azaña continued to live in Barcelona "because his presence constitutes in foreign eyes a formal contradiction of the false news that Catalonia is disposed to proclaim its independence". It is true that this was not precisely the reason for Azaña's closely guarded residence in the Catalan Parliament House and on lonely Montserrat; or, at least, not the whole reason. But it was a visible symbol of Catalonia's attachment to Madrid and Valencia.

The Unified Catalan Socialist Party, speaking Catalan, repeatedly declared Catalonia's obligation to Madrid. "From Catalonia has to come the army of victory, Catalonia must supply the towns which need food, everything rests on Catalonia. If Madrid fulfils its obligation by resisting, Catalonia will fulfil its duty by spending all its efforts to relieve Madrid." A proof that the PSUC was not trying to dominate Catalonia was the immediate sending of all the International Brigades to Madrid or Albacete. Certain persons looked sourly on these volunteers, who were mostly Socialists or Communists, simply because the other Spanish parties had almost no branches abroad. There were French and Italian Anarchists; and a very few Trotskyists, most of whom acquired administrative jobs in Barcelona. Since it was the International Column

which showed itself the really efficient fighting force on the Madrid front, the Catalan Communists were deliberately sending away the very elements which would have assured their victory in Catalonia had they been so wedded to the idea of a separate Soviet State that they had lost interest in the fate of Madrid.

The inner class conflicts were becoming acute. This was inevitable; but they were at least based upon a dialectical class process. The rebels were no less divided; but their divisions were less fundamental and therefore had less chance of finding a common basis. Lenin had stated that "unity must be conquered. Nothing more easy than to write the word 'unity' in huge letters, promise it and declare in favour of it. But in reality unity cannot be obtained save by the labour and organisation of the advanced workers, of all class-conscious workers. Unity cannot be 'created' by an 'agreement' of little groups of intellectuals. That is one of the stupidest, simplest, most ignorant of all errors."

An English journalist returned from Burgos—in Burgos a foreign correspondent could not write—said that Spain had never seen a union of more diverse elements: Basques and Navarrese, Carlists and Constitutional Monarchists, Falangists and Liberal Republicans, clericals and free-thinkers, all united by the cry of "Long live Spain! Up Spain!" "Amid this diversity of opinions, rivalries and quarrels increase daily."

The Antifascists had the great advantage, though an extremely perilous advantage, that their differences were based on perfectly definite and definable historical positions. Those between Carlists and Alfonsists were no more than a matter of preference, anachronistic and irrelevant. The elimination of a seditious section of the Carlists, for instance, would not have clarified the whole political structure in the same way as the failure of Dencás' final attempt at a *coup d'état*, an attempt which ended in the flight of Juan Casanovas, President of the Catalan Parliament, and the arrest of Juan Torres Picart, Secretary of

Estat Catalá, began to clarify the Catalan issue by openly demonstrating the pro-fascist nature of Dencás' separation. A certain amount of elimination was positively healthy, if Catalonia were not to be betrayed as Madrid was so nearly betrayed in the early autumn.

Little news of the Estat Catalá affair reached the outside world. It was a dilemma. To publish the plot would allow the rebels to exaggerate the lack of unity in Catalonia; not to publish would allow them to continue their insinuations about Catalonia's soviet separatism. The second was the lesser evil.

It was particularly necessary, however, not to allow an appearance of either separatism or sovietism, since, with the checking of the land offensive against Madrid, an offensive on the coast was to be feared.

It was not long in coming. Cartagena and Alicante were unmercifully bombarded and bombed. Barcelona remained unattacked, but Franco had sent the British Government a note on November 17, threatening to destroy the port of Barcelona; the excuse being that war material had been landed there by boats flying various flags, the majority Russian or Spanish. Franco strongly advised the evacuation of all foreign ships and subjects.

"Since this country has not recognised the Franco Government," asked Major Attlee in the House of Commons, "is not any action committed by him on the high seas an act of piracy?" Eden gave it to be understood that the British Government might be annoyed by any action taken outside the three-mile limit, and meanwhile demanded a safety-zone for British ships in the harbour. Britain would certainly not permit any British ships to be interfered with outside "Catalan territorial waters".

Not that Franco had the slightest chance of blockading Barcelona with his two cruisers, the *Canarias* and the *Almirante Cervera*. The bombardment of Cartagena, where Prieto was holding most of the loyal Navy for rapid reorganisation, succeeded in damaging three ships; but

even this could not redress the balance. Geneviève Tarbouis, *L'Oeuvre's* diplomatic correspondent, who appeared to know almost all the rebel calculations which never passed out of the realm of wish-thinking, decided that the Portuguese navy would be the most suitable to use, since Portugal had not recognised the "Valencia Government" and was taking no part in the work of the Non-Intervention Committee. She forgot, however, that the Portuguese Navy was not what might be called a fighting force and that it was the chief revolutionary nucleus in that country.

Much more serious was the statement by the Paris Communist daily, *L'Humanité*, that it knew for certain that thirty chaser-planes and twenty bombers were to leave Italy on November 28 for the Balearics, and that these planes would bomb Barcelona early on the morning of November 30. The planes went to Majorca, but they did not bomb Barcelona.

Barcelona's impunity was always puzzling. It was certainly not due to humanitarian scruples nor to any reasonable fear of the anti-aircraft defences, which were little better than those of Madrid. Two explanations were canvassed: that Germany, at any rate, really believed in the "Separate Soviet" legend and would use Catalonia as a bargaining counter with the U.S.S.R. against excessive Italian ambitions in the Balearics; or that the action against Barcelona was dependent upon success at Madrid. After the fall of Madrid, it was calculated, the rebels' first objective would be to liquidate the Bilbao, Santander and Asturias fronts; then, to make a strong offensive against Valencia and simultaneously blow up the Port-Bou tunnel, cutting Catalan communications by rail with France, while the Italian planes from Majorca prevented supplies arriving by road; finally, a general offensive along the Franco-Spanish frontier from Jaca and Canfranc towards the international station at Port-Bou.

Another pair of calculations may have been: first, that the natural dissensions between the parties, easily exploitable

by agents of the fascist Powers, as in the Picart affair, would greatly weaken the resistance, even persuading the numerically-large middle-class to accept Franco's Moors and Legionaries as a lesser evil; second, the proved fact that any aggression would inevitably lead to violent measures against the so-useful "Fifth Column".

On November 22, a very odd incident at Cartagena came to reinforce the impression that Germany was ready to give naval aid to the rebels besides smuggling men and war material. As Prieto pointed out, it was not the first time. He recalled the *Deutschland* incident at Ceuta on August 4, the German ships which kept their lights on at Malaga when the republican fleet was stationed there, espionage on the Atlantic coast in September, espionage of the *Mendez Nuñez* in Cartagena by a German destroyer, sinking of various food-ships off the east coast, all of which could not possibly have been done by the *Canarias*. On November 22, the *Cervantes* and the *Mendez Nuñez* were attacked at the mouth of Cartagena Harbour by submarines.

The rebels possessed no submarines, and fragments of the torpedo which damaged the *Cervantes* were found to be of a type used by the Italian navy. A German destroyer circled round the struck ships, examined them and vanished out to sea.

The rebels declared that the submarines were theirs, made in Vigo. But the Vigo yards were not capable of making submarines.

In Paris and London, Prieto's Note caused an immense sensation—for twenty-four hours.

The Spanish Government once again appeared to have on its side at least a modicum of human dignity, courage and decision. Luis Araquistain, Ambassador in Paris, published a note on the 17th explaining the Government's removal to Valencia. The Government had considered the possibility for some time and had decided upon it to "free itself from the psychological pressure exercised upon the Spanish capital by the proximity of the zone of

operations" and also to gain more complete control over all the fronts. "The Spanish Government will continue the war till victory because it has on its side right and the will of the immense majority of the country, because this right will end by opening its way into the universal liberal and democratic conscience; because the legitimate Government can count upon the great reserves of the national treasury, of which the rebels will not obtain a cent whatever happens; rather than hand over a grain of this gold to the rebels' creditors and backers, the Spanish Government will throw it into the sea. The Government has at its disposal the great industrial cities of the Basque country, Santander, Asturias, Valencia and Catalonia and the richest mines of coal, iron and mercury as well as the great agricultural wealth of the centre and east. With such resources and a people devoted to its Government there can be no doubt that the Government will fight on and win."

"We shall fight on," Largo Caballero said to the foreign press. "If there is foreign intervention, we shall fight on. If there is an international conflict, we shall fight on. We shall fight on so long as we have an inch of our soil under our feet. The war is only beginning. Now we have the necessary material."

An important note issued by the Government on November 23 carefully and with dignity defined the exact situation, in which Italy and Germany were using Franco as a "marionette", and stressed the fact of "the employment of colonial troops subject to the Sultan of Morocco amid the silence of those who share in Morocco the mission of a protectorate". This important point was closely linked to Caballero's enigmatic silence when one of the foreign correspondents asked him whether Spain would raise the question of the Algeciras Convention and the problem of joint French responsibility. It was the lamentable fact that Franco had promised a Moroccan Statute, probably as a method of more effectually placing Morocco under German control.

On August 26, General Sanchez Gonzalez had issued a Burgos decree ordering the Riff Mines Company to communicate with German mineral buyers. Mannesmann, whose activities had contributed to the Agadir incident in 1911, had returned to Morocco and secured a mining concession, and there were other German interests involved along with those of the Count de Romanones, and the English and French firms.

Franco at once set up a company in Seville called Hisma S.A. Carranza y Bernhardt to revise all current contracts and centralise them in a new Berlin firm called Rowak. Carranza y Bernhardt had long served as agents for mining firms in Spain.

A special clause had provided that the transport of minerals should be carried out at the risk of German consignees, who would put German ships at Hisma-Rowak's disposal under the protection of German warships. German payments would be made by offsetting the sums against Franco's armament debt to Germany, a typical piece of Ventosa Calvell finance. By December 22, the exchange of arms for ore was in full swing, and the 80,000 tons due to Germany by contract were pouring into the famous "Franco wharf" at Hamburg. This was providential for the German rearmament programme, for Britain had begun competing for the Swedish market and the French Socialists were talking of an embargo on Lorraine ores to Germany.

Algeciras and the Riff, therefore, were awkward problems. Equally so were the mercury mines of Almadén, north of Córdoba, still in Government hands. Italy and Spain together virtually control the world mercury market, so that the Italians were particularly anxious to get possession of Almadén, or, if Franco could not yet capture them militarily, at least reserve them until he could. Mercury is particularly important as a detonator.

In October, the Spanish Government broke up the mercury cartel with Italy and, according to the United

States Bureau of Commerce, gave the exclusive sales agency to a British firm, Alexander Pickering & Co. Italy complained that this was done "for political purposes".

Curiously enough, none of the British and French interests in the Riff mines filed protests, although they were not receiving a penny, all the proceeds going to offset Franco's debt (an estimated 320 million pesetas) to Germany. Possibly they considered protest was useless at the time; sentimentally—but not commercially—they favoured Franco. Rio Tinto, for example, was silent, though its hostility to the Azaña and Casares Quiroga Governments had been outspoken enough before the war. In February 1936, shares stood at a high of £22; in August they were £13; after the rebels took Rio Tinto in late August, they rose steeply to nearly £30. Yet it was complained that Franco was paying in pesetas at 42, when the current rate was about 85. The silence was politically disconcerting.

Since, unlike the Republic of 1873, the Republic of 1936 flatly refused to be economically colonised, the Caballero Cabinet was internationally in a weak but respectable position. It was rapidly becoming one of those troublesome minorities like Dantzig or the Polish Ukraine which, as Alvarez del Vayo was to put it, "regretfully disturbed the League of Nation's siesta". On November 28, the League Secretariat received a demand from the Spanish Government for the summoning of an extraordinary session.

British Governmental circles, already obsessed by the fear of the immediate outbreak of the Simpson affair which could be suppressed no longer, were very much disturbed. They felt that no good could come of this undoubtedly legitimate demand, that the League could only be discredited once more, while the eleven million men and women who had signed the Peace Plebiscite might well be roused again. Since Baldwin had unsealed his lips—the *Daily Express* had maliciously remarked that

one could almost see coils of sticking-plaster dropping to his desk—and frankly stated that the National Government's electoral promises of peace activity were simply electoral promises, and while the Baldwin Cabinet might at any moment be involved in a constitutional crisis which, whatever the ecclesiastical solemnity imposed upon it, would merely be a question of handing over the remains of British democracy either to a Royal camarilla or to a Cabinet oligarchy, the Spanish demand could only complicate Eden's and Plymouth's task of neutralising Maisky without actively opposing him. Should the Algeciras issue be raised, it could hardly fail to bring up the vexed question of the Statute of Tangiers, where Italian sailors, not so drunk as they appeared to be, were continually creating awkward incidents.

In France, too, the intransigent attitude of the employers refusing to carry out the Matignon Agreements was likely to cause serious difficulties to a Government which behaved almost exactly as if it had been an Azaña regime taking over after a bloodless revolution. The rank-and-file, not solidly behind the Communist Party but increasingly tending to approve its attitude, were more formidable than the employers themselves; and, as in 1848 on the Polish question, the internal issue might well be translated into terms of the two Communist slogans: "*Blum à l'action!*" and "*Des armes et des avions pour l'Espagne!*"

Thus Del Vayo's almost Cervantic irony fluttered the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay into strange projects of "safety-zones" and armistices. It was nobody's secret that these projects were not dictated by righteous humanitarian indignation but simply by domestic fears, however pathetically the British Parliamentary Commission might describe the horrors of the Madrid bombings. Humanitarianism had never yet been anything but a category of *Realpolitik* in precisely the same way as war, according to Klausewitz.

When the International Red Cross suggested the creation of a safety-zone in Madrid on the 23rd, Alvarez del Vayo

wired the President of the Madrid Defence Junta, General Miaja: "Government of Republic, which unlike Burgos rebels does not represent caste interests and feels responsible for lives of all Madrid citizens refuses idea of creation neutral zone signifying protection certain number of persons against air bombing carried out by foreign Fascists over open city. Creation of neutral zone would mean Government of the Republic would lend itself to legalisation of bombing of rest of Madrid outside said zone and expose popular and working class districts to rebels satiating their obvious impotence to take capital of Spain by breaches of international law which are scandalising all civilised humanity."

