SPAIN
In
Revolution
by E. VARGA

Foreword by L. Sharkey

Written by one of the world’s leading economists—giving the historical and economic background of the Spanish toilers’ heroic struggle against Fascist reaction.

PRICE THREEPENCE
SPAIN! That name is on the lips of every toiler at the moment. Because in Spain is being fought out one of the world's great battles between progress and democracy and reaction, between the working class and lovers of freedom and the mortal enemy—Fascism.

Modern Publishers, in making available the research of Professor Varga, of the Institute of World Politics and Economics, Moscow, into the economic problems and social forces in Spain, place at our disposal the necessary facts and material for the understanding of events in present-day Spain, and consequently enable us to understand the basic driving forces of the Spanish revolution.

For seven years, Spain experienced a dictatorship of a Fascist character under De Rivera, but as a result of the worsening of the situation at the commencement of the world economic crisis, the popular masses asserted their might, demonstrated that Fascist dictatorships can be overthrown by ousting De Rivera and compelling the abdication and exile of King Alfonso XIII and his family. The Republic was proclaimed and parliament (Constituent Cortes) was elected, the government being of a "Left" Republican character with the participation of the Socialists. A Constitution was adopted, laws for the expropriation of some of the big landed proprietors were passed, and also some labor legislation.

But the labor movement was yet weak and divided; the laws remained on paper. This early Republican government, however, sent troops led by Fascist officers against strikers and peasants who were attempting to occupy the large estates. The toilers lost faith in this government, with the result that at the election of December, 1933, the reactionary Monarchists, Church parties, and the Gil Robles Fascists secured a majority.

The "Right" government set about annulling the gains that had been made by the workers, and it was announced that the government would be reorganized and the Fascists of the Gil Robles type included in the Cabinet. A general strike was called, and out of it came the armed uprising of the Spanish proletariat, which in the province of Asturias was successful in holding power for two weeks. This success was based on the heroic Asturias miners and the fact that the united front of
some success, as shown by the “arrest” of four Fokker aeroplanes from Britain by the French authorities, which, it is claimed, were on the way to the Fascists for the purpose of bombing Madrid and the government forces.

At the time of writing the government and the workers appear to be slowly strangling the reactionary revolt. The government is now arming the workers and peasants, something that the Communists pointed to long before the rebellion, as a measure essential to subjugate the reaction. The rapid arming of the workers and peasants will no doubt be the deciding factor in the quelling of the revolt.

The class forces are vividly portrayed in the struggle. Workers’ militia, in the bourgeois press cables, is everywhere seen as the leading element in the struggle against the Fascists. Peasants are reported everywhere joining the workers. But no more clearly can be seen the class alignment than in the Spanish navy. Practically every Spanish battleship has mutinied and arrested the reactionary officers, sons of the big landowners and capitalists of Spain. On the other hand comes the report of the “grandees” hurrying to join the Fascist rebels or scurrying across the frontiers.

In addition to the leading role of the workers and the support from the peasants, a feature of the Spanish civil war is the part played by the women. In all of the activities come reports of the women’s participation, and the cables relate how they are in the firing line, thousands are demanding to be sent to the front, and The Sydney Daily Telegraph publishes a radio picture of a Spanish women’s battalion shouldering rifles and bayonets in orthodox fashion on the march to the battlefields.

The counter-revolutionaries in Spain, the Monarchists, Fascists, bankers, landlords, together with the princes of the Roman Catholic Church, aim at a Fascist dictatorship, at ending the liberties already won by the workers in their long and difficult struggles, aim at forcing the toilers back into the centuries-old slavery.

The workers of Spain are fighting a great historical battle, a battle of the greatest significance in the world struggle between the working class and Fascism. This struggle, it is plain, alarms the Fascist dictatorships in Italy and Germany to the utmost, as they fear the effect the example of the Spanish masses is likely to have on the workers in the Fascist countries.
The Spanish workers, led by the Communists and Socialists in a strong united front, in defending the Azana Government against the reaction are defending the democratic liberties established by mass action in Spain. In doing this, in crushing the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and feudal reactionaries, the Spanish proletariat are preparing the conditions in which the bourgeois-democratic revolution grows over into the Socialist revolution. Lenin showed beforehand how this would occur in the progress of the Russian revolution after the bourgeois revolution in Tsarist Russia, a proposition that was confirmed by the October revolution.

The working class must rush to the aid of the Spanish revolution, now reaching a decision as to which class shall wield political power in Spain. In the event of the establishment of Soviet power, intervention by the Fascist Powers must be prevented. Already Nazi and Italian Fascist warships are in Spanish ports and military aid is being extended to the counter-revolution. A strong campaign in support of the Spanish workers and the prevention of Fascist intervention becomes a foremost task of the labor movement. Defend revolutionary Spain!

L. SHARKEY.

Sydney,
July 31, 1936.
SPAIN IN REVOLUTION

By E. Varga

"Before the emancipation of the working class can take place, Spain must go through various preliminary stages of development and clear a whole series of obstacles out of the way. The Republic offered the opportunity of condensing these stages into the shortest possible period of time and of clearing these obstacles out of the way as rapidly as possible."*

Engels wrote the above words over sixty years ago, but in essentials they apply to the situation in Spain today. During the past hundred years Spanish history has seen a series of peasant insurrections, political mass strikes and protracted revolutions. However, although capitalism as a whole has been in the period of general crisis now for decades, and although it has already been replaced on about one-sixth of the earth's surface by Socialism, Spain, as the only country in Western Europe, is still essentially at the same semi-feudal stage of development as it was sixty years ago. The peasant still pays feudal dues ("Foros" and "Rabacca morta") to the landowners; the power and political influence of the Catholic Church is still tremendous; and the country is still divided up in a feudal manner into more or less independent provinces each under the control of a governor.

The peculiarity of the situation in Spain is that the bourgeoisie has not, despite the long chain of so-called revolutions, brought the bourgeois revolution (as distinct from the bourgeois-democratic revolution) to its logical conclusion, and that now, in view of the threatening proletarian revolution, it has on the whole become a reactionary, counter-revolutionary class. The following was written by Lenin in 1908 concerning the character of the revolution in Russia, but to-day it applies to a very great extent to the situation in Spain:—

"The victory of the bourgeois revolution in Russia as the victory of the bourgeoisie is impossible. This appears to be paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true. The preponderance of the peasant population, its ter-

rible oppression at the hands of the (semi) feudal large landowners, and the strength and determination of the proletariat, which is already organised in a Socialist party—all these circumstances lend a special character to our bourgeois revolution.”

Thus, the carrying out of the most important tasks of the bourgeois revolution, such as the solution of the agrarian problem, falls to the lot of the Spanish proletariat. However, it is precisely this situation which contains the possibility—analogous to the situation in Russia—of the bourgeois democratic revolution being, in certain circumstances, of very short duration only and no more than the introduction to the rapidly following proletarian revolution.

