

SPARTACIST-WEST

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FREE
ISSUE

WHAT WE MUST DO TO END THIS WAR

Recently the forces of respectable and not-so-respectable society were engaged in the disgusting game of pinning-the-blame for the isolation of the anti-war movement on the VDC leadership. Unfortunately, the latter responded with another game, called avoiding-the-problem. Yet the isolation remains a fact, and is the major reason for the VDC's endless discussions of tactics and no consideration of perspectives. And from this isolation comes the impotence of the movement.

Some people have responded by trying to overcome this isolation and impotence through the Scheer Campaign. They have oriented toward the "real" power of the establishment via the Democratic Party. They choose to ignore the voluminously documented record of political transformations which they will undergo on that road (look at Cohelan's history, for example!). They also choose to ignore the reason why that power exists where it does.

We maintain that there is a way to end the war and the causes of war; a way which

necessitates the overcoming of the confinement of the anti-war movement to the campuses. This also involves an ideological transformation, in the sense of a generalizing of the issues; the broadening of one's concern to include the satisfactory solution to the civil-rights problem and the problems of the labor movement.

The anti-war movement must become an anti-capitalist movement. Without the understanding that wars will be with us at least as long as capitalism exists (and the conclusions that flow from this), the anti-war movement will fail like all other such movements. The near disappearance of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, dwindling from its 80,000 Aldermaston marchers in 1961 to its 5000 this year is a case in point.

There is only one class which is free from any inherent class interest in the continuance of capitalism and also has the economic strength to destroy capitalism, and that is the working class. Space does

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GENERAL WESTMORELAND'S COMMANDMENTS TO THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES IN VIETNAM

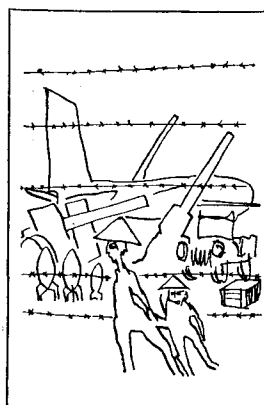
(As seen by Voix Ouvriere, French revolutionary weekly)



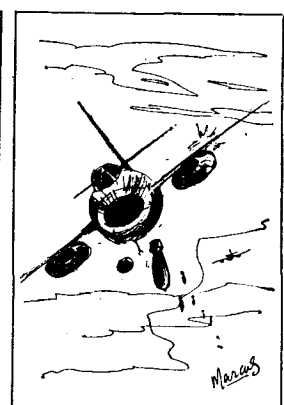
Mix with the common people, understand their way of life; learn their language and respect their laws and customs.



Be polite and respectful in your dealings with women.



Don't show off your wealth and privileges in front of the people.



Always give the first priority to the Vietnamese.

The Ultimate Choice: Social

(Continued from front page)

not permit us to demonstrate fully in this article the fundamental role of the proletariat and refute certain New Left skeptics.

The possibility of turning the working class into a social opposition does exist, first in the abstract and general phenomenon of the tendency for the bourgeois order to alienate and force the proletariat into opposition, and, second in the increasing problems of the working class today.

The civil rights movement must be understood as an example of this. Negroes, although only a tenth of the population, constitute around a third of the working class. Their demands have been essentially class demands. Their fundamental need is jobs.

Within the unions the awareness is growing that the existing leaderships cannot meet the needs of their members even to the extent that they have been able to in the past. These bureaucrats have no solution to automation because of their bondage to the "free-enterprise" system. They are having an increasingly harder time winning concessions from the Democrats. They are unable to secure the repeal of Taft-Hartley, even though it is becoming ever more difficult to exist under it.

Those intellectuals who are willing to break with the capitalist order, who are able to give up their illusions of their own strength, who are willing to become auxiliaries of the proletariat, do have a valuable role to play. They can be the carriers of the revolutionary ideology required for the successful completion of the class struggle.

They can become involved in the building of militant caucuses in unions and in the building of indigenous organizations in the ghettos. But they must do so as revolutionaries, as Marxists, with the aim of making workers conscious of themselves as a class. It helps no one to simply create bailiwicks for the advancement of personal careers. There are too many such people today.