French military and political circles had already feared that Franco would try the utmost rigours of Nazi militarism, the complete smashing of a civilian population in order to destroy morale. Such, indeed, had been the orders circulated to the officers even at the beginning of the rebellion. He did not deign to answer an appeal signed by French intellectuals of all parties.

The Government's Note stressed two immediate needs: general mobilisation on all fronts and general rationing.

After the first big attack on Madrid on November 7 and the second on November 25, the situation had become more or less stationary in the centre. The International Column, hastily drawn into Madrid, was the backbone of the defence. Its commander, General Kleber, was an experienced revolutionary soldier, one of the leaders of the struggle against Koltchak in Russia, an organiser of the Chinese Red Army. Its Political Commissioner was Mario Nicoletti, member of the Executive Committee of the Italian Communist Party. Hans Beimler, the Communist deputy in the Reichstag, was leader of one section until his death. The members of the Column, however, were of all parties. Naturally, Socialists and Communists predominated since these parties were the leading antifascist organisations throughout Europe; but many men in leading posts were non-political. As Dimitrov said, it was the true international antifascist fighting front.

The desperate and heroic defence of Madrid remains fresh in the memory of the whole world. The fierce bombardments, the epic of the Casa del Campo and the University City, the hunger, the women and children huddled shivering on mattresses in the Underground tunnels in the dangerous nights, the continual roar of the artillery smashing a quarter of the city, the bombing of the Prado Museum and the National Library; the caravans of refugees, two hundred thousand of them jamming Valencia and Barcelona, that "register of courtesy, asylum of strangers and hospital of the poor", as Cervantes called it; the crowds of cheerful *Madrileños* insisting upon watching the battle from the most exposed elevations, Miaja's "The people of Madrid will be worthy of its forbears of the Second of May who fought and beat Napoleon's armies"; the treachery of the "Fifth Column" and its liquidation in a night; the rebel Spanish airmen refusing to bomb their own mothers and sisters; the Italian bomb filled with sand and a note, "The Italian workers will not kill their Spanish brothers"; the whole able-bodied population digging trenches, making of each house and garden a fortress; the refusal to yield an inch, sometimes even holding up tactical operations; the bravery and the misery, the treachery and the sacrifices: a story to be registered not so much with the sieges of Numancia, Gerona or Saragossa as with the Commune of Paris, the defence of Petrograd, or, if with Saragossa, not with the siege but with the general strike that held through thirty-eight days.

Madrid's resistance gave a breathing-space for the reorganisation of the other fronts and the reversal of international policy. Germany and Italy had recognised Burgos too soon.

At a secret conference on November 19 at Berchtesgaden, Schacht's representative told Hitler that German finances could not possibly allow more adventures and the Generals

stated that they were not prepared for the war which intervention in Spain might well bring. The German working class would not support a foreign war as it had in 1914. Hitler's plea that the intervention policy could count on the support of the German Labour Front was treated with a certain brusqueness; and, although it was impossible to check the Leader's "somnambulistic" anti-Bolshevik crusade, the sending of German troops—"tourists", as Mr. Eden called them—seemed likely to excite the opposition not only of the German workers but also of the Herrenklub, the Civil Service, still wedded to the Meissner tradition, and of the General Staff itself. As Queipo de Llano remarked, rather sadly, "You can't take Madrid like a cup of chocolate".

While Catalonia still worked out its revolutionary salvation, while the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. fused in Malaga and issued joint proclamations in Valencia, while Vasquez, Secretary of the National Federation of the C.N.T. announced that Spain would not repudiate debts if given credits for raw materials and admitted that he did not know whether the C.N.T.'s present solutions "resembled Marxism or Anarchism", the Basques and Asturians advanced towards Leon, Burgos, Vitoria and Tolosa. General mobilisation, the single command, proletarian unity, the creation of militarised militia seemed in sight. Germany landed 6,500 regular soldiers at Cadiz and the recruiting offices in Milan and Turin were working overtime persuading the increasing Italian unemployed to join the Spanish Foreign Legion. And still Madrid held, broken, starving, insomniac; but it held.

Aragon built up a Defence Council, dominated by the C.N.T. but with participation of all other parties: the Basques were free: in Catalonia pseudo-separatism had received a death-blow: the Federal Spanish Republic was in the making.

The First Labour Day in Barcelona had determined the system of collectivisation as a transitional stage, and Luis

Companys had received a vote of confidence by acclamation.

To the League of Nations meeting called at the request of Spain the Powers sent their least important representatives. Their peoples shouted for "arms and planes for Spain!" but few went.

Snow drifted across the fronts under the bright sunshine which had succeeded the gloomy days dulling Durruti's funeral.

In Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Burgos, Salamanca, Pamplona the women stood in queues before the meagre markets. In the cold bright days the guns thundered the grim accompaniment of the Spanish Tragedy.

In Madrid, the Communists had gained control by the merit of the Fifth Regiment and the International Columns. In Catalonia, the Generalidad was an increasingly transitory organisation, and there were men in it and out of it sufficiently intelligent to recognise their errors and begin a constructive effort all over again. That was no small thing.

In Geneva, Alvarez del Vayo carried all liberal men with him but achieved only a euphemism on the mediation suggested by England and France and seconded by Roosevelt and the Pan-American Peace Congress in Buenos Aires.

In Valencia, Prieto slowly but efficiently reorganised the republican fleet to regain the command of the seas, as he had reorganised the Air Force and cleared the air over Madrid.

More and more Germans, Italians and Moors came to fight at Madrid. There could be no further doubt. The Civil War in Spain was not a "War of National Independence" or even a strictly civil war: it was the first battlefield of the world war which Marx had foreseen in 1870: that war which would override geographical frontiers and group the exploiters and the exploited against each other in the last struggle of an historical epoch. The new society, already on the way to achievement in the U.S.S.R. and

struggling frantically for birth in riven Spain, was coming into being, and, even though the savage Moor might squat on the ruins of Madrid and Barcelona, the world would not again be quiet until the next stage in its tragic but determined history had been achieved by indiscriminate bloodshed and the extremes of suffering which man is able to inflict and to bear.

VI

THE CIVIL WAR IN 1937

FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN Spain began on a large scale with the sending of the first Italian Expeditionary Force to Cadiz, where 15,000 landed in the first week of February. On January 11, Hitler had stated that there were no Germans in Spain, but the London *Times* became seriously alarmed by the fortification of Melilla, and a gentleman in close touch with the British colony in Barcelona privately boasted that he had been responsible for shipping Krupp "lorries" to Oviedo. On the other side, the Cortes at its meeting on December 2 addressed special thanks to Mexico and the U.S.S.R. for their aid and the U.S. Government licensed the export to Governmental Spain of £555,400 worth of planes and spare parts.

The full story of this shipment, on the *Mar Cantabrico*, cannot yet be told, but its complexities were both fantastic and typical. The *Mar Cantabrico*, making for Bilbao with what the American arms merchants supposed was a cargo of scrapped machines sold to poor ignorant Spaniards at an enormous price, was torpedoed after the last-minute passing of the Neutrality Act had given her departure unwanted publicity. Nevertheless, the cargo eventually helped the Basques to hold out for three months against the fiercest offensive of the war.

The Non-Intervention Committee continued its sessions, and agreement was finally achieved on the necessity of preventing "volunteers" reaching Spain. On January 15, France banned recruiting for Spain and Mr. Eden told the House of Commons, with doubtful legality, that

the Foreign Enlistment Act would apply to British subjects volunteering for either side in Spain.

Four days later, Goering, visiting Italy, stated: "Italy and Germany will oppose the Bolshevisation of Spain at all costs."

On February 17, after some sabotage by Portugal, the twenty-seven nations adhering to the Non-Intervention Pact agreed to ban the recruiting of volunteers for Spain. A system of control by neutral observers was set up. On the 20th, the Franco-Spanish frontier was closed to all except those who had legitimate business in Spain; the Portuguese following on the 23rd. On March 13, the control system came into operation.

The French, awaiting a lead from England, disliked the system, but carried it out on the whole efficiently and honourably. The effectiveness of the Portuguese co-operation was more dubious and the Commissioner's capacity open to question.

The naval patrol of the Spanish coast was to raise some crucial points. The British and French Navies patrolled the parts of the coast held by the insurgents, while the Germans and Italians covered the Governmental coastline. The junction between the German and Italian spheres was almost precisely at the point where a rebel landing might be most expected, between Peñiscola and Oropesa, just south of the Catalan frontier at Vinaroz.

The ban on volunteers, even if it had been enforced, came too late to save Málaga from Franco's allies. The offensive opened from all sides on February 4, and on the 8th, after heavy bombardment from sea and air, the town fell. According to an English observer, the victorious army was composed of 15,000 Italians, 10,000 Germans, 5,000 Moors and 5,000 Foreign Legionaries, including about 1,000 Irishmen sent by General O'Duffy. These, however, were engaged in a small private civil war, the men from Kerry perpetually wrangling with the rest. Nearly 10,000 Government supporters were arrested, and the firing-squads began their work.

The fall of Málaga has been graphically described by Arthur Koestler, a foreign journalist captured and imprisoned for three months by the rebels. It was a disgraceful story, for which much of the blame was attributed to the Valencia General Staff. Not an attempt had been made to fortify the defiles which surround the town; not an attempt to organise even a last-minute defence of the town itself. There were no anti-tank guns, almost no machine-guns and the officers had quitted their posts the previous day. General Villalba, the failure of the Huesca front, had been unaccountably transferred to Málaga. He left for Valencia, saying that he was sure that everything would be all right. When the rebels swept on along the road to Motril, machine-gunning the fleeing civil population from the air and relieving Granada, General Cabrera remarked that this defeat was really an advantage since it shortened the front to be defended.

Simultaneously, another rebel attack was launched to cut the road between Madrid and Valencia. Vaciamadrid fell on February 9. The outlook was black for the loyalists.

The fall of Málaga had shown up the intolerable inefficiency of the Republican armies. All over republican Spain there were protests. In Valencia a huge demonstration on February 14 cheered the Government and reaffirmed the people's determination to win or die. The demonstrators demanded the immediate creation of the single command and the unified army. The party militias, the inept and often disobeyed officers sent by the General Staff and the lack of cohesion between the fronts had lost Málaga. The unified command, Franco's chief strength, was absolutely essential, and the demand, hitherto the slogan of the Communist Party and the Fifth Regiment in Madrid, now became general. Caballero, Premier and Minister of War, replied by taking the demonstration as an act of homage to himself and reiterating that he was the single commander. He interpreted the demand for the unification of the army as a mandate to expel the

Political Commissioners with the troops, the only reliable *cadre* then existing. Although Villalba was arrested and a full enquiry into the responsibilities for Málaga was promised, little was done to investigate the capacities and loyalty of the Generals with whom Caballero had surrounded himself. Caballero, well over sixty, practically dictator of a nation at war, tended to sacrifice everything to a vanity which had been flattered when some irresponsible journalist had dubbed him the "Spanish Lenin" some years before. His collaborator, the Minister of the Interior, Galarza, was no great help in sifting loyalties. He was perpetually engaged in discovering vast conspiracies by the Fifth Column, but, as someone remarked, "no one ever saw its tail".

Possibly with an eye to making future allies, neither Caballero nor Galarza were willing to take adequate measures against the subversive elements in the parties whose campaigns against the Government were as inopportune as they were misguided. It was not time to attack the democratic Government as such, but simply its inefficiency. Because incapable officers had betrayed Málaga, it could not mean that a regular army as such was undesirable. The correct demand, as it was proved, was for the improvement of the Army, not its abolition.

In Barcelona, the fall of Málaga had a tremendous effect. The cry for general mobilisation and the creation of the regular army was universal and spontaneous. Waiters, shoe-blacks, tradesmen, factory-workers left their jobs early and drilled up and down the Ramblas far into the night and from dawn to opening-time. Improvised instructors were elected by these groups of volunteers, and the drilling was enthusiastic, though hardly efficient.

This was a valuable movement, but it had to be properly directed. The Defence Councillor, Isgleas of the C.N.T. took no steps, so the PSUC organised a Committee for the Regular Army, placed under the presidency of Com-

panys himself, rather to his embarrassment. There were huge demonstrations, culminating in the unveiling of a hastily-constructed and hideous plaster statue of a vast militiaman in the Plaza Cataluña. Regular Army Weeks were organised, and there were monster manœuvres several Sundays in succession. The "pre-military" instruction made great progress, and the Unified Socialist Youth promised to have 10,000 trained men ready in six weeks.

Each party now organised its own military training schools, but since all this was on the margin of the Defence Council, Isgleas threatened resignation. The PSUC was quite willing to have it accepted, for the Defence Council had proved unable or unwilling to canalise a most important movement. The crisis was averted by a compromise, but remained latent.

On February 28, General Miaja was at last given sole command of the whole Centre front, but neither the Catalan nor the Northern General Staffs were reorganised and unified. The Military Training Schools, hitherto functioning efficiently only at Albacete, were reorganised and began to turn out efficient Spanish officers, for the first time in centuries.

The rebel offensive against the Madrid-Valencia road had been halted on the day of the Valencia demonstration. By March 8, the road was again free. A governmental offensive between Toledo and Talavera, planned as a diversion, failed to achieve its objectives but gave the troops in the Jarama a breathing-space. Another fierce but unco-ordinated offensive against Oviedo between March 4 and March 10 pushed the miners' lines further into the city, but failed to cut the road westwards into Galicia, along which came the relieving forces.

On March 8 there began, down the Madrid-Saragossa road, near Guadalajara, the biggest offensive of the war. Four Italian divisions, of about 8,000 men each, under their own commanders. The attack was highly mechanised, and for four days the Italian tanks carried all

before them, the centre advancing twenty miles to a point between Trijueque and Torija.