Earlier revolutions in Spain were always protracted, as Marx pointed out in an article on “Revolutionary Spain” published in “The New York Tribune” on September 9, 1854:—

“Spain has never adopted the modern French manner of beginning and ending a revolution, all within the space of three days. Spain’s efforts in this direction are more embracing and protracted. Three years seems to be the shortest period for a Spanish revolution, and its present revolutionary cycle has lasted nine years so far.”*

The present “revolutionary cycle” began in 1930 and is thus in its seventh year. The most important question today is: in what does the present Spanish revolution differ from its numerous predecessors? Or, to put it in another form, what must our Spanish brother party do in order to prevent the present revolution ending in a failure and a new victory of the reactionary forces?

In order to answer this question thoroughly and scientifically it is necessary to go into a certain amount of detail and to give a short sketch of the history and geography of Spain.

* Why Spain Remained a Semi-Feudal Country*

We said that Spain “as the only country in Western Europe” has retained a semi-feudal character down to the present day. This is only conditionally true. Geographically Spain does in fact belong to Western Europe, but judged by its geographic character it is much more akin to Africa than to Western Europe. “Africa begins at the Pyrenees,” says an old proverb. Spain is separated from Western Europe by the tremendous wall of

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* Re-translated from the German.—Ed.
the Pyrenees. Now, although the topmost peaks of the Pyrenees are not so high as those of the Alps, yet the actual passes which traverse the mountains are higher than those which lead over the Alps, and the result is that the Pyrenees represent a much more formidable hindrance to international traffic than do the Alps.

The geographer Reclus stresses the African character of Spain, whilst its neighbor Portugal is, on the other hand, quite Western European in its geographic character. Like Africa, Spain is a country within mountains. Mountain ranges split up the country. Its coastal districts are narrow. Its rivers dry up altogether or develop into raging torrents of water, according to the season, and race towards the coast over a series of rapids which render any regular inland water transport impossible. This geographical character of the country proved a serious hindrance to the development of Spain to national unity out of the feudalist atomisation. Marx’s observations in 1854 (taken from the article previously quoted) are on the whole still valid today, despite the capitalist development which has taken place since then:

“Like Turkey, Spain remained a conglomeration of badly-governed provinces possessing various military insignia and flags of different kinds, and different tax systems. . .”

The building of railways has done something towards ameliorating this feudalist atomisation of the country, but it has not done away with it altogether. In comparison with other Western European countries the railway system in Spain is very undeveloped as the following figures show: At the end of 1932 there were per 100 sq. kilometres 12.5 kilometres of railway track in Germany, 11.6 in France, 14.2 in Great Britain, but only 3.2 in Spain, whose railways are expensive and comparatively little used. Down to the present day there is little movement of the population within Spain and generally speaking people live and die in the places in which they were born. The census carried out in 1930 showed that of the 23.6 million population of Spain and its 50 provinces, only three million Spaniards were living outside the provinces in which they were born.

The climate of Spain is also African. Northern Spain has a very heavy rainfall, but the greater part of the country (Central and South Eastern districts) consists of parched areas with very little rain, and here agriculture must of necessity be very poor unless assisted by artificial irrigation. The harvest yields vary very considerably according to the rainfall, and crop failures are
a regular feature of Spanish agriculture. The great temperature variations, for instance, the intense heat of the Spanish summer, which produces rapid evaporation, add to the harmful effects of the insufficient rainfall for Spanish agriculture. The resulting low and uncertain harvest yields, the periodically returning crop failures accompanied by famine and pestilence which have characterised Spanish history, have hampered the development of agriculture and therefore also of capitalism (very low capacity of the internal market, insufficient possibility of capitalist accumulation) and tended to conserve the existing feudal conditions in the rural areas. And, on the other hand, in the period of capitalism the feudal remnants hamper the development of a rational system of agriculture, and in particular the development of the necessary wide-scale irrigation system, for instance in many of the driest areas of Spain all the water belongs, on the basis of old feudal rights, to some noble or the other, and this man squeezes as much as ever he possibly can out of the peasants in return for the water.

However, historical conditions have tended towards the preservation of feudal conditions in Spain even more strongly than these geographic factors. Up to the year 711 the history of Spain ran parallel with that of the other Western European countries: it was conquered by Rome, it accepted Christianity and adopted a Latin culture, and later on it was overrun by Germanic tribes, but in the year 711, when the Arab conquests were reaching their height, the Mahommedan Prince Gebr al Tarik (whose name is still remembered in Gibraltar) invaded Spain from Africa and conquered the whole of the peninsula with the exception of the mountainous land in the North West. Spain thus became the only country in Europe which was for centuries a centre of Arab-Mohammedan culture.

The period of Arab dominance was a flourishing one for the material and mental culture of Spain. Vast irrigation systems ensured generous harvest yields. Handicraft flourished. The population rose to 30,000,000. The Arab universities in Spain were the only centres of culture, mathematics, natural science, and medicine at a time when the rest of Europe had fallen into pre-Renaissance darkness and ignorance.

The following eight centuries were filled with the struggles of the backward Christian kingdoms of Northern Spain against the Mohammedans. Step by step the Mohammedans were then actually forced back into Africa until in 1492, Granada, the last town in their hands, fell. This eight centuries of warfare left scars
behind from which Spain suffers down to this very day. The land in the conquered districts became the booty of the aristocratic Christian military leaders or of the church. The tremendous latifundia of Spain, the enormous wealth and the vast privileges of the church arose at this time and laid the material basis for that system of feudalism which has continued to exist down to the present day. During the last centuries of the middle ages rich and powerful towns developed in the rest of Western Europe (in Upper Italy, Southern France, Southern Germany, Flanders, and the Hanseatic towns) and became great manufacturing and international trading centres, thus forming the basis for the development of capitalism, but in Spain the towns were destroyed and the population put to the sword.

After the Mohammedans had been driven out there followed the most flourishing period of Christian Spain in the sixteenth century, when Spain was the leading power in Christendom. The Kings of Spain ruled over Central and South America, Holland and Flanders, and were the rulers of the "Holy Roman Empire." However, this political power was not based on the material prosperity of Spain itself, but on the exploitation and plundering which followed on the conquest of Central and South America. A tremendous stream of gold and silver flowed from the New World into Spain, and whole fleets laden with gold and silver brought tribute from the colonies to the Kings of Spain. In his "Géographie Universelle" Reclus declares that in the two centuries from 1500 to 1702 the Spanish colonies sent precious metals to the value of 54 milliard gold francs to Spain.

Nevertheless, this tremendous stream of riches was not followed by any development in Spain, but instead by the economic decline of Spain. The court, the nobles, and the church were those who benefited by it. The riches obtained in this way were used to finance wars and to permit the nobles and the princes of the church to display unparalleled luxury. The wealth obtained from Spain itself was as nothing compared with the wealth that came from colonial robbery. Instead of developing production at home, the riches so easily obtained from the colonies were used to make purchases abroad.

The decline of the Spanish economic system was rapid and complete. Seville, one of the most prosperous of Spanish towns, possessed in its flourishing period over 16,000 looms. During the reign of Philipp V there were only 300 left, and in 1662 the population of the town had
sunk to one-fourth, whilst the vineyards and olive groves in the neighborhood, which at one time had been an important source of its well-being, were almost completely deserted. Toledo in its prime had over 50 wool manufactories, but by 1665 it had only 13. The silk industry of Toledo, which at one time gave a livelihood to 40,000 people, disappeared almost entirely. In Castille, which was once a flourishing province, everything went to rack and ruin, and even Segovia lost its wealth. The decline of Burgos took place with similar speed, and soon its once prosperous and busy streets were empty and dilapidated. In the seventeenth century things went from bad to worse, and the impoverishment of the people defies all description. Even in the neighborhood of Madrid people were dying of starvation.