We believe that organizations independent of, and in opposition to the system can be built with advanced workers, militant Negroes and their allies, around such issues as:

- Rank and file control of unions. Democracy is needed within the unions not just because it makes them look good, but because it is necessary to keep them free

from the conservatizing control of careerists. Other demands can be that the salaries of union officials should be on a par with the wages of the membership; that there be frequent elections; no appointed officials; and that all officials should be subject to recall.

- 30-for-40. The shortened work week, with no cut in weekly pay. Implementation of this would create many jobs. This is a major way to build union-Negro solidarity, and thereby eliminate racist currents in the unions which are fostered by job competition.

- Opening up segregated unions, particularly in the construction trades, to all workers.

- Higher minimum wage. This should be made to cover all labor and be a living wage.

- Broader unemployment insurance coverage. Benefits should not be restricted by work records and should be given for

the entire state economy.

- Industrial Tail-enders are being with the Democrats.

- Homeless means withdrawal of victims from the slums should be given.

What Died In

In terms of Rossif's own photography, his editing of newsreels, the films musical accompaniment and narration, his "To Die In Madrid" is artistically successful, even to these lay eyes.

However, it is also a political and historical statement (it could hardly be otherwise, considering the subject), and in this it is a failure.

It presents the cause of the Loyalist government as the cause of "democracy," but it doesn't mention that this "democratic" government suppressed the newspapers of parties which were on its side in the civil war; broke strikes; imprisoned and shot its "uncontrollable" supporters; and refused to do anything for three days after Franco's "pronunciamento," which act started the war.

During those three days, commander after commander of the various garrisons in Spain declared for Franco. The only opposition came from workers in the anarchist-led CNT (the National Confederation of Labor) who, in some instances bare-handed, stormed several barracks and saved most of the country that was saved for the Republic.

Rossif does tell us that one of the fundamental problems of Spain was (and still is, thirty years later!) the landless or land-

starved figures. He does not mention the peasants who were not aided in the cities or the

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the entire period of unemployment. The state employment agencies should have the responsibility of finding suitable jobs.

- Independent class political action. There can be immediate alternatives to tail-ending the Democrats. If not a national labor party, then independent union candidates on a class program. Many workers are aware that when it comes to dealing with labor, the only difference between the Democrats and the Republicans is that the Democrats use vaseline.

- Home rule for the ghettos. This means that the capitalist police should be withdrawn as they are not only the prime victimizers of ghetto populations, but also the protectors of those criminal elements which particularly prey on the poor; i.e., the numbers racketeers, loan sharks, slum lords, etc.. All public housing should be available primarily to the tenants in areas which are renovated, and should be managed by them. Such housing should have rents lower than the housing

it replaces, and should be subsidised by increased property taxation if necessary. Existing slums should be taken away from their owners, without compensation, and administered by their tenants with the municipalities providing necessary funds for their rehabilitation.

- Labor solidarity. It is becoming more and more necessary for unions to defy those laws which effectively emasculate them; i.e., laws which prohibit secondary boycotts, wild-cat strikes, "hot cargo" actions, etc. . The way to overcome these laws is through the willingness of unions to stick together to ignore them.

- Opposition to the war. The war is being used to save the system from a recession. The lives of workers' sons and brothers are the price being paid for decreased unemployment at home. The war is also being used to discipline the labor movement to prepare for large scale automation in industry. The war is also the excuse for direct attacks on living standards through wage limitations during inflation. It is these kinds of effects of the war which will cause working class opposition to it, and not the arguments of atrocities committed by Americans in Vietnam.

Finally, we believe that it is imperative to begin to undertake the transformation of the proletariat into being a class for itself; a class conscious of itself as the force for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and conscious of the necessity to establish its own rule over society.

Failure to develop this revolutionary consciousness in the working class will leave us with another aborted radicalization. If one is optimistic, the remains of this radicalization will exist as another inadequate union bureaucracy; or as another indigenous ghetto leadership on "sugar hill," or as another generation of radical students who end up brain-trusting for the AFL-CIO, or for the State Department, or for "Fortune," etc. .

In the event that the system cannot buy such people, which still remains a possibility, they will be tomorrow's political prisoners, tomorrow's assassinated, or tomorrow's exiles.

Either way will mean the further atomization of society, if not its nuclear destruction.

We believe that ultimately the choices are between socialism and barbarism, and that your decision will affect the outcome.