Miaja brought up every available man, including the famous Garibaldi division of the International Brigade. These were to have the opportunity of fighting face to face the forces which had exiled them. On March 12, there was a violent storm of sleet. The loyalists launched the counter-attack, perfectly timed, just when the two Italian front-line divisions were being relieved by the two in reserve. The loyalist air force bombed effectively, and the Italian retreat became the biggest military rout of the war. The Italians lost four thousand men and a huge quantity of arms and stores.

The international effect of this victory was sensational. Mussolini, on a trip to inspect the Army in Libya, hastened back to Rome. The evidence of documents found on the dead, the evidence of prisoners confirmed Italian intervention beyond the shadow of doubt. A message from Mussolini himself, wired from his yacht on the way to Libya and wishing success to his brave Legionaries, was discovered and published. He had stated that he was watching the progress of the battle with intense interest.

Even more important than the definite proof that Italian regulars had been sent to Spain under their own officers, after Italy had adhered to the agreement banning volunteers, was the proof that the Spanish Loyalist Army was a really serious force. The battle of Brihuega had been fought against regular troops equipped with the most modern weapons. The fact that the Italian infantry had not proved such good material as had been supposed did nothing to diminish the effect of their defeat by troops which had been regarded as mere undisciplined guerrilla fighters. It was the first "modern" battle of the war, and the People's Army had shown a decisive superiority. The Cabinets and General Staffs all over the world began to revise their opinions about the Spanish Civil War and, even more importantly, about the strength of

the Italian menace. At Brihuega the Spanish People's Army had made the first move to call Mussolini's militarist bluff.

The effect was reinforced during the next few days by the very important action in Andalusia. The Guadalajara fighting had been purely military: that at Pozoblanco had also an economic objective.

On March 15, a mixed force of Moors and Italians, with some Spaniards and Germans, captured Alcaracejos and began to surround Pozoblanco. The objective was the mercury mines at Almadén, further to the north. With these mines in Italian hands, Italy could virtually corner the world market for this invaluable product. On March 25, the loyalists began a fierce counter-attack, Pozoblanco was relieved on the 27th, and, by the recapture of Villanueva del Duque and Alcaracejos, the rebels' coal, iron and lead mines at Peñarroya were seriously threatened.

The war for raw materials had begun in earnest. The capture of Málaga was intended as the preliminary to a drive up towards the rich iron, lead, copper and sulphur deposits near Cartagena. The Italians had entered the war later than the Germans, probably because Italian rearmament was farther advanced. The Germans had obtained tin and iron concessions in Galicia in December and had asked for vanadium and tungsten in Estremadura. When large Italian detachments landed at Cadiz, they went, not to the front, but to the vanadium and tungsten deposits to prevent German occupation. The defeats at Brihuega and Pozoblanco increased the Italian-German rivalry and perhaps tempted the British and French Foreign Offices to believe that the Rome-Berlin axis might thus be broken in Spain. This was particularly important in view of the situation brewing in the Far East, where Germany's "anti-Bolshevist" ally, Japan, was moving rapidly towards offensive action in China.

The war shifted northwards, and General Mola began his offensive against the Basque country on April 1. On the 9th, Franco declared the blockade of Bilbao,

sending his best warship, the *España*. The British Government, insufficiently informed of the situation at Bilbao, hesitated whether to recognise the blockade *de facto*. Doubts of everyone else were set at rest when "Potato" Jones and other skippers sailed into Bilbao with badly-needed food-supplies, unmolested.

The Basques were badly prepared for serious war. They had been resting on their laurels after Villareal. The Northern Command was divided into three, the Basque, Santander and Asturian; and General Llano de la Encomienda, transferred from Barcelona to Santander, could make little headway over local apathy. But Basque troops had been sent into Asturias for the March attack on Oviedo, and now Asturians, the finest fighters in Spain, came to help the Basques. But there was an appalling lack of material, and Valencia was quite unable to send any. Planes and anti-aircraft especially were inadequate.

No proper centralised command had been achieved, and Valencia was backward in intervening to create it. Santander, Castile's only port, was still apathetic. There were no political papers. Rationing was inefficient. A perpetual wrangle between the Delegation and the C.N.T. was not given much importance.

Although the blockade did not really exist, it was fairly hard to enter Bilbao harbour and useless to go to Santander, for all sorts of difficulties were placed in the way of releasing and transporting the cargoes. The Loyalist Navy was conspicuous by its absence.

This was due to several causes. Franco had established command of the Straits, and it would be fatal to risk losing ships even for a naval victory. They were needed too badly for convoying arms supplies, for the Government had not the rebels' advantage of being able to use the navies of two foreign Powers for this purpose.

All the officers had been killed in the early days, and navigation was not the Sailors' Committees' strong point. Prieto, Minister for Marine, was slowly rebuilding a force of seamen, but this took time. Here a political intrigue

came to slow the reorganisation. The C.N.T. offered technical experts, but Prieto refused. *Solidaridad Obrera* ran simultaneous campaigns, for C.N.T. inclusion in the Basque Government and against Prieto, the first authorised by the National Committee, the second repudiated by it. The Basques asked Prieto to send up a couple of cruisers with skeleton crews and promised to man them with their own skilled seamen. This too was refused.

The precise reason for the refusal was complex, partly political, partly financial. Centralising influences, such as that of Luis Araquistain, the C.N.T.'s *bête noire*, came into play. The cruisers would necessarily have come under C.N.T control and it was also considered undesirable and probably uneconomic to authorise the creation of a Basque Navy. The whole question was involved in secrecy and silence.

On April 30, the loyalists scored an advantage when the best rebel cruiser, the *España*, was sunk in Santander waters, probably by a mine, although it was claimed at the time that loyalist planes had destroyed her. This would have been the first time for a warship ever to have been sunk by planes, and it caused a sensation in foreign naval circles. It is now fairly certain that the planes did not arrive until after the ship had struck the mine. The blockade was carried out by some smaller warships, against which the big Basque armed trawlers, called *bous*, waged a plucky but not very effective struggle.

For eighty days and eighty nights the Basques held out against superior forces and against the "totalitarian war" methods which Ludendorff, recently reinstated in Hitler's favour as a sop to the discontented Reichswehr and Herrenklub, had long advocated but never had the opportunity of trying out. On April 26, Guernica, the sacred city of the Basques, was bombed out of existence. Rebel propagandists immediately claimed that the destruction had been done by Basque Anarchists. The claim was absurd on the face of it, but the matter was proved by the direct evidence of the London *Times* correspondent

who was himself machine-gunned from the air. Even in the unlikely case that the Bilbao Anarchists had wished to make such a gesture, they were certainly not strong enough to do so. The same destructive tactics had been used by the rebel air force at Durango and other places. The public opinion of the civilised world was outraged, but little concrete resulted save the evacuation of Basque children, 4,000 of whom were supported in England by the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief.

After April 11, the same terrorist tactics were used in Madrid. The city was shelled continuously every day, the rebel artillery using shrapnel which did no military damage but merely killed civilians. Madrid's morale however, did not suffer, and the Junta had the greatest difficulty in persuading non-combatants to evacuate.

One reason for the absence of real central command and the possibility of an offensive on other fronts to relieve pressure on Bilbao was the acute political tension in Catalonia. Under the stress of wartime conditions, most concretely shown in a steep rise in food prices and a huge increase of profiteering and hoarding, the old party dissensions were sharpening. The FAI was beginning to lose its hold on the C.N.T., chiefly because the middle classes objected to its wholesale collectivisation policy, while the workers in collectivised industries found that they were no better off than before.

The Generalidad was not strong enough to cope with this situation. For weeks the PSUC had been demanding a "Government which Governs"; but while there was inter-party sabotage in all departments, this was impossible. The POUM, expelled from the Government in the crisis of December 19, had declared: "You cannot govern without POUM and you cannot govern against POUM." This party, therefore, settled down to systematic opposition, taking with it those Anarchists, especially in the Libertarian Youth, who had been trained in aimless violence and who were incapable of seeing the Civil War as a whole. Organisations grew up in this atmosphere of preached disobedience.

The chief was the small but influential Friends of Durruti, originally a cultural society loosely attached to the FAI and Libertarian Youth, but later penetrated and controlled by the Trotskyist Marxist-Leninist Group, the leaders of which were foreigners.

The old antagonism between the Catalan Nationalists of Estat Catalá and the Anarchists of the FAI broke out again in the countryside. The FAI was suspicious of a recurrence of the alleged Catalanist plot of November, while Estat Catalá was bitterly opposed to the forcible confiscation of small farms in the name of collectivisation. and the "lack of truly Catalanist principles".

Under promptings from POUM, certain sections of the C.N.T. included the PSUC in their general hostility to the Government. The PSUC, whose main slogans were all directed to war needs, was supporting the bourgeois elements in the Generalidad for the sake of creating an efficient army and war-industry. It took the view that the maximum resources must be mobilised in the fight against Fascism and that it was essential not to antagonise the small farmers who were the backbone of Catalan production. To divert attention from the war to a chimerical revolution which had not yet happened was worse than absurd.

The Madrid Junta was stronger than the Catalan Generalidad in that the war was closer. On March 12, it had demanded and obtained the surrender of all arms for military use. A month before, on February 6, it had closed down the POUM centres and paper in Madrid in reply to a campaign for open disloyalty. In Catalonia, the C.N.T., "for motives of justice and from traditional hatred of the dictatorship of any one party whatever it might be" tended to shelter the POUM, so that subversive influences found place in the Government itself.

The first signs of the coming struggle were found in the new activity of the Libertarian Youth, who were perhaps too young to take an intelligent part

in politics. Riots and killings took place in several parts of Catalonia.

It was well known that few of the arms manufactured in Catalonia went to the front. It was for this reason chiefly that the Valencia Government sent little of its foreign shipments to Catalonia, fearing with some justice that they would simply disappear into private arsenals. Usually a lorry arrived with an order signed by some committee and the arms vanished. The committees, some of which had existed underground long before July 19, became more and more obstructive. Parties maintained private armies and private prisons. The Coast Militias, a formation controlled by groups associated with the FAI, refused to be incorporated in the Regular Army.

The U.G.T. and the PSUC had long been demanding the fusion of the various police-corps into one Internal Security Corps. Against this stood out the Patrols Committees, descended from the Investigation Committee, a branch of the original Antifascist Militias Committee. The PSUC had withdrawn from the Patrols, which were now controlled by the C.N.T. and the FAI. A FAI member, Dionisio Eroles, commanded this formidable force armed with tanks and machine-guns.

The C.N.T. had abandoned the Supplies Council to the U.G.T., represented by Juan Comorera, "in order to assure itself of the Defence Council", hitherto held by the Esquerra. Comorera's work was perpetually sabotaged by local committees and by transport committees belonging to the C.N.T. union. His public protests were somewhat tactlessly phrased, and they were at once seized upon as a weapon with which to attack the PSUC.

These sources of contention were utilised by the POUM as a weapon against the PSUC, somewhat to the dismay of the C.N.T., which believed that this was merely "competitive rivalry between Marxist brothers". That it was something very much more fundamental was

soon proved by the glee with which rebel spies and *agents-provocateurs* seized their opportunity to creep into the POUM and the C.N.T. organisations. POUM deliberately created an atmosphere of tension in order to show that it was "impossible to govern without it".

A series of serious but isolated incidents, unfortunate in time-sequence, made open conflict inevitable. There was an odd case of the sequestration of some armoured cars by the PSUC on March 5. No one enquired very much why the cars had not already been sent to the front by the C.N.T., to whom they "belonged".

The unreliability of the police caused Tarradelles to issue a decree forbidding political affiliation in these armed forces. The object was in fact the dissolution of the Patrols Committees. There was an immediate crisis, on March 27, lasting so long that wits nicknamed the Plaza de la Republica outside the Generalidad building "the Plaza of the Permanent Catalan Crisis".

There could be no obvious solution. To patch up another Cabinet on the same basis as the last would not improve matters. The C.N.T wished for this, but refused to enter into any signed agreement of policy. The U.G.T. demanded such an agreement in order to salve their responsibility when the threatened outbreak should come. It was by now essential to find out whether the sporadic riots and violence were the work of "uncontrolled" or "uncontrollable" elements; i.e., whether the C.N.T. and the FAI could control their own supporters and were willing to answer for their responsibility.

Public opinion was utterly sick of these crises; and Companys had the bulk of Catalans behind him when, somewhat arbitrarily, he formed a Provisional Council of four members, one each from the U.G.T., C.N.T., Esquerra and Rabassaires. On April 16, the crisis was finally solved on the same basis as the former Cabinet, but with the removal of persons particularly unpopular with the various organisations. Comorera, who was being attacked in Libertarian Youth leaflets in terms which

amounted to incitement to murder, quitted the Provisions Council, but was succeeded again by a U.G.T. representative.

On April 25, Roldan Cortada, secretary of Vidiella, the leader of the Unified Socialist Youth, was murdered by persons unknown near Molins de Llobregat, a suburb of Barcelona. The murder was followed by a police punitive expedition to Molins, ordered by Rodriguez Salas, a PSUC member who was Chief of Police in Barcelona. Tension grew with indignation all over Catalonia; the Anarchists were furious at the Molins expedition, the PSUC at the murder of Roldan Cortada, who had been universally respected. The PSUC and the Government made a demonstration of strength at the funeral on April 27, parading through Barcelona for three and a half hours.

On the same day, Antonio Martin, anarchist Mayor of Puigcerdá, was shot and killed at Bellver, a castellated town on the French frontier. The killings of Roldan Cortada and Antonio Martin had no actual connection, although the second was at once regarded as a reprisal for the first.

The anarchist committees of Puigcerdá and Seo de Urgel, further to the north in the Pyrenees on the Andorran border, had a system of barter. The road passed Bellver, where the Estat Catalá was in possession. There had been constant friction until Martin took advantage of the generally disturbed state of the country to head a column of 200 anarchists in an attempt to take Bellver. Another 200 converged from Seo. The second object was to obtain control of the whole frontier from Andorra to the sea, for it was known that Valencia was intending to send forces to regain free entry of imports, which had hitherto often been diverted to anarchist centres. Thirteen men in Bellver Castle, armed with fowling-pieces and one old machine-gun, held off the attack while the rest of the garrison lunched. Martin was killed in the first assault.