Spanish economy never succeeded in recovering from this terrible decline, and by 1750 the population of the country had fallen to eight millions. Down to the present day Spain has remained economically backward as compared with its other Western European neighbors. This economic backwardness is the chief reason for the persistent maintenance of feudal traditions and remnants in Spain, and these latter have in their turn greatly hampered the development of a modern economic system on a capitalist basis.

The economic decline of the country necessarily caused a political decline. In hard wars Spain gradually lost its dominant position in Europe, until in the eighteenth century it became politically dependent on France. In the first half of the nineteenth century Central and South America freed themselves from the Spanish yoke, and at the end of the nineteenth century the United States of America deprived Spain of the last vestiges of its once great colonial empire: Cuba and the Philippines. At the beginning of the twentieth century, therefore, Spain was confined to its own territory: an economically backward and poor country with strong feudalist traditions and remnants, a country in which the bourgeois revolution had not yet been carried to its logical conclusion.

There is, it is true, hardly another country in the world which experienced so many insurrections, coups d’état, governmental changes, and “revolutions” as did Spain throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. On innumerable occasions Church property was “secularised” and the Jesuits expelled from the country, for instance in 1767, 1808, 1836, and 1852. But within a few
years the reaction had again secured the upper hand, and everything was again as it had been before: the feudal latifundia owners, the fabulously rich Church, the corrupt court, the innumerable officers' cliques between them continued to rule the country.

The Economy of Modern Spain

With the loss of the remaining valuable remnants of their once tremendous colonial empire, the Spanish ruling classes were compelled to fall back on the exploitation of the people at home. All that was left of the Spanish Empire was the Canary Islands, which were regarded as a part of the motherland, and one or two more or less worthless strips of West Africa. After long and expensive wars with the natives, the Spaniards were squeezed out of the greater part of their Moroccan possessions by the French, and all in all the population of the Spanish colonies today totals about a million souls. Thus compelled to look to Spanish territory proper for objects of exploitation, the Spanish ruling classes began to develop the productive forces of their own country. The ideological reflection of this changed situation was the so-called spiritual renewal proclaimed by "the generation of 1898." The development of the productive forces came about chiefly by means of increased capital imports. Exploitation by foreign capital was therefore added to the already existing exploitation by the feudal landowners, the corrupt bureaucracy with the king at the head, and the "national" bourgeoisie. Analogous to the situation in pre-war Germany, Spanish economic policy brought about a compromise between the large landowners and the industrial bourgeoisie at the expense of the "consumers," i.e., the working masses. Important duties on agrarian and industrial commodities went hand in hand, with the result that Spain soon had the most formidable customs barrier in the world. The parallel increase in the prices of agricultural and industrial goods increased the rate of exploitation, limited the purchasing power of the home market, and represents, side by side with the strong feudalist remnants, one of the chief causes for the backwardness and impoverishment of the country. Although Spain is after France the biggest in area of any capitalist country in Europe, the population is only 24,000,000. There are only 50 inhabitants per square kilometre, as compared with 76 in France, 133 in Italy, 140 in Germany, and 264 in Great Britain. Within Spain there are great differences in the
densities of the population, as the following figures show: Soria has 15 inhabitants per square kilometre, Huesca 16, Biscaya 224, and Barcelona 234. Although therefore the Spaniards have plenty of “room,” the population is (literally) beggarly poor, and the distribution of the “national” wealth is extremely uneven. There are latifundia owners who control whole provinces containing millions of landless peasants, i.e., land workers. There are fabulously rich princes of the Church and poor parish priests who are practically beggars. There are highly-paid generals and other officers and at the other extreme soldiers who are not even decently fed. These tremendous contrasts are to be met with not only on the economic field, but on all fields of Spanish life; for instance, there are world-famous scholars and scientists in Spain although illiteracy is a mass phenomenon. According to “The Statesman’s Yearbook” for 1935, in 1933 45.46 per cent. of the population of Spain over six years of age could neither read nor write, as compared with 4.2 per cent. in France over the age of ten years.

Despite the great area of the country as compared with the population figures, the feeding of the population is by no means guaranteed from the products of the soil. Although 57 per cent. of all persons employed are at work in agricultural occupations and Spain is therefore a definitely agricultural country, the harvests hardly suffice to feed the population.

In a country in which 57 per cent. of the population is engaged in agricultural pursuits, only 40 per cent. of the land is actually in use, and of this a quarter lies fallow every year. Undoubtedly the lack of rain over great areas of the country, coupled with the intense heat, represents great difficulties for any extension of Spanish agriculture, but these difficulties are not by any means insuperable. Thanks to the modern technique of “dry farming,” American agriculture secures normal harvests from areas whose rainfall is approximately the same as in these Spanish districts, and further, the extension of the irrigation system in certain parts of Spain would tremendously increase the harvests. The available figures for irrigated and non-irrigated areas show that irrigation at least doubles and occasionally increases the harvest yield fivefold. However, only about one-half of the area suitable for irrigation is actually irrigated. Although a slow improvement has taken place in recent years, the average harvest yields in
Spain are lower than those customary in the rest of capitalist Europe. The average wheat yield per hectare in capitalist Europe was 15.1 double cwt. in 1933. In Spain the figures were 9.1 for the years 1928 to 1932, 8.1 in 1932, and 10.5 in 1933.

The causes of this agricultural backwardness of Spain are above all the tremendous extension of latifundia ownership, the fact that the land actually in the possession of peasants is split up into extremely small holdings, and the oppressive feudal dues which still hamper the peasantry and make it impossible in the vast majority of cases for them to adopt improved methods of agriculture owing to the lack of the necessary means of production.

There are, unfortunately, no complete statistics available for the whole of Spain with regard to the distribution of land, but a Right-wing bourgeois reactionary, Castrillo Santos, writes the following in his "Four Years of Republican Experiment, 1931-35":

"Ninety-five per cent. of the total agricultural undertakings in Spain comprise only about 5,000,000 hectares of land, whilst 0.35 per cent. of the total comprises 9,000,000 hectares. One million owners possess 6,000,000 hectares of land, whilst 100,000 owners possess 12,000,000 hectares. These contrasts represent in the last resort the social problem of Spanish agriculture."

In addition, the figures available for various provinces show us clearly what the general situation is. The undertakings comprising 100 hectares and more represented the following percentages of the total land:— Badajoz, 51; Caceres, 61; Granada, 57; Malaga, 51; Cordoba, 57; Seville, 66; and Cadiz, 70. (Lucien Craux, "L'Espagne Economique," Paris, 1932.)