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starved peasantry. He even gives us the figures of how and by whom land was held. He does not, however, tell what was being done about it. He doesn't mention that the peasants seized the land and held it (often aided in this by the workers' militias from the cities) until the Republican government or the arrival of the Fascists made them give it back.

We are shown some of the aid that Stalin sent to Spain. Soviet tanks are shown and clearly identified in the narration. But no mention is made of the GPU, much less of its activities. (The fact that they are not in the film is not to be wondered at as they were never ones to make film records of their doings.)

Although it is explicit in the film that the Loyalist cause was the cause of the worker and peasant masses of Spain, it does not even obliquely indicate how their support was subverted, betrayed and finally destroyed through political suppression; the destruction of the militias; failure to legalize the peasant seizures of the land; the denial and elimination of autonomy for Catalonia, the Basques and the Moors, the granting of which ought to be fundamental to liberalism.

(Continued on back page)

What Died In Madrid?

(Continued from inside pages)

All that we are left with is the affirmation that it was a tragedy, but only in a national sense. Although, to his credit, Rossif does venture the opinion that thirty years of fascism might also represent a tragedy . . . particularly to the unpropertied classes of Spain.

The ineptitude of the Republican government when faced with the open rebellion of the generals was not due to the stupidity or advanced age of its leaders. They were trying to convince the Spanish ruling classes that a parliamentary democracy was the best means for the continuance of capitalism in that country. Those ruling classes, however, were of two minds about the matter. They could see from the examples of Germany and Italy that fascism was an expensive proposition. But they knew that they could survive Franco and they were terrified of social revolution.

Moreover, in Spain even a labor movement, tame and tolerated, was an expensive item. Such a movement would have to have minimal wage increases, for instance, and capitalism in Spain was nearly broke.

These bourgeois, while they were making up their minds and fearful of Franco, were very sure not to completely alienate him. Witness the Biscay capitalists who, despite owing allegiance to the Republic for a year after Franco's coup, were adamant in refusing to utilize the resources of their area (one of the relatively more industrialized in Spain) for the production of armaments which the Loyalists so desperately needed.

The Spanish Stalinists, and Stalin himself, deserve the major share of the blame for the victory of the Falange, despite the aforementioned tanks. (Said armaments were quite openly used to further their own policies. And the history of that is well documented by those who intimately knew, Orlov and Krivitsky, for instance. Both were GPU chiefs during the civil war.) In a mad scramble to win a vacillating bourgeoisie in Spain and to win support from

the capitalist governments in Britain and France, they did their best to smash any signs of independence of the workers and peasants. They were the prime movers in the liquidation of the militias, in making the peasants give back seized land, and in terrorising the other left parties. They used the International Brigades to force the workers out of factories that had been taken from their owners. They also used them to attack militia units which were "uncontrollable."

The other parties of the Spanish left also did their share, characterised more by ineptitude than by malice. The leaders of the anarchist CNT joined the government, as did the often sentimentalised POUM. This latter organization was described by the CP as "trotskyite," a label which Trotsky vociferously denied.

Only a revolutionary war would have succeeded against Franco, because only the revolutionary appeal of redistribution of the land, of expropriation of the factories under workers' control, etc., would have undercut the reliability of his troops.

The willingness of the Spanish working class and peasantry to take that road was clearly demonstrated by their spontaneous seizures of lands and factories, their creation of militias and embryonic soviets.

Only such a road would have given the disinherited masses a real reason to fight against "los cuatros generales," and given hope to those behind fascist lines.

But there was no revolutionary party in Spain that was willing or able to lead such a revolution. By the time that cadres were beginning to emerge who were willing, the war had been all but lost, and those revolutionists were trebly outlawed; by their own party leaderships; by the Stalinist GPU, and by the Republican secret police, the "Seguridad" . . . to say nothing about the Falangist organs of terror which were just over the horizon.

Rossif's film, in sum, merely perpetuates the banalities of liberal and cryptoliberal sentimentality. Trotsky once wrote that the task of revolutionaries in studying revolutions is "neither to laugh, nor to cry, but to understand." To do so one must do a lot more than see such films as "To Die In Madrid."

We recommend reading Felix Morrow's "Revolution and Counter-revolution in Spain," George Orwell's "Homage to Catalonia," and Gerald Brenan's "Spanish Labyrinth" as a beginning.

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