Such bandit warfare had been a feature of the whole northern province of Catalonia known as Cerdanya. The sham neo-Gothic residences of the Catalan bourgeoisie had been seized and held by a whole variety of free corps using the names of the various parties. Puigcerdá itself had been a sort of Icarian Anarchist Republic, a perfectly traditional and even admirable state of affairs, but dangerous to Valencia's sovereignty. If the Generalidad could not control the frontier, Valencia must.

During the nights of April 28 and 29 there were scuffles in Barcelona, darkened against air-raids. The party patrols attempted to disarm one another. Some barricades were raised. Armed men appeared on the streets, and the Generalidad suspended its sessions, Companys broadcasting that "the Catalan Government refuses to deliberate under the threat of armed forces".

Negotiations for a joint U.G.T.–C.N.T. demonstration on May 1 fell through. Valencia forbade public meetings throughout the country. As the C.N.T. account of the affair puts it, "bitterness increased and became hatred".

The details of the street-fighting, which lasted from May 3 to May 7 and cost some 950 dead, some 3,000 wounded and millions of pesetas' worth of ammunition in the worst street-fighting in Europe since the Paris Commune, are still open to dispute. The general line is not.

The amount of misrepresentation of its origins and aims is extraordinary. It was certainly difficult to get a clear view actually from the barricades. Most of the combatants themselves, whose youth was a striking feature, appeared to have little idea why they were on the barricades and against whom they were employing what the Japanese were later to call "self-defence in a wider sense". But some accounts which have appeared in England are based upon a fundamental misconception probably due to their inadequate sources of information already mentioned in this book.

A pamphlet by Mr. Fenner Brockway, entitled *The Truth About Barcelona* and alleged to be based upon the reports of two members of the I.L.P. in Barcelona, John McNair and Jon Kimche, is a remarkable instance of this misunderstanding. Mr. Brockway, or his informants, create a perfectly imaginary antithesis between the "Government Forces" and the "workers". The PSUC and U.G.T. were "on the side of" the Government forces; and one could hardly deny that a trade-union organisation with nearly half a million members must have necessarily contained a considerable number of workers.

The opening shots were fired from the Telephone Building at half-past three in the afternoon of Monday, May 3. The usual story is that Rodriguez Salas, acting on instructions from the Councillor for the Interior, Artemio Aiguadé, took three lorry-loads of police to the building and occupied it in a provocative manner. "Great sentimental value was attached to this building by the Anarchists," say Mr. Brockway's informants.

Rodriguez Salas' own account, which appears to fit the facts more closely, was as follows: The telephones had been controlled by a joint C.N.T.–U.G.T. committee, on which the C.N.T. had a majority, and by a Government Delegate. Since the heightening of tension in Catalonia, the Generalidad lines had been openly tapped and incoming calls from Valencia intercepted. The climax, it is said, was reached when Prieto asked to speak to the Catalan Government and was told that there was no such thing, only a Defence Committee. The employee who answered this call was almost certainly a member of the Friends of Durruti.

It had become known to the Generalidad that a subversive movement was being planned. Bellver was perhaps its beginning. On Sunday night, barricades had again been raised in the suburbs. It was essential to hold control of communications.

Rodriguez Salas and the Generalidad Delegate went into the telephone building. It was fairly empty, as public calls began only at four. The hall was guarded by some shock police.

Salas and the delegate went up to the offices on the first floor of the ten-storied building, to the censors' office. As they mounted, shots were fired from above, where the Workers' Control Committee was stationed. Salas returned to the lower floor and—a very Spanish touch—phoned police headquarters for reinforcements. While they were covering the five hundred yards from the Jefatura to the Telefónica, Dionisio Eroles appeared, persuaded the Control Committee not to fire, and all appeared to be over. The police arrived and the Committee was ordered to give up its arms. Its members did so, first firing off their spare ammunition through one of the upper windows as a form of protest. Immediately a cordon was formed round the building.

Thousands had gathered in the huge Plaza Cataluña outside the building. No one knew precisely what had happened. Most believed that the FAI had captured the building: it is an old Barcelona custom to attribute every disturbance to the FAI. Gradually, however, the ugly word "provocation" spread—or was spread—round the city, and barricades rose.

Quantities of arms appeared on the streets. The unions' headquarters and the political centres were sandbagged. Machine-guns were placed in strategic positions on the roofs. Firing began, chiefly between snipers.

On this first night, there was almost no regular fighting. The various forces fortified their positions, apparently fearing some such attack as they believed had taken place at the Telefónica. The party executives were taken completely by surprise. C.N.T. representatives saw Terradellas and Aiguadé and received assurances that the police would evacuate the Telephone Building. Then, however, under pressure from the local committees, they went on to demand the resignation of Rodriguez Salas

and Aiguadé. To this pressure the Generalidad could not yield, and negotiations went on all night. The workers left their jobs with the knowledge that next day they would be fighting. No orders were given for a general strike.

C.N.T. forces occupied all the outer suburbs, for in Barcelona itself it still had a big majority. In the countryside the division tended in favour of the U.G.T. In Barcelona, U.G.T. members did not come out on the streets, but they did not dare to go back to work for fear of sabotage. In some of the war industries, where the U.G.T. metallurgical Union had the majority, work was continued under armed protection.

There was little fighting in the suburbs, for the Civil Guard, mostly newly-recruited after July 19, were completely outnumbered, and surrendered. In a great ring all round the business and political centre of the city the Anarchists were masters. As on July 19, they had the city more or less at their mercy, but refused to follow up their advantage.

The fighting began in earnest on the morning of the 4th. It was chiefly composed of attacks upon police barracks and counter-attacks by the police. Owing to the occupation of residences for party and union headquarters in the early days of the war, the strategic position was incredibly complex. Rival organisations lived next door to each other, and no fighting was possible beyond a little roof sniping. In some places, a form of non-intervention pact operated.

The use of hand-grenades and dynamite made this one of the most interesting examples of modern street-fighting. After two or three police-cars had been destroyed by grenades dropped from roofs, not a car stirred. Save for the continuous rattle of rifles, pistols and machine-guns, the roar of explosives and the urgent bells of the ambulances, there was not a sound. Hardly a soul stirred on the streets. Nearly all the fighting took place on the roofs. At night, all lights were out, and the

darkness was so thick that it was difficult to see two yards ahead.

There were strange intervals when life suddenly became normal except that there were no trams and no shops or cafés open. These were during the truces, which were kept on the whole honourably. Curiously enough, phones functioned the whole time and lines were not tapped. Some of the Telephones Control Committee were driven up to the seventh floor, which rises above all the surrounding buildings. Here they remained, literally in mid-air, the Shock Police below occasionally sending them up sandwiches.

The C.N.T. and the FAI continually broadcast appeals to lay down arms and return to work. They stated that they were not the aggressors, that they did not wish the fighting, that they were not in any way responsible for it, but that their supporters should be careful not to be tricked again. This particularly mixed appeal naturally had no effect, especially as all Barcelona, on both sides of the barricades, believed that the FAI was really at the head of the movement. This was in fact untrue.

"The lead passed," says Mr. Brockway, "to the extreme Anarchists and the Anarchist Youth. The POUM leadership issued general slogans, such as 'The reawakening of the spirit of July 19', 'The Revolutionary Workers' Front', 'The Formation of Defence Committees'." "The workers were on the streets and our party had to be on the side of the workers," said the official POUM statement issued on May 11.

Negotiations were going on in the Generalidad all this time. Four of the Councillors were unable to reach the building. Companys and Tarradelles refused to be browbeaten into dropping Rodriguez Salas and Aiguadé.

Members of the C.N.T. and U.G.T. National Committees and C.N.T. Ministers rushed up from Valencia: Mariano Vasquez, Garcia Oliver, Federica Montseny, for the C.N.T., Hernandez Zancajo and Muñoz from the

Executive Committee of the U.G.T. All of them appealed over the radio for peace. Garcia Oliver's speech, especially, was an oratorical masterpiece, which drew tears but not obedience.

On Wednesday, May 5, the C.N.T. issued orders to return to work, but the firing went on. The Friends of Durruti, whose agents were everywhere except where there was fighting to be done, issued a leaflet, headed "C.N.T.-FAI" advocating the disarming of the police, the shooting of those responsible for the fighting, dissolution of all parties which "had fought against the workers"; "stay out on the streets," these leaflets advised. The C.N.T. immediately repudiated the Friends of Durruti, who were now being directed almost exclusively by German and Belgian members of the Fourth International.

A temporary solution had been reached in the Generalidad. The Government was to resign *en bloc*, to be replaced by a Provisional Council. Thus the question of the dismissal of Aiguadé was automatically solved. The confused but heavy firing continued, despite orders broadcast at five that evening for a truce, both sides remaining in their positions.

The Friends of Durruti published a proclamation: "A Revolutionary Junta has been formed in Barcelona. All the elements responsible for the subversive attempt working on the margin of the Government must be shot. The POUM must be admitted to the Revolutionary Junta because it has placed itself beside the workers." This appeared more like a broadcast by Queipo de Llano than anything else, and was received coldly. The Revolutionary Junta was never seen. Even the Libertarian Youth disowned all connexion with this manifesto. The POUM, however, published it in *La Batalla* without repudiating its slogans.

That night, the leading Italian Anarchist, Camillo Berneri, Malatesta's successor, was murdered. He had had sole access to complete documentation on the pre-war Italian espionage system in Spain. Thursday morning's

papers gave official figures: 500 dead and over 1,500 hurt.

The truce was observed all the Thursday morning, but firing broke out again after lunch. (There was never any fighting between 1.30 and 3 p.m.) All appeals to return to work were disregarded, and it was clear that the situation was definitely out of hand. The C.N.T. and FAI could not control their men, and the Government's action was hampered by sporadic attacks by police and Estat Catalá bands who could not resist this opportunity of trying to smash the Anarchists. The Patrols Committees appeared not to be participating actively, and Aurelio Fernandez, Eroles' confidant, had publicly appealed for peace; but the Libertarian Youth appeared to have taken over the Patrols' armoured-cars, and these became deadly weapons in their hands. The Coast Militias brought up some .75 guns with which they blew to pieces a number of Civil Guards quartered in the America Cinema. This was the only piece of large-scale damage done to property. It was believed that what was left of the Pino church was to be dynamited, but the local C.N.T. Committee intervened to save it.

The news of the alarming situation in Barcelona spread to the front and the C.N.T. troops at Barbastro and Bujalaroz made some move towards marching on the city. The C.N.T. Regional Committee dissuaded them from carrying out what was probably one of the chief intentions of Franco's *agents-provocateurs*, who, with the Friends of Durruti and elements in the POUM, were so active in spreading the most fantastic rumours.

The Generalidad could not cope with the situation without calling for civil war on a large scale and mobilising the man-power of the U.G.T., the PSUC and the Esquerra. So far, these parties had taken no part in the fighting except to defend their own buildings. Some PSUC members from the Military Schools acted as special constables in the centre of the city, where their smart khaki uniforms with red-and-white armlets made a good impression.

Unless the front was to be abandoned entirely or turned back on itself, Valencia must intervene.

For some weeks, Right-wing circles in the Esquerra and Catalan Action had been discussing the merits of asking for a General who would act as a Military Governor. General Pozas' name was most frequently mentioned. He had been an efficient Minister of the Interior, had achieved notable discipline in his divisions in the Centre and, though stern, was not unpopular. Valencia now sent him as General in Command of the Army of the East, and the Catalanists, though breathing relief, muttered at this infringement of Catalan autonomy. In fact, such a move was perfectly in accordance with the Constitution and the Catalan Statute.

Two warships loaded with armed police and soldiers withdrawn from the Jarama front arrived in the harbour, to be followed by the *Jaime I* shortly afterwards. News came that 4,000 police were coming from Valencia by road.

Fighting began again during the afternoon. Negotiations were held up by the shooting of Antonio Sesé, General Secretary of the Catalan U.G.T., on his way to take up his new position as Councillor. Although the shooting was probably accidental—all moving cars were still shot at regardless—it was generally believed that he had been murdered. Involved negotiations were still going on at the Telefónica, but the police now controlled the lines. It was impossible for the C.N.T. centre in the Via Durruti to communicate with its supporters except by its own broadcasting station, and its messages were easily intercepted.

The C.N.T. was alarmed to hear that the British warship *Despatch* was coming at full speed to Barcelona. At once they revived the old supposition of British intervention. They had believed the same on July 20, for experience in China as well as in Spain during the Republic of 1869 led them to be suspicious of "the protection of British interests". They pointed out that the democratic capitalist

powers would be even more hostile to any revolutionary government in Spain than even the fascist powers would be, and that the Spanish bourgeois parties, Socialists and Communists were depending upon British and French moral, if not material, aid. The usual—and perhaps justified—anarchist persecution complex reinforced the belief that the Barcelona events were a plot to crush them and lead to a compromise solution of the Civil War, a "Vergara embrace", they called it, referring to the Treaty which ended the First Carlist War in 1839. It was emphasised that this Treaty was largely due to the intervention of a British agent.

This fantasy increased the tension, especially as the Generalidad was playing for time until the Valencian forces should arrive. These had a fierce struggle at Tarragona and Reus, and in these places they crushed the revolt without mercy.

All night, the C.N.T. waited for the Generalidad's compromise solution. The fighters on the streets moved uneasily. There were isolated skirmishes. The news from Tarragona was disturbing. It was one thing to face and defeat the comparatively weak forces of the Generalidad, quite another to take on well-trained, experienced and well-armed soldiers furious at having been transferred from the front where they had been making special exertions to relieve the pressure on Bilbao. The easy-going slaughter of the three-day dogfight was over. The fighting had gone on too long, the fighters were tired and eagerly hoped for some solution which would allow them to retire from a pointless and dangerous enterprise with honour and safety. At 4.45 on the morning of Friday, May 7, the C.N.T. broadcast the order to "return to normality".

On Friday the tension relaxed notably. The whole population came out to stroll in the streets and discuss the fighting. Some cafés and bars opened, but there were no trams. There were general sight-seeing tours to admire the barricades, some of them constructed with a skill

worthy of a better cause. These days were an extraordinarily valuable lesson in the art of street-fighting, in which the Barcelonese had always been masters.