The main portion of these huge landed estates are let off to tenant peasants, whereby usually there are chief tenants, sub-tenants, etc., so that the poor peasant who finally tills the land is cut off from the man who finally owns it by a whole chain of middlemen. The lack of land often compels the peasant to agree to short-term leases, very often only a year in duration, and both capitalist and feudalist methods of exploitation are in use. Any improvements which the peasant may have made to the land during the term of his tenancy fall to the lot of the owner when the lease expires (“Agrarian Conditions in Spain,” issued by the League of Nations in
Geneva, 1920). But even that land which is formally in
the undisputed possession of the peasant is burdened
with various feudal dues which vary from province to
province. In many cases these feudal dues are not docu-
mented either in any agreement or by law, but consist
of "customary rights" whose interpretation lies in the
hands of corrupt judges who are hand in glove with the
landowners in the event of justice being sought in the
courts. It would lead too far to go into details here, but
it is sufficient to say that these feudal dues are in prin-
ciple the same as those which existed everywhere in
Europe prior to the emancipation of the peasants, and
that as a result of the exploitation by the landowners,
the Church, and the usurers, the Spanish peasants are
unable to provide themselves with modern agricultural
instruments, etc. Modern agricultural undertakings are
a rarity in Spain. Owing to the lack of capital, the
squeezing of the highest possible leasehold payments and
feudal dues out of the impoverished peasants represents
the most convenient fashion for the Spanish grandees,
the princes of the Church, and the monasteries to exploit
their monopoly of the land, particularly as the price of
agricultural commodities is kept artificially high.

Although Spain is an agricultural country whose agricul-
tural possibilities are not fully exploited, high import
duties have nevertheless been placed on agricultural
commodities. Import duties in percentages of inland
prices were as follows in 1932:—Wheat, 111; rye, 59; oats,
60; beans, 36; maize, 60; rice, 72; meat, 50; sugar, 167;
potatoes, 25; stockfish, 125. Since 1932 protection has
been intensified by various import prohibitions.

Agricultural protection in Spain resulted in a "scissors"
in favor of agricultural prices despite the rapid drop in
the prices of agricultural goods on the world market. The
following are the "Anuario" figures:

WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX (1913 equals 100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foodstuffs</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Goods</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Owing to the poverty of the people, a good harvest
means that the market is immediately inundated with
wheat, which leads to a rapid fall in prices. This was
the case in 1934 and 1935, and the Government then
purchased large quantities of wheat in order to keep up
the incomes of the big landowners. The advantage of
the artificial measures taken to keep up the price of
agricultural goods falls almost exclusively to the rich landowners. The poor peasants bring very little of their products on to the market, and in fact they are glad if, when they have paid their feudal dues and the leasehold rents and other obligations, they have enough left to feed themselves and their families until the next harvest.

The burden of this artificial increase in the price of foodstuffs falls heavily on the consumers, i.e., chiefly on the industrial working class and the urban petty-bourgeoisie. The result is that the consumption of foodstuffs, particularly of the more expensive sorts, per head of the population is unusually low. The following figures show, in kilogrammes, how much lower the consumption per head and per year is in Spain as compared with France and Germany:—Wheat (1928-32): in France, 221; in Spain, 158. Meat: in Germany, 45 to 50; in Spain, 13 to 14. Sugar: in Germany, 23; in Spain, 11.

This policy of artificially maintaining the prices of agricultural produce represents a great obstacle to the increase of agricultural production. The high import duties and other protectionist measures keep up agricultural prices only so long as home production does not exceed home consumption, and therefore those who gain by high prices for agricultural goods have a direct interest in hampering the development of agricultural production. In fact, the increase in agricultural production in Spain is very slow and it just keeps pace with the normal increase of population. The least increase in production can lead to a surplus on the market, owing to the low absorbing capacity of the latter, and thus to a fall in prices, which threatens the feudal ground rents of the rich landowners. The result is that the latter obstinately oppose any extension of the irrigation system, any improvement in agricultural methods, and even the most moderate bourgeois reforms which are proposed from time to time to improve the antiquated agricultural system of the country. The only solution of the Spanish agrarian problem is a real agrarian revolution which will destroy the old and rotten semi-feudal system of land tenure at present in existence and thus bring real assistance to the toiling peasant population of Spain.

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This semi-feudal character of Spanish agriculture represents the chief hindrance to the development of Spanish industry down to the present day. The purchasing power of the enormous majority of the agricultural population in Spain, as far as industrial goods are
concerned, is practically nil. Both landworkers and poor peasants are happy if they can obtain enough to eat, never mind about purchasing industrial goods, whilst in the cities the purchasing power of the industrial proletariat, the officials, and the urban petty-bourgeoisie is greatly limited owing to the unnaturally high prices for agricultural goods, i.e., foodstuffs. Those who benefit from ground rents in Spain and the ruling classes in general prefer as far as possible to satisfy their own personal needs abroad. The situation described therefore results in the following vicious circle:—

(a) The development of Spanish industry lags behind that of the neighboring countries;

(b) Despite this low stage of development there is nevertheless a surplus production in some branches of industry owing to the abnormally low absorbing power of the home market;

(c) The costs of production in Spanish industry are so high as a result of the poor utilisation of existing capacity and of the high prices for agrarian raw materials, etc., that Spanish industry is unable to compete on the world market; and

(d) In order to make any profits at all in such circumstances, the industrialists force the government to place huge import duties on industrial goods in order to maintain prices at home. As a result of this, however, the purchasing power of the home market is still further reduced, the utilisation of capacity sinks still further, and in consequence production costs rise still higher.

The only way for Spanish capitalism to escape from this vicious circle is by means of a thorough agrarian revolution. The following figures, provided by the International Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations, show the state of Spanish industry as compared with that of other capitalist countries:—

**PRODUCTION OF THE MOST IMPORTANT INDUSTRIAL GOODS IN 1929**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Poland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electricity (millions kwhrs.)</td>
<td>2,433</td>
<td>14,319</td>
<td>9,815</td>
<td>3,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal (in 1,000 tons)</td>
<td>7,108</td>
<td>53,780</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>46,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron (in 1,000 tons)</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>10,362</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steel (in 1,000 tons)</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>9,716</td>
<td>2,122</td>
<td>1,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement (in 1,000 tons)</td>
<td>1,820</td>
<td>5,787</td>
<td>3,497</td>
<td>1,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Spindles (in 1,000's)</td>
<td>1,875</td>
<td>9,880</td>
<td>5,210</td>
<td>1,557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artificial Silk (in tons)</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>16,780</td>
<td>32,340</td>
<td>2,730</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above figures show that Spain is far behind her neighbors industrially, but even these figures do not give us the full extent of this backwardness, which can be seen most strikingly of all by the figures for the so-called new industries: motor-car production, motors, artificial silk, chemicals, etc. Spanish industry is therefore not merely backward in the figures of production, but it is structurally backward, and in addition the greater part of those few modern industrial undertakings the country does possess are in the hands of foreign capitalists, for instance, the dyes and chemical industries are in the hands of the big German dye and chemical concern I. G. Farben and of the French chemical concern Kuhlmann. The electro-technical industry, and in particular the production of electric lamps, is also in foreign hands. The greater part of the artificial silk undertakings is similarly under foreign control. Pneumatic tyres are produced in Spain by branches of the French Michelin, the American Firestone, and the German Continental concerns, and so on throughout the modern industries.

