

Socorro Rojo Internacional,
Chambre 2 R. T.,
Albacete, Spain.

21-10-1937.



Mr. P. Thorne,
Dear Phil,

I was very pleased to receive your letter yesterday dated 7th Sept., as well as another previously through Emma. My new address (see above) was responsible for the time the letter took. Somehow I feel guilty in neglecting to write to you, because the Relief Ctte (or you) writes to me quite frequently. However I will try to be more regular in future. Of course, the mail here is very irregular, especially when the address is changed, but I am sorry to say I have not received ONE paper "W. W." or otherwise. "¡Está la guerra!"

We (that is our outfit) returned to headquarters camp, Madrid, a few weeks ago from the Aragon front, and just now we are doing but little work. Actually, this seems to be a permanent change, altho' one never knows, but if it is so I feel it reflects a growing improvement in our position, because in the past few months, while the number of troops etc. to be moved, has increased, as also have these troop movements, the tremendous shortage of transport facilities seems to have been caught up with.

I spent a few days holidaying in Barcelona recently, & was struck by the great difference in the atmosphere there & that of Madrid. Ablet pens than mine have written of Madrid & its wonderful people, calm and heroic under the constant

strain of bombardment and danger, & I will not try to compete with them, but a casual visitor to Barcelona could be forgiven for failing to realize there was a war on. There is a good question, most certainly, & the constant aerial bombardments ^{would} ~~do~~ not permit one to be in ignorance for long, but life goes on there more or less in the usual manner. Actually while I was there a day time attack killed a large number of school children when bombs fell on the school, and believe me, Phil, it is when one witnesses the dead & maimed children being dragged out from the wreckage of ruined buildings that one really realizes what fascism really means to the peace-loving people throughout the world. I know I felt at the time "if only the Australian people could see this sight, fascism would never be permitted even to show its head in our country". I wanted them as never before to be back home, so I could tell ~~to~~ my friends, all the workers, every body, just what kind of beast fascism was. It is one thing to read of it; it is another to see, with your own eyes, such a heart-rending and maddening sight. It is not possible to keep the vividness of events before one's eyes over a long period, but believe me ~~it~~ I remember this every day, every night. I hope the memory never fades. I want to be able to use my tongue to fittingly describe this horrible event. Then I will be able to fight fascism in Australia, or wherever I am, in a really effective way.

Enough of this for now. I hope Lister-Jones's
 drive is a success and money rolls in; it is
 needed here, and how. Australia has I think done
 well, for over £3000 is a lot of money, but the
 need is tremendous. I remember our talks before
 I left of a food ship. I suppose this is still not
 accomplished, but if it only could be, how it
 would be received! Because food is needed, in
 spite of the fine work done here & internationally.
 The harvest has been good, but the army has grown
 tremendously & takes a lot more than hitherto.
 We all feel that a crucial point in the war
 has been reached; that France & Britain can
 still, if they wish, act in such a way as to
 both safeguard their own interests and in conjunc-
 tion with the progressive forces of the world, call
 an early halt to this war by forcing Italy & Germany
 out of Spain & leaving the Spanish people to clean
 up their own rebels. Long before this reaches you
 this will probably be known.

I hope you raised quite a bit of money
 with the handkerchief. I enclose a snap of some of
 the boys in the ~~1st~~ Regiment. Doubtless you can
 pick me; Edmonds is kneeling on one knee just
 under the writing on the ~~2nd~~ door.

Hoping to see you before many more
 months.

Yours fraternally
 S. Aaron.

10/12/37.

Mr. Sam Aarons,
Socorro Rojo Internacional,
Chambre 2 R.T.,
Albacete, Spain.

Dear Sam,

Just a note in a hurry to let you know that I received your letter and that everything is still progressing favourably in Australia. Our total appeal is now past £4,000.

We have sent £10. to the Coordination Committee in Paris asking them to send a few parcels of cigarettes, etc., to Australians in Spain and your address was among those given, so let us know if you receive anything through.

Your letter contains some of the best news we have received for a long time and we have already made much use of it. It is indeed inspiring to know that the battle is still being fought with so much enthusiasm and your letter had already given us a kick to try and do more here. We have decided on a plan to hold Aid to Spain Conferences in all States by the end of February. We recently had a very effective demonstration outside the Italian Consul's in Sydney and I will enclose you a cutting.