As twilight fell, the Valencian police entered the city. Lorry-loads drove down the Via Durruti, in which were situated both Police Headquarters and the C.N.T. Regional Committee. The people gathered outside Police Headquarters applauded the grim, smart-looking men, some of whom stood on the lorry roofs, picturesquely waving their rifles and cheering. There was a moment of tension as the cars passed the C.N.T. One man fired his rifle in the air—probably by accident; with great presence of mind his comrades shouted: "Long live the FAI!"

Next day, the city returned to normal. The C.N.T. broadcast the slogan: "Away with the barricades! Every citizen his paving-stone! Back to normality!" The Valencian Expeditionary Force strolled about the streets, fraternising with the Catalans. Strong detachments were sent up-country to complete the clean-up and assure the frontier. The PSUC and Esquerra town councillors who had been driven out of several towns were able to return.

The whole movement had been extraordinarily confused. Amid the broad masses of the combatants it was certainly instinctive, the traditional method of "manifesting a feeling of discontent". It was the same thing as the risings of 1932 and 1933, Casas Viejas, Arnedo, Bajo Llobregat. Always it had an anarchist content, and the FAI, although it had not participated, had received the unwanted paternity of the movement. The C.N.T., which always really believed its professions of its own nobility of intention—"the only way of defeating the C.N.T.", said one manifesto, "is by excelling it in honourableness, nobility and austerity"—had been placed in an impossible position. Disdaining to take a general view of a situation, which it despised as mere "politics", it lamented the rising but could not disown the actions

of its own "class-brothers". Hence, although its leaders begged for peace with the utmost eloquence and sincerity, even its own supporters could hardly credit its consistency. When the red-and-black flag waved from the barricades, it was hard to understand why Garcia Oliver was appealing with tears for the cease-fire. It was a lamentable misunderstanding, implicit in the whole modern history of Catalonia. The FAI had prepared the atmosphere and even made preparations for an eventual rising "against the counter-revolution", for it was well aware that Anarchism must lose, whoever won the Civil War. Its followers had proved "uncontrollable" because it was in the very nature of anarchist thought that no man should be "controlled" by another.

Anarchist responsibility was intelligible and even inevitable as the result of a long historical process. There were responsibilities more direct and less excusable. The anarchist participation was in its way honest and certainly very Spanish: the intervention of the POUM had not this excuse, and the leaders of the Friends of Durruti were not even Spaniards.

Documents found in two leading hotels proved conclusively that Franco's agents had been actively at work to foment the rising. The actual outbreak had, as usual in Spain, been badly mistimed. There had been a plan for a large-scale rebel landing on the Catalan coast in April, aided surreptitiously by German and Italian ships. Only the fact that these plans fell into the hands of a neutral power had prevented its execution. The Catalan rising had been planned to coincide with the landing.

It had been obvious that it would be easy to exploit a "manifestation of popular discontent" with anarchist tendencies. Another favourable factor was the atmosphere created by POUM's campaigns against the Popular Front and the Government.

The documents referred to "our business manager in the POUM, N.". In the heat of the moment, this was taken

to mean Andrès Nin, who was arrested, along with the other POUM leaders. In fact it almost certainly referred to a prominent German member of the Marxist-Leninist Group inside the POUM.

POUM had openly supported the movement, although it had not initiated it. It did not repudiate the Friends of Durruti's leaflets. It had a loose tactical alliance with the C.N.T., but the C.N.T. leadership refused to take its suggestions, and so POUM deliberately incited the extremer wing, the Libertarian Youth, to continued intransigence.

Sheer irresponsibility marked the conduct of some of the delegates from the International Bureau. Some of their militiamen were home on leave from the front. These were either instructed or allowed to stand guard on the roof of POUM headquarters, where an attack was feared. Luckily, no attack was made. These militiamen had come to Spain to fight the rebels, and it was no part of their business to get killed by the police of the Government for which they were fighting.

There were more sinister—or more irresponsible—matters. One alleged member of the British I.L.P. contingent made a point of impressing upon British journalists that volunteers had signed a paper before they came to Spain pledging themselves to fight for Workers' Control. Although this incredibly dangerous statement was at once denied by the local delegate of the I.L.P., it was only chance that there had been an opportunity to consult him before the story went out. It had always been understood that volunteers for Spain had been recruited simply and solely for the fight against Fascism and entirely without political aim. It was on this basis that the International Brigade was composed of men of every shade of progressive opinion, from Christian Pacifist to Communist.

These minor points are essential, because of the complete distortion of fact which spread in the foreign press both of the Right and of the Left. It was interesting that

Right-wing papers' accounts largely coincided with those of the Extreme Left, though both combined in the Anarchist alibi.

The Government took immediate action against POUM. The *Batalla* offices were occupied and the paper suspended; later, all POUM centres closed. The party itself was not dissolved partly owing to the demand of the C.N.T. that no persecution should result from a battle "in which there were to be neither victors nor vanquished", partly because there had always been a distinction made between POUM militants and POUM militias, and it was considered unfair to penalise relatively good troops for their leaders' political errors. The Sabadell POUM committee, one of the most important branches, had repudiated the Executive's approval of the rising immediately it received the news.

The U.G.T. expelled the POUM leaders and deprived POUM militants of their executive posts in the various Unions. In this it undoubtedly had the practically unanimous approval of the rank-and-file.

No direct measures were taken against the C.N.T. A gradual clean-up of the "uncontrollable" groups which had usurped the FAI's name was carried out in the provinces, and private prisons, such as the famous Convent of San Elias in Barcelona, were closed down. After a bewildering succession of new appointments to Chief of Police, Valencia definitely took over the administration of Public Order—"Public Disorder", the wits called it—in Catalonia. There were few further disturbances, save an occasional raid from air or sea, and the amazing city returned to such normality that it was impossible to notice that it had been through the severest street-fighting in its history.

The events in Catalonia had immediate repercussions in the general military and political situations. It was impossible to make a big diversion on the Aragon or Teruel front to relieve the increasing pressure upon the Basque Country. On the other hand, the appointment of General

Pozas to the command of the Army of the East meant that a big step forward towards the unification of the military direction had been made possible. No longer were the Catalan columns under the direction of an anarchist War Councillor, whose activities might be suspect of a political rather than military objective.

It was obvious that the Caballero Government was responsible for the Catalan disturbances. Galarza, Minister for the Interior, should never have allowed the situation to arise, and his first appointments of Police Chief in Barcelona had been an open gesture towards the C.N.T. One of his nominees had been an officer in the anarchist "Tierra y Libertad" Column.

Largo Caballero as Minister for War had been quite unable to create a regular People's Army and to unify the command. He had taken the "personalist" view that he was the unified command, but at the same time admitted that he knew nothing of military matters. His collaborators had been appointed for reasons of personal friendship, and when an incompetent General was forced out by popular clamour, he merely transferred but did not dismiss him. Both the military and the internal situations had been causing general dissatisfaction for some time and the Barcelona riots brought this to a head.

On May 15, the Communist Party opened the Government crisis, placing before Caballero and public opinion eight demands: (1) democratic direction of the whole life of the country by collective decision of the whole Cabinet; (2) normal functioning of the Supreme War Council, to occupy itself, together with the Minister of War, with all the problems of this Department; (3) immediate reorganisation of the General Staff, appointment of a Chief of General Staff responsible to the Minister of War and Council of War, but with full authority to plan and direct all military operations; (4) reorganisation of the War Commission and creation of a collective directorate

composed of all parties in the Government. The Commission to be responsible to the Minister of War and War Council, but autonomous in everything relating to the appointment and political direction of the Commissioners; (5) the Premier to occupy himself solely with affairs relating to the Premiership; separation of the portfolio of War from the Premiership; (6) elimination of Galarza; (7) the Ministers of War and the Interior to be men enjoying the support of all parties in the Government, and therefore their names to be known before they were definitely appointed; (8) a governmental programme to be drawn up and published on the same day that the new Government took office.

These demands were the purest common sense, and the really surprising thing, to the general public, was that they could give rise to a Government crisis. If these things were so lacking in the Caballero Government, which had held office for nine months, it appeared that only the capacity of the Spanish people for self-organisation could have enabled republican Spain to survive. The People's Army was coming into existence as one of the finest fighting forces in the world, despite lack of material, especially heavy artillery. It was admitted that the really efficient armies were those of the Centre and the South, the victors of Brihuega and Pozoblanco; it was no coincidence that it was precisely in these regions that the Communist Party predominated.

The Communists "considered indispensable the formation of a Government of the Popular Front in which all the political parties and unions were represented". Its press also demanded that the new Government should publicly disapprove of those who had participated in the events in Catalonia.

Caballero appeared to accept these demands, and everyone expected a speedy reorganisation of the Government, which would emerge with more or less the same composition as the last but greatly strengthened by having a reasonable and concrete programme. No

exception was taken to any of the Communists' eight points.

Caballero retired to think over the situation, and suddenly presented a completely new scheme, announcing his resignation if it were not accepted *in toto*. This scheme included a strong preponderance of the U.G.T and C.N.T., an elaborate War Council, of which he himself would be the head as well as Premier of the Government. In effect, it was a bid for a sort of syndicalist dictatorship headed by Largo Caballero.

The general impression was, quite literally, that Caballero had suddenly gone mad. The C.N.T., uneasy in Catalonia, where the Regional Federation had assumed a certain autonomy, swung its whole weight behind Caballero, declaring that it would support only a Government headed by him. But the whole weight of the C.N.T. was no longer what it had been. Its havering during the Barcelona days had dislocated its striking force in exactly the same way as its similar stand had disrupted it temporarily during—by a subtle irony—the Telephone strike of 1932. The political parties refused to be terrorised, although they did not wish to alienate completely a still important, and certainly sincerely antifascist, force in the country. The U.G.T. Executive supported its General Secretary, but the Executive had lingered far behind the rank-and-file. When the Asturian miners, long the backbone of the U.G.T.'s moderate but militant wing, had followed Javier Bueno in his reasoning that, willy-nilly, the Third International could be the Spanish working-class's only salvation, the purely syndicalist tendency in the U.G.T. was broken. The Asturian U.G.T. and C.N.T. had made effective union on March 5 on what can only be described as a common-sense basis; and, although Asturias was entirely isolated from the rest of Spain, its prestige was such that "what Asturias thought to-day Spain thought to-morrow". The common-sense basis was a tendency to follow the line, though not necessarily the resolutions, of the VIIth Plenum of the Communist International, that

is to say, to coincide with the new orientation of Popular Front policy already adopted by Prieto. In Spain first of all this historic Congress was showing the correctness of its analysis, the practical effect of the understanding of "the dialectic of the dialectic", a process which neither POUM nor Caballero could be capable of appreciating. The Government crisis of May 15, 1937, at Valencia may well have begun an entirely new phase in world history.

To none of the parties save to the C.N.T. and to the U.G.T. Executive did the Caballero proposal recommend itself. The C.N.T. membership was puzzled and divided by the sudden adulation of a man whom it had been taught to regard with the deepest suspicion. Caballero resigned, and, despite gloomy forecasts, there was no battle, murder and sudden death. The war could go on.

The C.N.T., which had declared that it would support no Government not headed by Caballero, withdrew its four Ministers. Juan Peiró went straight back to his trade as glazier in Mataró. Probably no other Minister in history had ever gone straight back to the humble trade from which he had come.

The idea of a purely syndicalist Government, without political parties, had failed, although Caballero and a small group round him were to intrigue for its revival. It had been a very interesting conception, although hardly a practical one. Its chief fault lay in the fact that it would have had to introduce forcible and universal union membership in order to remain democratic; and, as in Catalonia, the entry of vast numbers of unorganised persons would have diluted the strength of the unions, creating an unmanageable hotchpotch. It would have meant union collectivisation when, in time of war, nationalisation could be the only efficient system. Even warring capitalist countries discovered this. The syndicalist entry into politics had always been a failure—hence the creation of the British Labour Party—and this historical experience received its most striking confirmation in Spain. Since the

basis of Syndicalism was non-political, it necessarily stultified itself by entering politics. The withdrawal of the C.N.T. from the Negrin Government was the logical result of the fine but false position in which it had placed itself by taking political action on July 19.

The new Government was incomparably the strongest since the foundation of the Second Republic. Dr. Juan Negrin took the Premiership, Economy and Finance, on which he was an expert. José Giral, Azaña's confidant, took Foreign Affairs, still working closely with Alvarez del Vayo, delegate to Geneva and Chief War Commissioner. Prieto's Ministry of Defence now included all the land, sea and air forces. The Basque Nationalist, Manuel Irujo, was Minister for Justice. The Communists, Jesus Hernandez and Vicente Uribe were Ministers for Education and Agriculture. A Catalan Esquerra member, Jaime Aiguadé, brother of Artemio, was Minister of Labour. The Protestant Giner de los Rios, of the Republican Union Party, became Minister of Public Works and Communications. The Interior was held by Julian Zugazagoitia, editor of *El Socialista* in its most brilliant period. There were thus three Socialists, all of the Prietist tendency, two Communists, one Azañist Left, one Republican Union of the Martinez Barrio tendency, one Catalan and one Basque Nationalist. Curiously enough, since the operations in the Basque Country were then in the forefront of the war, Basques predominated, with Irujo, Zugazagoitia, Uribe and Prieto, who, although an Asturian, was deputy for Bilbao.

An important point of strength was that Negrin, Giral, Prieto, Zugazagoitia, de los Rios and Irujo were all experts on international affairs, and that Alvarez del Vayo had not followed the other two of the Triumvirate, Caballero and Araquistain, into the wilderness. This was to be the more necessary very soon, for the Spanish Civil War was becoming increasingly an international problem. There were not only the questions of the naval patrol by the Non-Intervention powers but also the obvious objective

in the northern campaign, the mines and foundries of the Basque country. Here British, French and German capital and rearmament interests interlocked. It was impossible to prevent the rebels' military victory at Bilbao, but it might be possible to set the victors squabbling for the loot.

Negrin, intimate friend of Prieto, with whom he had conducted a long guerrilla against Juan March, was particularly well placed to cope with this situation.