The low stage of development of Spanish industry is reflected in Spain's foreign trade figures. The import of finished goods and the export of foodstuffs represent the chief item in the balance. German sources give the following figures:

**SPANISH FOREIGN TRADE (in Millions of Gold Pesetas)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>1933</th>
<th>1934</th>
<th>1935</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raw Materials</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finished Goods</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodstuffs</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exports</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raw Materials</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finished Goods</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodstuffs</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the relatively low stage of Spanish industrial development, there is nevertheless a chronic surplus of the means of production in a number of branches of industrial production. This paradoxical situation is a heritage of the world war when Spain as a neutral country was able to supply the belligerent countries with industrial goods at high prices. Further, although the Spanish railway system is absolutely at a very low stage of development it is nevertheless relatively overdeveloped for the present backwardness of Spanish agriculture and Spanish economy in general. In other capitalist coun-
tries a great stage of industrial development set in with the building of the railways. The railways gave a great fillip to the heavy industries and opened up the national markets to an increased extent. Later on, too, the railways remained one of the chief customers of heavy industry. All these factors hardly exist in Spain. The railways were built with foreign capital (English and French) and most of the rolling stock was imported from abroad.

The freighage rates of the Spanish railways are particularly high. The reasons for this are: the high building costs owing to the mountainous nature of the country and the very backward state of the inner Spanish provinces, which have only small quantities of goods to send by rail down to the coastal areas, where such Spanish industry as exists is situated; the heavy industries in Asturia and the Basque provinces, and the textile industry in Catalonia. The lack of freighage increases the running costs of the railways, whilst the high freighage rates thereby made necessary, limit the amount of freighage still further and thus tend to conserve the isolation of the provinces from each other.

The backwardness of Spanish industry, the obsolescence of most of its equipment, the impossibility of utilising productive capacity to the full, the high freighage rates on the railways and the high cost of coal, all these things make costs of industrial production high in Spain, despite the fact that wages are lower than in the big capitalist countries of Europe, and make it impossible for Spanish industry to compete on the world market. As a result of this situation, import duties are placed not only on industrial finished goods, but also on half-finished goods, on the means of production themselves and even on raw materials, and these import duties are being steadily increased. The result is that the costs of industrial production in Spain are also steadily increasing. In 1932 the customs duties imposed on wool were from 22 to 26 per cent., on jute 105 per cent., and on coal 21 per cent. Spanish customs duties are the highest in the world. In 1926 C. Morrison reckoned out in an article published in "The Economist" on October 2, 1926, the average customs duties imposed by various countries in percentages of the total value of imported goods. The figures were: Great Britain and Holland, 6; Denmark, Belgium and Portugal, 7 to 8; France, Germany and Scandinavia, 12 to 16; Poland, 23; Jugoslavia, 25; Hungary, 27; and Spain, 35. In addition, the Spanish govern-
ments have always indulged in all sorts of protectionist measures, including import prohibitions, quotas, State monopolies, etc. Every industry, every trade and every particular group of the Spanish ruling classes is ceaselessly conducting its own special campaign for increased protection, and the resulting situation is a never-ending source of inner-political friction and, of course, bribery.

The backwardness of Spanish industry and of Spanish economy in general has resulted in the world economic crisis affecting Spain less intensely as far as depth goes, but longer in point of time; in fact up to the present there have been no signs of any improvement whatever in Spain. The following figures are supplied by the Bulletin of the League of Nations:

**INDEX OF SPANISH INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION**

(1929 equals 100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>1933</th>
<th>1934</th>
<th>1935</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>98.6</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>85.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figure for 1935 is for the first eight months only. These figures show us that for three years now Spanish industrial production has remained at the same low crisis level. It must be pointed out, however, that naturally the severe internal political struggles hamper any tendencies towards the overcoming of the crisis on the normal capitalist basis. In the sphere of circulation, also, the crisis in Spain has not been so severe as in many other countries. After suffering considerable depreciation in the first year of the crisis—a circumstance which contributed considerably to the overthrow of Primo de Rivera—Spain’s currency remained fairly stable throughout the years 1932-36. Despite the fact that the passivity of Spain’s balance of trade has steadily increased, gold and foreign currency reserves and also the sum emitted by the Bank of Spain have remained stable also. The official figures for Spanish foreign trade (in monthly averages of millions of gold pesetas) are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Import Surplus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>81.29</td>
<td>61.53</td>
<td>19.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>69.67</td>
<td>55.71</td>
<td>13.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>71.72</td>
<td>50.92</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>73.19</td>
<td>48.62</td>
<td>24.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to these figures, therefore, the annual deficit in Spain’s foreign trade balance amounts to from 200 to 300 millions of gold pesetas. Added to this must come the interest and profit on foreign capital invested
in Spain. However, it must be pointed out that these figures are extremely arbitrary and therefore extremely unreliable. The sources from which this deficit could be met are the sums sent back into Spain by workers who have left Spain to work in other countries, and the sums expended in Spain by foreign tourists. Still, all Spanish statistics are very unreliable.

Class Relations and the Class Struggle in Modern Spain

On the basis of the analysis of economic conditions in Spain which we have just made it will be possible to obtain a correct picture of class relations in modern Spain. However, it is impossible to obtain any numerical picture of class relations in Spain, because Spanish social statistics are incomplete, obsolete and unreliable. For instance, there has been no complete census of land ownership in Spain since 1881, i.e., for over half a century. The figures quoted therefore must be understood to be nothing more than general approximations.

(a) THE CLASS OF LARGE LANDOWNERS. There are from 20,000 to 30,000 landowners in Spain owning land of more than 100 hectares up to 100,000 hectares. These landowners possess approximately two-thirds of the whole land in Spain. There are various strata in this group. The uppermost stratum is that of the grandees, the feudal lords who have remained the owners, in some cases, of whole provinces, despite the agrarian reforms. There is also a small stratum of rich landowners of later, capitalist origin: speculators who have been fortunate and grown rich, war contractors and manufacturers, men who have invested a part of their wealth in landed property with a view to obtaining social standing, as in Spain only he is really a “gentleman” who has, apart from other wealth, land, hunting grounds, etc.

The landowners are at the head of numerous agricultural organisations, by means of which they exercise considerable influence on sections of the peasantry. In the same way they control a number of political parties, which are either organised in the Ceda or are independent, such as the Agrarian Party. All the organisations and parties of the landowners maintain the closest possible connections with the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church itself is undoubtedly the biggest landowner in Spain, and at the same time it is undoubtedly the biggest individual capitalist in the country; it owns banks, industrial undertakings, urban house property, etc., loans out money at interest, etc. The Church and the landowners in Spain
are closely allied counter-revolutionary factors in Spain, and the Church is a factor of tremendous power, thanks to its century-old and uniformly led organisation.

(b) **THE CLASS OF THE BOURGEOISIE.** This class is, in accordance with the general backwardness of Spain, much weaker than in other Western European countries. An important section of Spanish capital is in foreign hands, and this further weakens the influence of the Spanish bourgeoisie. A further factor making for the weakness of the bourgeoisie is that, whilst the landowners are almost all of Spanish nationality, the bourgeoisie is nationally split, for instance in Catalonia it is chiefly Catalanian. The economic antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the feudal landowners has been softened owing to the fact that the bourgeoisie often profits from ground rent itself, that the two classes have co-operated politically in order to secure the increase of both agricultural and industrial import duties, and because the bourgeoisie is compelled again and again to appeal to the State apparatus, which is in the hands of the rich landowners, against the revolutionary working class.