Two days previous to the crisis, the British warship *Hunter* had struck a mine, losing eight killed and fourteen wounded. A fortnight later, the German pocket-battleship *Deutschland* was bombed by loyal planes at Ibiza, with twenty dead and seventy-three wounded.

There could be no certainty as to what happened. Whether the planes or the battleship began hostilities was open to any interpretation. The *Deutschland* had no business at Ibiza, in any case.

On May 31, the German fleet in the Mediterranean bombarded Almeria. Almeria was not a naval base, and there was not the slightest attempt to treat it as such. The barrage began at the top of the town and moved steadily downwards to the harbour. This was sheer cold-blooded massacre as "reprisal".

Despite international protests, which talked of "medieval methods", the fascist powers continued their policy. International law had long ago become an outworn conception, and there were plenty of precedents. Signor Gayada, rather cruelly, continued his comments on the way in which the British Empire had been acquired.

On June 19, the German Government announced that the cruiser *Leipsic* had been attacked twice by "Red" submarines, luckily without damage. The attack had been perceived only by sound-detection apparatus. This, however, was sufficient for Germany, followed by Italy, to withdraw from the naval Non-Intervention patrol, crying aloud about "Red piracy and barbarism".

This move was nicely timed to coincide with the fall of the Blum Government and of Bilbao. On June 13, the "Iron Ring" of defences had been penetrated owing to the treachery of an officer who had long benefited by the famous Basque "exquisite tolerance". For the next week, there was the utmost confusion in Bilbao. The Basque militias turned upon the Asturians, the best fighting force on that front. The Government deserted its President, José Antonio Aguirre, who had taken over the supreme command on May 12 in a vain hope of repairing the past errors. All the barely-concealed Monarchists came into the open, penetrating the nationalist militias and raising barricades against both the Asturians and the Basque working-class militias. The struggle against centralism and militarism had been heroic, but the petty-bourgeois Basque Nationalists could not face the necessity of taking extreme measures in self-defence. Italian mechanised divisions prepared the way against their almost unarmed opponents, and the Requetes of Navarre and Guipúzcoa were given the jackal-work of cleaning up their fellow-Basques and fellow-Catholics of Vizcaya. The remains of the army withdrew to Santander, an untenable position. The mines were not flooded nor the foundries dynamited. Franco's first move was to encourage the return of British engineers. Iron exports, however, began to flow into Hamburg. It had been a costly offensive.

Franco concluded a commercial treaty with Germany on July 19, extending, by a series of individual agreements, the German Commercial Treaty of May 1926 and granting most-favoured-nation treatment. The position after the fall of Bilbao was summed up by the *Boersenzeitung*: "It was to be expected that the Spanish National Government would see to it that the German iron industry was compensated for the loss it had suffered from the illegal intervention of the Red Government in Bilbao in favour of the iron industries of other countries which would be unable to dispute the justice of such a proceeding."

The usual blackmail was applied to England, for whose armament programme Bilbao supplied at least 7 per cent of the necessary ore. Dr. Schacht's organ, *Deutsche Wirtschaft*, pointed out that "just at the moment when an increased supply is so very urgent, a continued shortage of Bilbao ores would cause serious embarrassment to the British rearmament programme".

Both the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail*, which had special facilities for reporting Franco's views, announced that British citizens would not be welcomed back to rebel territory until Franco had been officially recognised by Britain. The *Metal Bulletin* hinted that serious representations might be made to the Board of Trade in view of the report that the bulk of Bilbao ores would now be directed to Germany. The British Government was placed in a dilemma between governmental mercury and rebel iron and pyrites.

Bilbao had fallen, "admired and abandoned by the whole world". The lack of communications between Valencia and the Basque Country as well as the internal situation in Catalonia had made any diversion impossible. Davila pressed on with his Italian allies towards Santander.

The taking of Bilbao, by Italian troops, brought into the open the internal dissensions among the rebels. Local interests came into play, for the Carlists were also Basques and disliked the introduction of foreign allies. The Falange, on the other hand, were favourable to the idea and action of a Fascist International.

The Basque campaign had been directed by General Mola, by far the most competent of the rebel officers. His connexions with the Carlists when Military Governor of Navarre had led them to look upon him as the probable leader of the whole movement, especially in the early days when Franco, Cabanellas, Quiepo de Llano and Mola held independent commands.

The Left wing of the Falange led by Manuel Hedilla in the absence of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, were in favour of carrying out their Twenty-six Points, while

Franco's chief supporters, the Falange Right Wing, issued the slogan: "Win the war first."

Franco was thus attacked from the Left by Hedilla and from the right by Mola's supporters, who had been particularly outraged by a big massacre of hostages in Vitoria on the night of the reported shooting of Primo de Rivera. Troops had to be called out to suppress the Falangist rioters.

On June 3, Mola, in a plane piloted by an "ex"-Anarchist, Chamorro, crashed to his death on the Basque front, as his leader Sanjurjo had crashed in Portugal. On June 16, as the attack closed on Bilbao, Hedilla, twice condemned to death, along with other Falangist leaders, was reported to have been shot. At once, there were bloody riots in various places.

Franco became leader of a new unified party, the FET (Falange Española Tradicionalista de las JONS). The name really implied the "co-ordination", in the German manner, of the Traditionalist Carlists and the Monarchists of Renovación Española with what was left of the Falange. The Leader assumed absolute authority, with the right to nominate his successor, and was to be responsible "only to God and History". The organisation's National Council, appointed by the leader, had a "Catholic and Imperial mission"; it would "establish an economic regime transcending individual group and class interests with a view to the multiplication of riches in the service of the people, State, social justice and Christian liberty of the individual".

This was sufficiently vague, contrasting strongly with the almost too-vocal programmes of the various antifascist parties. Nationalisation, collectivisation and so on were concrete matters which could be discussed freely and sensibly. What an "economic regime transcending group and class interests" might mean was not clear, and no discussion was permitted in the rebel press. The lack of definition increased the bitterness of the struggle between the "co-ordinated" parties; and their quarrels reinforced

those between Spaniards, Germans and Italians. In July and August there were large-scale disturbances behind the rebel lines, suppressed by the dependable non-political Moors, who were given a wide margin of tolerance for wholesale looting, since they were paid in deflated German and Austrian currency or with cheques upon the banks of the cities they had not yet captured, and very often were not paid at all.

While the disturbances on the rebel side and the murders of the few surviving rebels with any claim to governing capacity were necessarily sterile, the struggles between the Antifascists were, although terribly wasteful, a sign of vitality. Unity, Lenin repeatedly declared, must be fought for: unity could not be made by a stroke of the pen, as in the creation of the FET; it could emerge only from fusion, elimination or absorption on the basis of a concrete issue. This had been the basis and the strength of the Popular Front.

The Government was reorganising. The Northern front after the fall of Irun had been more of a liability than an asset. It had been impossible to send supplies, and its chief importance had been to prevent Franco's allies from laying their hands on its rich mining districts and important factories. It was now important to make a diversion from the Santander advance chiefly to prevent a large number of men being transferred to the Madrid front and also to try out the newly-organised People's Army. Before this could be successful, it was essential to clarify the political situation.

The C.N.T. had withdrawn from the Valencia Government, but, after a few days of loud remonstrances, had promised to support it in the industrial field. The local branches of the U.G.T. had sent in promises of support, and the Executive was isolated. Caballero and some of his friends, together with a small group of Socialists of the Extreme Left, coquetted with the C.N.T. to form an opposition alliance, but could not carry the bulk of the U.G.T. with him. The C.N.T. considered that Caballero

had been hardly used, but was unwilling to come out into open opposition again after its recent defeat. It was engaged in proclaiming its undying hostility to any form of armistice.

The idea of an armistice had been mooted abroad, especially when the Non-Intervention Committee had proved its uselessness after Germany and Italy had been allowed to withdraw from the Naval Patrol following the hypothetical *Leipsic* incident. The bombardment of Almeria by the German fleet had made a deplorable impression among Conservatives as well as among Liberals. The withdrawal of "volunteers" was raised, but no formula could be found. The British Government, forced by its own behind-the-scenes pressure to submit a plan, made a proposal that Franco's belligerent rights should be recognised "as soon as the Committee is satisfied that a substantial evacuation of volunteers" had taken place. Maisky, for the U.S.S.R., pointed out the difficulties and inconsistencies of this scheme and asked what was a "substantial evacuation" and how could it be proved. The British Government declared that it could accept only the approval of the whole scheme or none of it. Shortly afterwards, the whole idea was literally torpedoed by an outbreak of piracy in the Eastern Mediterranean, far from Spanish waters, English ships not being spared. There was evidence that the responsible planes and submarines were not under the control of Salamanca.

This piratical activity killed all hope of the utility of Non-Intervention and most prospects of immediate mediation. Mussolini had stated that there were no Italian volunteers in Spain and that, anyway, the Italian volunteers were not defeated at Brihuega, but had avenged their defeat there by the capture of Bilbao. This Mussolinian logic was completed by a declaration on July 1 that he would not withdraw volunteers from Spain; and on the 8th, Franco stated that the withdrawal of volunteers was impossible.

The capture of Bilbao was balanced in August by the first really big battle waged by the People's Army. It was

entirely successful. Planned as a military "show-down", the armies fought for two weeks over a fourteen-mile stretch centring on Brunete, west of Madrid. Both sides used all their available resources. Despite a huge concentration of arms, men and over 300 planes, the rebel counter-offensive petered out. The Italian infantry had again proved a failure, and, despite terrible losses, the Government had won one of the few pitched battles of the war. The rebels had captured important towns, but they had not won any major battle save the unequal struggle in the Basque Country. There had been nothing like a real fight at Badajoz, Talavera, Toledo and Malaga. Peguerinos, Medelin, Villareal, Brihuega, Pozoblanco, Brunete showed a steady improvement in the Republican Army's fighting capacity; and by the time of Brunete reserves were being trained and equipped faster than Italians could be landed.

The Negrin Cabinet at once set about restoring order in the rear. "That side will win", said Prieto with his usual sceptical caution which many called pessimism, "which has the healthiest rearguard."

Despite the colossal wastage of life and munitions, the May riots in Catalonia had at least precipitated a solution of immediate political problems. The POUM had been eliminated. The FAI had lost prestige. The C.N.T. was faced with the necessity of employing a little common sense in time of war and was responding with honourable intentions if with some difficulty.

Gradually, the wilder economic experiments were liquidated in view of war needs. Certain industries were decollectivised. It was proposed to dissolve the Patrols Committees, from which all parties save the FAI and POUM had withdrawn. A Popular Army of the East was rapidly trained, and, in late August, was able to support a big offensive towards Saragossa and take Belchite. The public transport services were to be taken out of the hands of the C.N.T. Transport Syndicate, which had made of them a lucrative but somewhat

irregular business, and transferred to the Municipality. Shock brigades and Stakhanovism began to be the rule in the war industries, which were now turning out three fighting planes a day.

The Generalidad crisis, which had been in effect permanent for the past five months, was solved by an impatient, somewhat high-handed, but popular gesture by Companys. As usual, a solution had been reached and published when last minute difficulties arose. Companys wished to include a notable Catalan scholar, Dr. Bosch Gimpera, of the Rightist Catalan Action, as Minister without Portfolio. This was a gesture towards the broadening of the Popular Front to include those who were discontented by Valencia's assumption of the military and police services in Catalonia. The C.N.T., justly complaining that Bosch Gimpera did not represent any one in particular and that a Minister without Portfolio was so much dead-weight in a Cabinet, went on to assume that his inclusion was a gesture towards a pact with the rebels. The C.N.T. representatives refused to attend the first Cabinet session. Companys broadcast the challenge: if they did not appear within two hours, he would reconstruct the Government without them. They did not appear; and with an expressive Catalan "*prou!*"—which might be translated "no more shilly-shallying!"—the President formed a Cabinet composed of the Esquerra, PSUC, Rabassaires and Catalan Action, Bosch Gimpera becoming Councillor for Justice.

Next day, the C.N.T. stated that it would henceforth confine itself to the industrial field, work for unity with the U.G.T. and not place obstacles in the way of the Generalidad. "Government", it stated rather ruefully, "was never the C.N.T.'s strong suit."

Companys' solution smacked of the "personalist" policy which had made Caballero objectionable; but in his case there was every excuse. Someone had to say "*prou!*"; and there was no one so authorised as the President who was, after all, the successor of Maciá' the Liberator. Companys' weavings in and out of the complexities of Catalan politics had not always met with universal approval. In Catalan intrigue, a man was too often judged by his unwanted friends; and, at various times, every party, from Estat Catala to the FAI, had praised "our revered President" and denounced any detractor as traitor. The consequence was that every time some new party broke the monopoly of adulation, Companys became anathema to his late friends. Just before the fall of Bilbao, Companys himself, a sick man with his physical exhaustion increased by his inability to deal with the "uncontrollables" and by a widespread campaign respectfully suggesting that he had served his purpose and had become an obstacle, was thinking of resigning. The fall of Bilbao, he said, would make resignation appear desertion, and he stayed. But he had become an obstacle by his own political cleverness; he complicated things. His "personalist" policy had been forced upon him, but it was no longer time for "personalist" policies. He stayed on sufferance. The man who had had the acumen to offer complete political power to the C.N.T. after July 19, when he knew it would be refused, was no longer needed to control it. Companys could retire with all honours whenever necessary, for even the FAI had radically changed.

On July 4, the Peninsular Plenum of the FAI decided to alter the whole character of an organisation which in just ten years had made an indelible mark on Spanish history. The FAI, the conspirators *par excellence*, were to become members of a legally registered organisation. Dogmatic foreign Anarchists, who had stuck steadily to their principles and held nudist picnics while their Spanish mates died for an ideal respectable at least if misguided, were furious. This Plenum, confirmed by a Conference of Regional Committees in Valencia on July 11, marked a turning-point in the history of the anarchist movement, and possibly of Spain.

"Although affirming our libertarian principles more strongly than ever, we must become more efficient in action and in the application of revolutionary methods. . . . The FAI will not be able to fulfil its mission completely if the war is lost." The original system of small groups was suitable to the old conspiratorial conditions, but lacked flexibility under the present circumstances. "We ourselves do not know the faculties and attributions which correspond to us."

Permission was now given to Anarchists to accept posts in all "public institutions". The FAI was no longer to be a co-optive body, but was opened to "every manual or intellectual worker who accepted the general line and was willing to co-operate in realising it". He was bound to carry out all missions entrusted to him by the appropriate Committee, provided such missions had been previously approved by the Assemblies and Congresses. An important provision was that any member of the FAI appointed to public office could be disauthorised or forced to resign if the organisation disapproved of his activities.

The Secretary of the FAI Peninsular Committee stated three weeks later that the organisation had over 160,000 members throughout Spain.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party had been agitating for the fusion of the Communist and Socialist Parties into the "Single Party of the Proletariat". The Youth Movements had long been so fused, and fusion had been achieved, on a smaller scale, in the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia. The summer of 1937 was a period in which issues in Spain were becoming increasingly clarified by contact with the catalytic of civil war. Party lines, political divergences, personal ambitions and capacities could be judged by one supreme test: their efficiency for war purposes.

POUM had held that the war could only be won by making a social and economic revolution at once. Bitter experience had shown that revolutionary experiments, made by the C.N.T., not the POUM, which had made

nothing but an insurrection, had created merely chaos. Certainly, the Spanish Revolution had been carried forward a long way since Azaña had announced his intention of making it, six years before. Things could never be the same again. But the war had to be won by the arms-factories' capacity for production, by the harvests, by the mobilisation of capital and above all by the creation of an efficient People's Army. In January, the fate of the Spanish Civil War seemed to depend on manœuvres in the foreign capitals and at Geneva. In August, it again depended upon Spain itself. The Spanish Republic had failed to command success; it now had to do more, and deserve it. It had to provide factors which would upset the calculations of National Governments and spur the hesitations of wavering labour movements. The battle of Brunete, even more than the constitution of the Negrin Government, was to be the beginning of a fourth phase in the Spanish Civil War.

The first phase had been that of the Giral Government, between July 19 and September 4, 1936; the second that between the fall of Irun and the Catalan crisis of December; the third that of antithesis resolved into synthesis, the liquidation of chaos and the emergence of a real Civil War Government, the unification of the regions, the military command, the Army, the administration.

The Spanish Republic, attacked by military rebellion seconded by foreign military, economic and political intervention, had started from far behind scratch on July 19, 1936: after a year of war, in which its survival, not its lack of resounding victories, was surprising, it had become a power to be reckoned with, not only nationally but internationally. It had had to face overwhelmingly superior forces, the sabotage of international capital, the disorganisation and half-heartedness of international Labour. Its representatives had to hear Mr. Ernest Bevin, leader of the biggest surviving Labour movement, esteemed member of an International to which their organisation belonged, state at a meeting of the L.S.I. and I.F.T.U.

in London in March that he was "speaking in the name of the whole British labour movement" when he refused their appeal for aid. The Spanish delegation withdrew from the Conference. The *Daily Herald* made no reference to Mr. Bevin's remark. Aged Emile Vandervelde, chairman of the Second International, said that the organisation which had somehow survived 1914 was now dead.

After the bombardment of Almeria, Dimitrov, for the Third International, sent a telegram to the L.S.I. and I.F.T.U. proposing a Joint Contact Committee of all three Internationals. De Brouckère, Chairman of the L.S.I. Executive, agreed, but was unable to overcome the opposition of the British delegation. At last, however, on June 21, the three Internationals decided on a common policy at Annemasse, after the resignations of De Brouckère, Adler and Roosbrock (Treasurer of the L.S.I.) had been refused. The two general demands, also accepted previously by the Joint Council of the T.U.C. and the Executives of the Labour and Parliamentary Labour Parties, were: immediate action by the League of Nations to end acts of aggression against the Spanish Government; restoration without delay of the right of the Spanish Government to buy arms. It was not much, but it was something.

While international Labour fumbled in a well-meaning effort to help Spain by reliance upon a body controlled by their own hostile Governments, Santander fell. On August 27, all Italian newspapers emphasised that this was an Italian victory. Lists of casualties and the names of the ten Italian generals who directed the fighting were given. Mussolini replied to a telegram of thanks from Franco: "I am particularly proud that the Italian Legionaries have, during ten days of hard fighting, contributed mightily to the splendid victory of Santander, and that their contribution receives coveted recognition in your telegram. This brotherhood of arms, already close, guarantees the final victory which will liberate Spain in the Mediterranean from any menace to our common civilisation."

The truth was out. Issues were clear. Republican Spain was fighting a war of national independence. The existence of the People's Army and the possibility of the creation of the Single Proletarian Party could still bring victory even if the legitimately-elected Spanish Republican Government found itself "admired but abandoned by the whole world".

VII

SOCIAL CHANGE

THE SITUATION WAS not much clearer than it had been at the beginning of the war. Militarily, it was a dead-lock. Politically, the situation had resolved itself into a matter of the external and internal politics of Italy, Germany, England, France and the U.S.S.R. Economically, it was still almost entirely dictated by the necessity of creating a war industry and caring for war supplies and by the problem of the acquisition and disposal of foreign currency in relation to the apprehensions and intrigues of foreign holders of raw materials.

Because of this complex situation, the levers of which were outside the control of the antifascist Spaniards, it was very difficult to see the extent of the social change that had been effected. Several parties proclaimed loudly that the war and the revolution were inseparable; even the petty-bourgeoisie expressed through its most intelligent representatives such as Companys and Prieto the feeling that "things could never be the same again and the workers had won a very much larger share in the direction of the country".

Indubitably, the movement of July 19 had begun as the mere continuation of April 1931 and October 1934, sharing the characteristics of both. This was shown, in July, by the fact that the military rebellion was simply the continuation of Sanjurjo's *putsch* of 1932. The Spanish military rebellion relied upon the semi-aristocratic officer caste, the younger sons of the upper classes, enrolled in the Falange Española, and upon the Navarrese peasants of the Requetes, entirely controlled by the clergy. In

Robles' Acción Popular was the nucleus of a mass fascist movement, but Robles was never popular with his allies and his followers were soon relegated to much the same position as that held by some of the bourgeois fractions of the antifascist front. Simplifying, Franco possessed an S.S. (the Falange), but never an S.A.

The petty bourgeoisie, strong only in the autonomous regions, unhesitatingly opposed the movement, after Martinez Barrio's short-lived attempt at conciliation by the "Maura plan". The Catalan Esquerra and the Basque Nationalists, despite their class limitations as fighters, put all their force into opposing reactionary centralism.

The logic of the Spanish Civil War was determined by the circumstance that the Spanish Antifascists were fighting against an *offensive* movement of the reactionary classes, a movement opened at a time when those classes were, dialectically, on the defensive against the latent revolutionary movement of 1934. It was easy for many observers to mistake the symptoms of revolution for the fact. Obviously, the symptoms could not have existed if the fact had not been latent; but it was an error, at the close of 1936, to mistake the promise for the present reality. There were many contradictions yet to be solved.

In Catalonia, the casual visitor might well have supposed that the revolution had already been accomplished. The Generalidad Council was composed of more or less equal representation of the two Unions, the Marxist and the Anarchist, and the petty-bourgeoisie, with a petty-bourgeois President who was publicly moving further every day towards at least acquiescence in the Unions' demands.

In everyday life there was a form of proletarian rule, amounting almost to dictatorship, said the socialist organ, *Treball*. A rich man could not direct his business without at least consulting a Workers' Committee; he could not withdraw more than a certain amount of money from the bank or keep it in his house; he could neither buy nor drive a car without the workers' permission; the police protecting his person and property were workers; he could

not buy more than a certain amount of most commodities, nor could his provisions-dealer deliver goods at his house. If he wished to go into the country, he had to ask the workers for a pass. He had to provide a certain amount of household linen for worker refugees. He could not dismiss his employees or servants. He was liable for military service to fight with the workers against his fellow rich men. He could no longer live in luxury on his director's fees. He did not like to wear a hat on the streets.

Many factories and firms had been expropriated by the workers and run on a co-operative basis. Enterprises employing more than 100 workers were collectivised by Government decree. Only very small businesses could function without workers' control. The framers of the Collectivisation Decree, to do them justice, always declared that this was simply a transitional measure tending towards socialisation later. It was a weapon, a means, not an end.

Striking in such declarations, publicly and frequently made by such prominent Anarchists as Juan Fábregas, Councillor for Economy, was that they showed the immense difference between Spanish Anarchism and the conventional conception still obtaining in other countries. It was always the objection to historical Anarchism that by shooting a King or a capitalist nothing whatever was achieved: it was well nigh impossible to liquidate a whole royal family or an entire board of directors. This was, in actual fact, an unfair accusation, since these tactics were not employed even by the Russian Nihilists, and political assassination was always more of a wild emotional protest than a tactic. But the fact that the Spanish Anarchists could think in terms of organisations and systems rather than of individuals was a big step towards an intelligent revolution.

In the Resolution of December 28, 1936, the Communist International Executive Committee not only fully approved the action of the Spanish Communist Party but added:

"The strengthening of fraternal relations with the Anarchists . . . has been extraordinarily facilitated by the fact that the C.N.T. has proved in practice its ability to draw correct tactical conclusions from the circumstances." This statement is as important as the entry of the C.N.T. into a Socialist-Communist-Republican Government.

Great changes had come about even in six months in the structure and administration of the three fundamentals of government: legislature, executive and judiciary. All the new apparatus was, however, by the nature of things, transitional.

Legislation was carried out by decree. The Cabinet which issued the decrees was quite unlike any other Cabinet in the world. An important section, the four Anarchists, were not even members of the Cortes. The Cortes still existed, and met periodically to hear the Ministers account for their legislation and to ratify the Basque Statute. The Cortes Standing Committee met monthly to assure an astonished world that a "state of alarm" was necessary in Spain. The Catalan Parliament existed in theory, despite the C.N.T.'s protests; but this odd body continued its tradition of being perfectly useless when it existed and an excellent grievance when suppressed.

While the Spanish and the Catalan Governments stood firmly on the basis of the Constitution, this strange state of affairs had to continue, a polite fiction but possibly a future weapon: the Cortes might, under certain circumstances, become a Convention.

The executive was naturally subordinated to military needs. At the end of the year, the Valencia Government took steps to fuse all the various police corps and the political patrols into a single Junta of Internal Security, under the orders of the Minister of the Interior. The U.G.T., the PSUC and the Esquerra suggested the same in Catalonia, but here local political issues came into play.

The judicial system had been profoundly modified by the creation of the People's Courts formed by representatives of all the antifascist parties. Their action was

not more unjust and a great deal more human than that of the old professional courts. Justice was made vastly speedier and cheaper. A kind of Appeals Court had been set up in Catalonia to examine the People's Courts' sentences, so that the Councillor for Justice, who reported on the cases to the whole Generalidad Council, had a very large measure of power. While the Courts dealt only with proved rebels of July 19, the matter was not of great importance, except in so far as many of the accused were related to more or less influential persons in the Esquerra, who, thinking perhaps of their own position, did not like the idea that a man was suspect because he was rich. In justice it must be said that the Barcelona People's Courts rarely sentenced a man for his ideas or social position but simply for his proved activities, that acquittals were frequent and popular. In the provinces, however, there were certain cases against which the extremist parties were the first to protest.

The political importance of the Appeals Court would appear when the trials dealt with presumed traitors, persons who had insinuated themselves into the various antifascist organisations. In the early days, the organisations had dealt with their own traitors severely and expeditiously. But all parties recognised that this system opened the way to all kinds of abuses and that the People's Court could be the only judge of the matter.

The Valencia Government created labour camps, an economic and a humaner method of treating the hundreds of persons who were in prison not for any actual seditious behaviour but because they had belonged to Right-wing organisations, were obviously disaffected to the Popular Front, and, if released, might well join the famous "Fifth Column". Many were set to work on a new Valencia-Madrid road.

Diego Abad de Santillan, declaring that he had always been a heretic, told a meeting of C.N.T. militants: "Instead of condemning an enemy to thirty years' jail, I would sentence him to build five miles of road or plant

a hundred thousand trees." He had always been hostile to the idea of prisons, but thought it was far humaner in the early days of the rebellion to preserve them instead of executing the people's enemies right and left. Daily executions, he added, had no effect and merely served to satisfy certain "repugnant morbidities".

The U.G.T. representative who took Nin's place abolished the Appeals Court, restoring liberty of judgment to the People's Courts.

There were several other very important changes in legal ideas and procedure. As has already been related, both marriage and divorce were immensely cheapened and speeded up. Coming of age was lowered to eighteen. Women obtained more liberty in many directions. The brothels were collectivised and a vigorous campaign was carried on for the abolition of prostitution. Many of the sexual inhibitions imposed by the Church gradually disappeared. Curiously enough, after the first outburst, there was almost no anti-religious propaganda. The Church, as Church, had simply vanished and, just as by June 1931 no one mentioned Alfonso XIII, so now few people mentioned the clergy. Mariano Vasquez, Secretary of the National Committee of the C.N.T., actually told the foreign press that it was quite possible that a form of private Catholicism would be tolerated in Spain after the Revolution, much in the same way as in the U.S.S.R. Churches might be rebuilt by private subscription, but the convents and monasteries would never again be tolerated.

One of the most interesting creations in Catalonia was the New Unified School, decided upon by a two-days conference of the C.N.T. unions in the early autumn and ratified in a special article of the famous Pact with the U.G.T. and PSUC on October 22. Education had always been one of the fundamental Spanish problems, and although illiteracy was not very extensive in Catalonia, the mere ability to read and write was hardly a satisfactory criterion when the chief reading-matter in the schools

was the Catechism. Even upper-class education in the private schools was not much better, as it was usually controlled by the head master's confessor.

The new education, as one speaker put it, was to be "neither communist, socialist nor anarchist, but rationalist". It was to be based on the teachings of Ferrer Guardia, shot in 1909.

The Council of the New Unified School was created by Generalidad decree on July 27, only a week after the outbreak; in itself an impressive fact.