Historically considered, the retarded capitalist development of Spain has given the Spanish bourgeoisie the task of carrying out a bourgeois revolution in the epoch of imperialism, at a time when the bourgeoisie has already become a reactionary class and the proletarian revolution begins to raise its head threateningly. This explains the constant vacillation of the Spanish bourgeoisie between revolution and reaction; pompous phrases when the revolutionary tide is rising, half measures against feudalism and the Church (the expulsion of the Jesuits and the handing over of their property to other religious bodies, etc.), but sabotage of the agrarian revolution when it has gained office with the assistance of the revolutionary forces, and then a repentant return to the camp of the reaction in order to crush with its assistance the rebellious workers and poor peasants and re-establish "order."

(c) **THE UPPER STRATUM OF THE PEASANTRY.** This includes the peasants owning from 20 to 100 hectares of land. The primitive statistics of Spain offer no possibility of estimating even approximately the numerical strength of the stratum of capitalist peasants. The statistics on landed property in Spain are even less use as a basis for judging class relations than anywhere else. A peasant who owns 100 hectares of poor-quality grazing
land in Central Spain can be a very poor man indeed, whilst, on the other hand, the peasant who owns 20 hectares of irrigated land, vineyards or orange groves may easily be a small capitalist. In any case, it would seem that this stratum of more or less prosperous peasants has made no independent appearance in the arena during the revolutionary struggles which have taken place in Spain during the past few decades.

(d) THE OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS. These groups play a much greater role in the political life of Spain than do similar groups in other Western European countries. As is the case in all countries with strong feudalist remnants, the highest offices in the State are generally in the hands of aristocrats. In Spain it has always been a matter of course that the State should provide a cosy official position for any landowner who has wasted, gambled away, drunk up or otherwise dispossessed himself of his substance. However, as the official salaries are much too low to satisfy the requirements of such gentry, corruption is the order of the day everywhere and reaches, as the Lerroux scandal demonstrated, up into the highest places of political life. In many cases provincial officials develop into so-called Caziques, into tyrants in their own territory. These Caziques are a peculiarity of Spanish political life. They need not belong to any particular class or group, and all that is necessary is particularly good relations with the authorities. The local Cazique may be an official, a small aristocratic landowner or the representative of some rich landowner.

The number of officers, and in particular those of high rank, is enormous. In 1931 the strength of the Spanish army was 105,000, but there were 195 generals, 5938 officers enjoying the rank of major or a higher rank, 5281 captains and 5707 subaltern officers. In the reserve there were 437 further generals and 407 other high officers. In 1931 therefore there was one active general for every 538 soldiers, one high officer from the rank of captain upwards for every 10 soldiers, and one subaltern officer for every 6 soldiers.

For the purposes of comparison let us take the officers' corps of the French army: In 1935 the French army had a strength of 545,000 men and 28,024 officers, i.e., one officer to every 19 soldiers. The Spanish army has thus about three times as many officers as the French army. In 1932 the number of active officers in the Army List was given as 7000 lower, thus it would appear that after
the overthrow of the monarchy masses of superfluous officers were placed on the retired list and pensioned. If we now add to these figures the officers of the Spanish navy and of such civil war formations as the Guardia Civil and the Carabineros, we find that, together with the officers of the reserve, the officers represent a force which is able to play a more or less independent political role in Spain, thanks to the intensification of the class struggles, and thanks too to the fact that these officers are inspired by a very strong esprit de corps.

It is a matter of history that these officers' groups have organised and carried out numerous political coups in Spain. These officers organised themselves in so-called Juntas and exercised great influence on the civilian politicians and even on the king himself. King Alfonso, the ex-king of Spain, maintained the closest possible connections with these officers' Juntas. The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera was established, with the agreement of the king, by means of an officers' putsch. The reactionary counter-revolutionary forces in Spain, including the hesitant and vacillating bourgeoisie, need the officers' corps for use against the rebellious workers and peasants and they must therefore make concessions to these officers.

The rapid advance of the revolutionary movement in recent years has undoubtedly caused a certain demoralisation in the ranks of the lower officers (as proved by the voluntary participation of such officers in the ranks of the revolutionary workers' army in Asturia), who come to a very great extent from the ranks of the petty-bourgeoisie. However, on the whole the Spanish officers' corps must still be considered as a strong prop of the reaction and counter-revolution in Spain.

(e) THE URBAN PETTY-BOURGEOISIE. This class plays an important role in Spanish political life. As a result of the backwardness of the country, the number of artisans and small traders, etc., is relatively greater than in neighbouring capitalist countries. The total numerical strength of the urban petty-bourgeoisie—artisans, traders, innkeepers, lower and middle officials and minor professional men—may be estimated at round a million.

The political activity of the urban petty-bourgeoisie is particularly important, because its members happen to live chiefly in the centres of political life. As a result of the geographic atomisation of the country, already described, Spain has no main political centre such as Paris
for France or Berlin for Germany. Madrid (Engels once called it merely a luxury centre) is an administrative centre and not an industrial centre, as is Paris or Berlin, although there are many railway and building workers living there. Barcelona has a numerically strong proletariat, but many of the workers are women (textile industry) and the town lies away from the centre of the country. Like all other petty-bourgeoisies, the Spanish petty-bourgeoisie vacillates between the proletariat and the ruling classes. However, there are certain special Spanish peculiarities to be reckoned with, particularly with regard to the Spanish intellectuals. The tremendous material wealth of the Church, which controls innumerable offices and positions, either directly or indirectly, has harnessed a section of the Spanish intelligentsia into the services of the Church. For the same reason another section of the Spanish intelligentsia is anti-clerical and the standard bearer of the bourgeois revolution against clericalism and feudal vestiges. The centre of this latter section is the Atheneum Club in Madrid. The influence of this radical intelligentsia on the petty-bourgeoisie, and even on sections of the working class, is at times very great. The great swing over of the urban petty-bourgeoisie from Lerroux to Azana was undoubtedly due in part to the influence of the radical intelligentsia. Amongst this radical intelligentsia are very many of the numerous high school students in Spain, and from time to time they have played a considerable role in the revolutionary movement.

(f) THE MIDDLE AND POOR PEASANTS. Although it is highly desirable that the middle and poor peasants should be statistically separated from each other, Spanish statistics offer no possibility of doing this. Owing to the very great variations in the harvest yield as between province and province, and very often within the same province according to whether the land is irrigated or not, etc., the existing statistics, which refer in any case only to a part of the country, are quite useless for any such statistical calculation of the two peasant strata, because they refer only to the size of the holdings and are furthermore obsolete. However, in our opinion, the lack of any such statistical data is of little political importance in the present stage of the revolutionary movement. The exploitation of the middle peasants by the rich landowners, the Church, the State and the usurers is so intense, or—to put it differently—the middle peasants in Spain are so poor and their interest in a
bourgeois-democratic revolution so urgent that for some time to come at least their political activity will be hardly distinguishable from that of the poor peasants in general. It may be pointed out here that with the expression poor peasants we mean that stratum of the peasantry which is so poor that, apart from the work on its own little plot of land, or rented plot of land, it is compelled to perform wage labor.