The Committee was to be presided over by the Councillor for Education, at that time the poet Ventura Gassol. It consisted of four representatives from the U.G.T. (Spanish Federation of Educational Workers), four from the C.N.T. (Liberal Professions Union), and one each from the Council for Education, the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the Committee of the Industrial University and the Fine Arts School.

The New Unified School was based on the Spanish Constitution and the Catalan Statute, which defined its four ideals: "Labour, Freedom, Social Justice and Human Solidarity."

The School was to cover the whole of the child's life from its birth until its education was finished. Teaching was to be in Catalan up to the age of six, then strictly bi-lingual.

The curriculum was to be decided by consultations between the Unified School Committee, the teachers, and a Parents' Committee, which was to control the school under supervision by the Generalidad. In the High Schools, there would be formed joint councils of teachers and pupils.

Important school building activity took place, especially in the provinces. The Workers' University was created. The Generalidad obtained from the Government the educational rights not originally included in the Statute. The Basques also obtained their long-desired national University.

Parallel with these legislative, executive, judicial and cultural developments went a fundamental economic change: the Collectivisation Decree. What precisely happened is extremely hard to assess, chiefly because the same word had different meanings in different places. Property and enterprises were "collectivised", "socialised" "nationalised", "municipalised", "controlled", "appropriated", "occupied", "taken over" (*incautado*), "supervised" (*intervenido*). All these terms covered the legalisation, to a greater or less degree, of an action taken by the workers themselves, when they simply occupied first the factories and businesses whose owners had fled or been liquidated, then those essential for war purposes.

The eventual regularisation of this state of affairs was aimed at by the creation of the Economic Council of Catalonia, the programme of which was:

(1) Regulation of production in accordance with the necessities of consumption.
(2) Control of foreign trade.
(3) Collectivisation of big estates, respecting small property.
(4) Reduction of urban rents.
(5) Collectivisation of big industry, public services and transport.
(6) Confiscation and collectivisation of all enterprises abandoned by their owners.
(7) Encouragement of co-operatives for distribution and collectivisation of the big distributive enterprises.
(8) Workers' control of banking leading to complete nationalisation.
(9) Workers' control in private firms.
(10) Placing of unemployed workers on the land and in industry, encouragement of agricultural production, resettlement of city workers on the land, creation of new industries, electrification of Catalonia, etc.
(11) Abolition of all indirect taxation in favour of the single tax.

In point of fact, about a dozen different systems prevailed. There were branches such as banking which were "*intervenido*", controlled by a Workers' Council, sometimes including the former director, who might stay on at his work at a salary equal to that of a highly-skilled worker, 1,500 pesetas a month, and by a delegate from the Generalidad. Other industries were "*intervenido*" by the Workers' Council and a delegate from the Union. The taxis were about 80 per cent in the hands of the C.N.T. Transport Union, and were run by it as a commercial undertaking, the drivers receiving a fixed wage. Many cafés were collectivised, being run by the waiters on a co-operative basis. Tips had already been abolished. Some enterprises, such as the smaller hotels, ruined by lack of visitors and the imposition of non-paying refugees (who were later moved to converted convents, the Hotels Pasionaria and Federica Montseny) applied for collectivisation so that the unions would pay wages and provide cash for food, etc.

Other enterprises, abandoned by their owners, were "*incautado*" and run by Workers' Councils for their own profit. The real disadvantage of this was that it merely intensified the faults of capitalist competition and created a "new form of bourgeoisie", as many papers complained, while most of them refused to pay the bills outstanding on July 19, thus creating even more confusion and placing other "*incautado*" enterprises in a very difficult position.

The same confusion was apparent in the countryside. In theory, the big estates, rare in Catalonia, were to be collectivised. In Andalusia the peasants had already done this and were farming in the manner of the Russian *kolkhozes*. The Catalan peasants, with their smallholder mentality, more French than Spanish, did not want this. Their ideal was the one-family farm. It was also hard to persuade them not to kill their cows and chickens for meat, for the Barcelona market was voracious and profitable, even with the huge speculation carried on by the middlemen.

A transitory measure was the "municipalisation" of the land. This responded to the anarchist idea of autonomous municipalities organised federally, but in practice it was uneconomic. There was also a project to municipalise all urban property.

The municipalities had gone through much the same stages as the Generalidad. The Azaña and Casares Quiroga Governments had been unable to hold municipal elections, and although the Generalidad had decreed the return of the former corporations displaced after October 6, 1934, by Government Commissioners, there was still considerable confusion on July 19. The old municipalities were more or less forced out by Village Committees or Defence Committees, composed of representatives of all parties, many of which had never been represented there before. Later, the Committees were changed back to Municipalities, and later still, the Municipalities were called Councils.

One of the political consequences of the municipalisation of the land was the rapid growth of the U.G.T.'s Land Federation, which had hardly existed previously in Catalonia, and counted some 20,000 members by the end of the year. This was, however, partly due to the decree making it compulsory for the peasants to join a union. The Rabassaires tended to support the U.G.T. both in the Councils and in the Generalidad.

Despite two important agrarian congresses held by the C.N.T. and others by the PSUC, the POUM and the Rabassaires, no definite decision was reached. This was inevitable; for land-tenure conditions in Catalonia differed widely from those in the rest of Spain, so that it was impossible to apply to the Catalan farmers and peasants alone general measures, of which the application would have averaged out over the whole country. While the war lasted, no radical solution for the land problem could be found. The Generalidad simply suspended temporarily all the contracts of tenure in existence before July 19, whether they conformed to the famous Land Tenure Law or not.

The original Supplies Committee, at first merely a subsidiary of the Antifascist Militias Committee, came to assume increasing importance and increasing autonomy owing to the magnitude of its task. When the Militias Committee fused with the Generalidad, Supplies, Finance and Economy became separate Councillorships, but the Economic Council was for long so much the most important that there was at one time a project to reform the Generalidad into three supreme Councils: Defence, Internal Security and Economy. The C.N.T., before it entered the Caballero Cabinet, advocated the formation of a National Economic Council.

The Catalan Economic Council kept its importance, and increased it by the Collectivisation Decree. The Decree created—or rather perpetuated—the Works Council and the General Industrial Council.

The Works Council, composed of from five to fifteen members, with proportionate representation of the unions organising the workers in each enterprise, was to be elected by the workers in general assembly. The General Industrial Councils were to be formed by four representatives from the Works Councils, eight representatives from the various unions, proportionate to the number of their members in the factory, four technicians appointed by the Economic Council, and be presided over by a representative of the Economic Council.

The General Industrial Councils were to have a very large measure of liberty and authority, but were to remain in constant contact with the Economic Council and, ultimately, take their orders from it.

Since the Councillor for Economy could take important measures only after consultation with the Generalidad Council, this was still a strictly centralised organisation. It was, however, not impossible that the Councillor for Economy might obtain, like the Councillor for Finance, full powers to act without consulting the Generalidad Council, although the Presidents' signature would be necessary to give the decrees the force of law.

Even before July 19, the country had been breaking up: Catalonia had recovered its Statute, Casares Quiroga had bestowed autonomy on the somewhat astonished Galicians, Prieto was lobbying through the Basque *fueros*, Gil Robles was half-seriously trying for a Statute for Old Castile and Leon, in order to provide a stronghold for the reaction, and Navarre was in frank opposition to Madrid.

By the end of the year, Catalonia and the Basque Country were autonomous, the Valencians had been offered autonomy, but had not pressed the point, owing to the hostility of Castellon and Alicante, Aragon had a Defence Council, presided over by the C.N.T., Asturias and Leon were acting almost independently, cut off as they were from the rest of the loyalist districts. On the rebel side, it appeared that Queipo de Llano in Andalusia and Mola in Navarre had a certain autonomy, despite the proclamation of Franco as Generalissimo of Spain, the Moroccans had been promised their Statute and the Balearics were more or less an Italian colony.

It was important, however, that even the Basques and Catalans consulted Valencia in matters of foreign policy and reiterated their adhesion to the Central Government. The break-up showed no likelihood of going so far as it had in 1869–73, when the whole of Spain had been a tangle of warring provinces. It had had increasing independence thrust upon it by the force of circumstances, and neither seized nor demanded it; Catalan separatism, indeed, on the only occasion on which it became at all militant, was shown to be definitely disloyal, not only to the Republic but to Catalonia.

The federal structure could admit local varieties of organisation. Collectivisation could mean one thing in the Andalusian countryside, another in the Catalan factories. The course of the war, objective conditions rather than will, would determine whether the process would be centripetal or centrifugal.

In Part I of this book, the five fundamental problems of Spain were discussed: the land, the Church, capitalism,

the Army, the national question. Of these, the Church and national problems had solved themselves by disappearing. The creation of a new Popular Army was the biggest of all the problems the Revolution was facing. The problem of capitalism was being attacked through collectivisation, but still remained acute, and could not possibly be solved until the end of the Civil War. The problem of the land remained, as ever, the fundamental problem of Spanish society.

On January 4, 1837, the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent wrote from Bilbao: "We are extremely glad to announce that on Christmas Day, the Spanish general Espartero, powerfully aided by the crews of the British ships on the station, and by detachments of the royal and marine artillery, succeeded in raising the siege of Bilbao, completely routing the Carlists, and capturing the whole of their artillery and a considerable number of prisoners. . . . We expect that the moral advantage of this signal victory will be of peculiar advantage to the liberal cause."

A hundred years later, the German fleet was off Bilbao, capturing and handing over to the Carlists ships of the "liberal cause". Sheltered by the Non-Intervention Committee, the British Government was even able to promise to make it an offence for Englishmen to join the ranks of the "liberal cause" as volunteers, at a time when some thousands of German and Italian regulars were landing at Cadiz.

There was no free field for the development of Spanish internal processes. It was impossible either to neglect or to count upon the chance of an international war which would divert attention from Spanish affairs. "Is there not," Engels asked in 1891, "perpetually hanging over our heads the Damocles' sword of another war, on the first day of which all the chartered covenants of princes will be scattered like chaff; a war of which nothing is certain but the absolute uncertainty of what will be its outcome, a race-war which will subject the whole of

Europe to devastation by fifteen or twenty million armed men, and is not only already raging because even the strongest of the great military states shrinks before the absolute incalculability of its final outcome?"

In the welter of blood and treachery, of intrigues and heroism, of injustice, idealism, error and initiative which filled the first half-year of the Spanish Civil War, three tremendous facts stood out: Madrid did not fall, the International Columns, voluntarily enlisted, fought for antifascist Spain, and the Catalan workers of the General Motors factory in Barcelona produced, in four months, a completely national-made lorry.

Madrid held. Despite the crucial aid of the International Columns, it could not have held had not the militias and the civil population, so frivolous hitherto that it was hard to distinguish their "*no pasaran*" from their traditional "*no pasa nada*", simply refused to be impressed by the most terrible bombardment to which a city had ever been subjected. It could not have held had not the Fifth Regiment and the Defence Junta organised the war, the civil life of the city and the evacuation of the civil population on correct revolutionary lines.

The International Columns came to fight for Madrid. Many of the leaders had been through almost all the civil wars of the last twenty years; but this was the first time in history that a voluntary political army had gathered from the ends of the earth. They were not the scum of the capitalists lands, cannon-fodder from the slums. Their dead included men like Hans Beimler and Ralph Fox, men whose fame extended beyond the circle of their revolutionary activities. By far the majority had no pressing reason to come to Spain save their burning desire to fight that Fascism which had murdered so many of their friends and class-comrades in almost every country in Europe and the Americas. It was jokingly said that the Spanish Civil War had been almost transformed into a German Civil War on Spanish soil. The German exiles, many of whom fought in a compact body on July 19,

formed the first Thaelmann Century, but later they were in a minority. The Soviet battalions were a myth.

The International Columns were an extraordinary thing in the Europe of 1936. In so many countries the antifascist front had appeared to be merely platonic, but now men actually came to die under unfamiliar bombardment. Unlike the civil wars of 1919-23, this was no last flicker of a world war, though it might well be the first flicker of one. Antifascism had joined hands often with integral pacifism: the example of the International Columns might go far to remove that dangerous illusion.

In Madrid, the Communist Party had gained predominance not by cunning political manœuvres, but by its "seriousness": by the speeches of Pasionaria, the organisation of the Fifth Regiment, the efficiency of its food-distribution, the responsibility for evacuation, the military success of Miaja and Antonio Mije; in a word, by the proved correctness of its general line. In Asturias, it was well on the way to the same results, simply because the reformism of the Miners' Union and the predominant Anarchism of the Regional C.N.T. were, practically and dialectically, incapable of solving the immediate problems. In Catalonia, the C.N.T. had shown remarkable adaptiveness, but its whole tendency was precisely to adapt itself to the general line of the Communist Party. In the Basque Country, the Communist Party alone realised the correct way of reconciling the Nationalist petty-bourgeois reformism with the necessities of civil war and revolution.

Franco's victory would serve only to stress the tragic wastage, the ubiquity of death, the often pointless slaughter, the horrors of lolling child corpses and the huger horrors of the treacheries of intention, of deviation, of stupidity and of weariness; the ruin of a fine land and a fine race of men. To do Franco the utmost justice he may have believed that he was emulating the Cid Campeador, who also fell into strange company; and, charging the windmills of history, have wished to destroy the only progressive force in Spain.

Ultimately, the struggle was between progress and "order". Undoubtedly, progress would be accompanied by upheavals, wild experiments, murders, transitional changes which could bring only suffering until they had found their correct direction. But "order" could only be the order of those Spanish graveyards where, facing the finest landscape in the world, the dead are inserted into a thick wall in square boxes.

The proletariat, the people, has been defeated time after time. It has been victorious only in the U.S.S.R. and, partially, in South China and Mexico. It can afford to be defeated again and again. Military defeat is only the intensification of its normal position. It cannot afford to throw away the chance of victory, for too much is then at stake. The chance of victory lies in unity; not only in one country but over the whole world. The Civil War in Spain is only an incident in the whole world struggle of the working-class for liberation and progress. Not the defeat would be shameful but the betrayal of this historic solidarity. And the result of that betrayal would be simply annihilation: a war of which the workers and progressive classes would inevitably be the first to pay the very personal and painful price of death.

August 1937.