Together the middle and poor peasants undoubtedly represent the most numerous section of the population of Spain. The Spanish census figures give a total of approximately 5.2 million people engaged in agricultural pursuits at the present time. On the basis of a number of considerations we assume the following division of this total: 0.2 million landowners and rich peasants, three million poor and middle peasants, and two million landworkers. The division between poor peasants and landworkers is just as vague and uncertain as that between poor and middle peasants. The great point is that there is a mass of approximately five million toilers engaged in agriculture (the female members of the family are not counted as engaged in work, but merely as members of the family) and live in conditions of appalling poverty. The most terrible witness to the extent of this poverty is the statistics of child mortality. Out of every 1000 deaths the following were children under 5 years of age: Granada 447, Caceres 456, Albacete 405 and Las Palmas 494. The only solution for the masses of the poor and middle peasants is a radical agrarian revolution. The decisive strategic problem of the revolution which is at present proceeding in Spain is to mobilise these masses uniformly for revolutionary actions under the leadership of the industrial proletariat, and to gather the isolated local outbreaks into one great simultaneous action.

(g) THE LANDWORKERS. There are from 1.5 to two million landworkers in Spain. They comprise completely landless workers, particularly in the South, men, chiefly from the province of Galicia, who possess little strips of land which are tilled by their wives whilst they themselves wander over the country looking for work, local landworkers who own little strips of land or lease such tiny plots, and finally, but not many, domestic farm servants who live on the farms and are paid annually. The impoverishment of the Spanish peasants is intense, but the situation of the landworkers is miserable to an even greater degree. Wages are very low indeed, but what
makes their situation still worse is that work is available only from 100 to 200 days in the year, so that the annual wage earned is extremely low. It is no exaggeration to say that grim hunger is the constant companion of the Spanish landworker.

(h) THE WORKERS IN INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE. The numerical strength of this section of the Spanish population can also only be estimated approximately. It is in all probability round about two millions, and includes miners, industrial workers, railwaymen, dockers and commercial employees. There are in addition about 300,000 domestic employees. The geographical distribution of the Spanish working class is very uneven: miners and metal workers are mostly in the north, and the textile workers are mostly in Catalonia. For many years unemployment in Spain has been very considerable, and also short-time work. Official statistics published in the Bulletin of the League of Nations gave 216,000 unemployed workers for December, 1935, and 258,000 workers on short time. Real wages are considerably lower than in the other countries of Western Europe. The poverty of the great masses of the peasantry and the pressure of the enormous reserve army of unemployed landworkers must necessarily exercise a depressing effect on the standards of living of the industrial workers. The agrarian revolution is therefore also an urgent necessity for the Spanish urban working class.

The Spanish working class is undoubtedly extremely courageous, possesses a fine fighting spirit and is inclined to take revolutionary action to right its wrongs. Hardly any working class has fought more often with weapons in its hands against its oppressors during the past hundred years than the Spanish working class. The reason why this revolutionary clan and activity brought in so little lasting gain was the lack above all of coordination between the struggles of the workers and the peasants, and the unfortunate disunity of the working class itself.

The disunity of the Spanish working class is of a special character. In all other Western European countries the working class is divided into two camps: the reformist and the revolutionary Communist camps. In Spain, however, a strong anarcho-syndicalist movement has existed since the beginning of the modern working-class movement, and down to this day it still wields very great influence on the workers. The result therefore is
that the Spanish working class is divided into three
camps instead of two.

Why has anarcho-syndicalism succeeded in maintain-
ing itself in Spain as a mass movement? In our opinion
the reasons are as follows:

1. Anarcho-syndicalism developed in Spain before the
Socialist movement, and even the First International
was compelled to wage a vigorous, but largely unsuccess-
ful, struggle against Spanish anarchism.

2. The division of the country into isolated provinces
very different from each other, the low stage of indus-
trial development, and the predominance of small and
middle size undertakings prevented the Spanish workers
from seeing clearly the impossibility of capturing indivi-
dual undertakings and conducting them in the interest
of the workers, whereas in the more highly developed
industrial countries of the rest of Western Europe, with
their huge industrial undertakings and monopolies
stretched over the whole country, the uselessness of such
a procedure is immediately obvious.

3. The "rejection of the State" is a very under-
standable idea in a country in which the workers know no-
thing but evil of a State obviously in the hands of the
rich landowners and their supporters, and in which their
only experience of the State is obtained in armed col-
lisions with its servants. The State gave the workers
nothing: neither schools nor hospitals, neither health
insurance nor unemployment insurance; none of those
things with which the bourgeoisie of the other Western
European countries was able to win at least an upper
stratum of the working class.

4. The "rejection of all political parties" is understand-
able also in a country in which for the most part the
political parties represented not class, but clique inter-
est, in which political activity was largely a matter of
personal enrichment, and in which political corruption
was the order of the day. The syndicalist workers who
have been educated for two or three generations in a
spirit hostile to all political parties, are now making the
acquaintance of "a party of a new character" in their
joint struggles shoulder to shoulder with their fellow
workers, and this party is the Communist Party. The
abandonment of the old prejudices is therefore now pro-
ceeding rapidly.

5. The completely hopeless tactic of repeated local, so-
called general strikes and local armed risings, is explained
partly from the nature of the country, which is split up
into districts only very loosely connected with each other, and partly by a false analogy with successful officers' putsches. The anarcho-syndicalist workers failed to grasp the fundamental difference between the "Pronunciamento" of an officers' Junta, which, in the event of success, does no more than alter the respective positions of the various cliques within the ruling classes, and does not in the least affect the principle of class rule itself, and an armed insurrection of the workers aiming at the overthrow of the ruling classes altogether, and, therefore, meeting inevitably with the resistance of the ruling classes as a whole and their apparatus of violence and repression.

Up to the present, the chief hindrance to any co-ordination of the struggles of the landworkers and peasants with the struggles of the industrial working class has been the disruption of the Spanish working class into three camps. This disruption also expresses itself territorially, and Social-Democrats, Anarchists and Communists have their strongholds in different parts of the country. The revolutionary energies of the toiling rural population and of the anarcho-syndicalist workers were dissipated in local risings unco-ordinated with each other even in time.

Another important hindrance to the co-ordination of the struggles of the workers and peasants throughout Spain is the unsolved national question. A very considerable portion of the population of Spain (from a quarter to a third) consists of oppressed nationalities: Catalanians, Basques and Galicians, etc. National oppression gave the national bourgeoisie the opportunity of turning the class struggle, which was directed against it, into national channels without, however, fighting honestly and steadfastly for a real solution of the national question, as was demonstrated again quite recently in the cowardly attitude of the bourgeois Catalanian Government towards the reactionary central government in Madrid. The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities has made use again and again of the repressive central State apparatus against its own proletariat, and, in return, has betrayed the national cause.

The New Element in the Present Revolution

Up to the period of the fighting in Asturias it looked as though "the revolutionary cycle," as Marx called it, which began in Spain in 1930, was going to peter out in the same fashion as its predecessors. In fact, by sacri-
facing the monarchy, the landowners had succeeded, with the assistance of the church and of the Fascist demagogy of Gil Robles, in preventing any revolutionary distribution of the land. Although the purely feudal dues which still existed in certain parts of Spain were abolished, at least on paper, almost no change took place in the distribution of the land. According to official Spanish statistics published in the “Anuario Estadistico” for 1932-33, 17,984 hectares were expropriated from the grandees, 20,132 hectares taken over by the State, and 6250 “temporarily” occupied by the peasants. According to the figures of the International Agrarian Institute in Rome, 110,000 hectares are said to have been distributed among 12,000 peasants up to the middle of 1935. This is, of course, a drop in the ocean.

The methods adopted to sabotage any real distribution of the land were the same as those adopted by the bourgeoisie in all other countries: instead of any radical distribution of the land amongst the peasants, a so-called agrarian reform was promised. Amidst a tremendous amount of propaganda a cumbersome and bureaucratic apparatus was created to carry out the agrarian reform, or, in other words, to sabotage any radical redistribution of the land. The officials of this new organisation examined very carefully and at great length whether this or that landowner’s property fell within the scope of the agrarian reform or not, whether those peasants who claimed the land really had the right to claim it under the new scheme, and whether they were suitable persons within the meaning of the scheme, etc., etc. Thanks to the bombastic propaganda the peasants were pacified for the moment and then worn down steadily by systematic bureaucratic sabotage. The compensation awarded to the landowners whose land was to be “expropriated” was made so great that the burdens handed on to the peasants with the land were intolerable from the beginning. In some districts the peasants lost patience and seized the land of the landowners. This seizure was subsequently “legalised” for the space of two years, but at the same time such burdens were imposed that the end result was as though the peasants had leased the land in the good old fashion.

The political recuperation of the reactionary forces went hand in hand with the sabotaging of the redistribution of the land. The landowners and the Catholic Church mobilised their supporters throughout the country and the Fascist “Acción Popular,” led by Gil Robles,
began its demagogic activities amongst the rural population. The Spanish bourgeoisie took fright at the enormous increase of strikes and turned for support to the rich landowners and the Catholic Church. In the years 1926-29 there was a yearly average of 95 strikes, with 660,000 lost working days, but in the years 1930-32 the average yearly figures rose to 606 strikes, with 3,726,000 lost working days, not including the political mass strikes. The monarchists who had fled from the country gradually returned and the Spanish petty-bourgeoisie began to swing back again towards the camp of the reaction. The elections in 1933 ended in a victory for the reaction. The left-wingers were forced out of the government and replaced by right-wingers, and it seemed as though once again a revolutionary cycle has ended fruitlessly.

Then came the fighting in Asturias and a turning-point was reached. Although the revolutionaries suffered a defeat, their action let loose revolutionary forces which had been held up, caused confusion in the ranks of the ruling classes (in whose midst the protracted economic crisis and the oppression of the non-Spanish nationalities had caused intense friction), and mobilised the petty-bourgeoisie against the reactionary government, which "revised" even the modest bourgeois agrarian reform, granted the grandees compensation for the expropriation of their lands, etc. Gil Robles was compelled to resign, and within the space of one year there were six governmental crises. A new wave of revolutionary upsurge set in and, thanks to the successful strategy embodied in the formation of the People's Front, led to the great electoral victory at the beginning of 1936 and the immediate release of 30,000 imprisoned revolutionaries.

Naturally, although this election victory was of very great importance as a barometer to show the spirit of the working masses and at the same time strengthened the revolutionary spirit of the masses, it was not the victory of the revolution itself. The months which have passed since the elections have brought important gains for the working class: the right to meet freely and the right to strike have been restored, the old Left-wing municipalities have been restored to office, Catalonia has recovered its autonomy, the capitalists have been compelled to reinstate the workers dismissed after the revolutionary struggles in Asturias, the feudal dues have been abolished, and over 60,000 peasants have received land,
in many cases by “anarchist” seizure of the land of the rich, afterwards legalised by the authorities. The masses were able to observe clearly the difference between a government of the People’s Front and a Fascist government. Many aristocrats and leaders of the reaction have fled from the country, and the hotels in Gibraltar and in the South of France are full of them, whilst those revolutionaries who had previously been compelled to flee from the country or had been imprisoned have now been carried in triumph through the streets by hundreds of thousands of workers. The enemies of the Spanish people have undoubtedly suffered a severe defeat, but they have not abandoned the struggle as hopeless, as can be seen by the frequent armed Fascist attacks on workers.

Although, therefore, the danger of a counter-revolutionary coup still exists, the present situation is nevertheless marked by a number of new factors favorable to the revolutionary forces, factors which were not present previously. The most important of these are:—

(a) The Communist Party of Spain has developed into an important political factor, and its organisation represents a hard revolutionary nucleus around which the whole working people of Spain can gather. With a correct application of the united front tactics the Communist Party will undoubtedly be in a position to fulfil this role of leader of the masses of the Spanish people. The amalgamation of the Communist and Social-Democratic youth organisations on the basis of the programme of the Young Communist League of Spain, and the amalgamation of the revolutionary and Social-Democratic trade unions, represent great successes for the Communist Party of Spain.

(b) The application of the tactics of the united front and the People’s Front has made it possible to co-ordinate the revolutionary movements of the workers, peasants, and oppressed nations, which were previously isolated from each other territorially and otherwise, and to give them common aims, although limited ones, as can be seen in the electoral platform of the People’s Front. This fact represents a great point of attraction for the vacillating urban petty-bourgeoisie.

(c) The Social-Democratic workers of Spain, and with them a section of the Social-Democratic leadership, have veered sharply to the Left. For instance, the Spanish Social-Democracy declared itself “neutral” towards the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, and at the beginning of
the revolution it refused any form of co-operation with the Communist Party, whereas today a comradely relation has been established and the Left-wing Social-Democratic workers, under the leadership of Largo Caballero, are in favor of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(d) The traditional isolation of the anarcho-syndicalist workers and their fatal tactics of isolated putsches (a tactic which unfortunately found a certain amount of support in the ranks of the Communist Party at one time) are now rapidly being overcome. Many anarcho-syndicalist workers took part in the revolutionary struggles in Asturia, and many of them voted for the People’s Front candidates at the elections. The mistrust of the Communist Party at one time generally prevalent amongst the anarcho-syndicalist workers has now largely disappeared.

(e) The old isolation of the movements of the peasants on the one hand, and of the industrial workers on the other, has now been in part overcome. Although the Workers and Peasants’ Alliance is still in general little more than a loose alliance of leaderships, nevertheless a fraternal relation previously unknown in the history of Spain has grown up between the workers and peasants, and the beginnings of real political co-ordination can be seen.

(f) The old isolation of the national movement from the revolutionary movement has now been bridged. The fight of the oppressed nationalities for their freedom, which was formerly regarded as their own particular affair and was invariably in the hands of their bourgeoisie, who invariably betrayed it, is now a programme point for the People’s Front, and this represents a great strengthening of the revolutionary forces.

It would be wrong to imagine that the revolution in Spain is already victorious. The present government in Spain is not even a government of the People’s Front, but a Left-wing bourgeois government which is being supported by the Communists and Social-Democrats with a view to securing the carrying out of the very moderate programme of the People’s Front. At the same time, however, mass pressure is being placed on this government to ensure that this is actually done.

Although great dangers still threaten the Spanish revolution, there are undoubtedly many new factors present in Spain which are favorable to the revolution, and with a correct and courageous application of the united front strategy the final victory of the revolution should be secured.
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