

REVOLT

Vol. 2, No. 3

Published by Demos Press for the Central Committee of the
Revolutionary Workers League, U. S., Box 141, Alfred Station,
Detroit, Michigan

Feb. 5, 1939

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Tragic Lesson of Peoples Front Treachery

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Auto Workers, Save Your Union!

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INDEX

Barcelona Seized by Fascists (Editorial)4
Salud, Comrade Negrete6
Auto Workers, Save Your Union8
Insurgent Unemployed Call National Convention11
Klan Wizard and Catholic Bishops Bury Hatchet14
Mexican Trotskyists Bureaucrats Go In For Gangsterism17
Irish Nationalists Panic British Empire Democrats15
Chronology of the Negrete Case19
In the Richest Country in the World23
What We Stand For24

NEGRETE NUMBER

BARCELONA SIEZED BY FASCISTS

TRAGIC LESSON OF PEOPLES FRONT TREACHERY!

Barcelona has fallen! Barcelona, industrial and proletarian stronghold of Spain, has been taken by the Fascist beast without a struggle! Who is responsible for this fatal blow to the cause of the workers against Fascism?

Millions of words will be written about this catastrophic event. Editorial writers, correspondents, columnists, authors, newscommentators, eye witnesses, writers of all shades in all camps all over the world, will drown the intelligence of mankind in a deluge of analysis, explanation, criticism, evaluation. But what can they say more than these two facts which stand out in this terrible moment like the twin lights of an automobile as it rushes away into the darkness?

The workers did not fight. The government ran away.

The workers should have fought. But they did not. Why not? Because they had no confidence in the government. Because its history is a history of conciliation of fascism and aggression against the revolution, of treachery and starvation. Because it dissolved the workers militias and juntas and the peasant co-operatives. Because it befriended the Church of medieval darkness, usury, ignorance and oppression, the Roman Catholic Church, over which presides His Holiness, the Pope who, in the name of Christ, declares his sympathies are with the Fascist beast. The workers did not fight because there was no revolutionary party and program to lead them.

They fought at Madrid, and without a party. That is a fact. That was the first period of the Civil War. Since then they have seen how the Basque country was allowed to fall into Franco's hands without a finger being lifted to help it. They have seen the sell-out of Malaga, the crushing of the insurrection in Barcelona in May, 1937, the suicidal offensive at Belchite, the concentration camps of political prisoners of the left at the front lines, the persecution of revolutionists, the assassination of Berneri, Nin, and other revolutionary leaders.

There is an end to all things, even to the capacity of the proletariat to sacrifice itself for the comfort and safety of men whose existence mocks the name of justice and decency.

Tens and hundreds of thousands of proletarians, men and women, will be butchered by the Fascist hordes. But the Popular Front Government of Republicans, Socialists, Stalinists and Anarcho-Syndicalists ran secretly away. Against the insurrection of May, 1937, it found the means to shoot down five hundred of the best proletarian fighters of Catalonia. But before the advance of the Fascists it could only flee, headless, without honor, without courage, without shame, seeking only its own safety.

The fall of Barcelona will not go unpunished; the butchery of the proletariat, the treachery of the Popular Front, will be avenged, if not in this war, then in a future war. The proletariat will learn from this bloody defeat today how to win tomorrow.

ON THE BANNER OF THE WORLD PROLETARIAT IS EMBLAZONED THESE SLOGANS:

Down with the Popular Front of treachery and cowardice!

Death to Blum, creator of the Non-Intervention policy!

Death to Negrin, who has rented a villa where he will have his "front door in France and his back door in Spain!"

Death to the cowards and traitors who ran away!

Death to Caballero and Araquistan who crossed into France guarded by Spanish soldiers armed with rifles and refused to say where they were going!

Death to the Stalinist, Hernandez, who declared in 1936 in the name of his party and the government that they were opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat!

Death to all the criminals who conspired to sabotage and defeat the revolution and who are responsible for the shooting down of the workers in Barcelona in May, 1937!

Death to the conspirators against the working class who ordered offensives without adequate equipment and any chance of success!

Death to the assassins of Berneri and Nin!

Death to Stalin and his clique who prevented the Soviet workers from aiding the Spanish revolution and whose Spanish agents and servants helped to strangle the Spanish revolution!

Never again the Popular Front!

To crush Fascism - the proletarian revolution!

Above everything - build the revolutionary party!

Hear Russell Negrete Blackwell!
FRIDAY, FEB. 10, 1939
Stuyvesant Casino at
2nd Ave. & 9th St., N.Y.C.

SALUD, COMRADE NEGRETE!

At last!

Comrade Negrete is on his way home from Spain!

The frame-up against him has been completely smashed!

His life has been saved!

His freedom has been won!

His reputation as a revolutionist has been cleared!

On January 20th he was "embarked on a British warship at the port of Gandia, south of Valencia, for Marseilles" according to a letter from the U.S. State Department. A cable received from Negrete says he will return on the President Harding which is scheduled to arrive in New York City February 4th.

And just in time, too! The sweep of the Franco armies into Barcelona and the precipitate and secret flight of the Loyalist Government to north-eastern Catalonia are conditions in which the revolutionists in the Loyalist jails face either extermination by Franco's forces should he win the war as is almost certain now, or indefinite imprisonment without hope of trial, or assassination by the Stalinist murder machine.

Negrete's release and repatriation follow a trial which was held in Valencia on December 30th in which he was acquitted of the charge of high treason. In a letter written after his acquittal and just received here, Negrete writes:

"The espionage charge had been dropped from the accusation at the beginning of December.* In the trial the prosecuting attorney asked me a number of questions....The defense then interrogated me and the prosecution moved - declaring that he withdrew the charge of high treason - for my acquittal in view of my 'innocence' and that I be deported from the country because of my 'illegal' activities'. The prosecutor made a speech about the untarnished purity of Spanish justice and it was all over.

"That same afternoon I bid goodbye to the numerous comrades at the jail and was turned over to the consulate to be held until my deportation.

"How I am looking forward...to getting to work actively in the American movement after so many months of enforced activity."

The trial came as a surprise. Only nine days before it was held, the

* Negrete had been accused by various Stalinist organs of being an espionage agent of Franco, the Gestapo, the OVRA-Mussolini spy service, and the U.S. government, but all efforts to learn the official charges were unavailing. This letter gives the first authentic information. See REVOLT, Vol.1, Nos. 10, 11, 12, 13.

American Vice-Consul in Valencia had cabled: "Deportation without trial expected soon." The explanation of this turn of events is probably contained in a sentence in Negrete's letter: "The judiciary saved its face through the holding of the trial." His brief account of the trial supports this judgment.

While the trial was a surprise it was not excluded from the calculations and activity of the Defense Committee. In REVOLT No. 13 we wrote: "But should he be brought to trial the Defense Committee is prepared to engage defense counsel in Spain and send counsel from the United States, France or England." On December 2nd the Defense Committee cabled the Vice-Consul: "Want engage counsel. Can you establish contact Revilla counsel POUMists October trial?" On December 7th the Vice-Consul cabled back that Negrete and he "agree that adequate counsel may be engaged locally in the unlikely event of a trial." In his letter Negrete writes: "Due to the special circumstances attending the case, impossibility of local publicity, and the probability of a closed trial, etc. it would have been useless to have brought legal counsel from America. The consul, Mr. Wallner, consulted me several times on this matter and as a result informed the defense committee that no foreign lawyer was necessary. A local lawyer of standing was retained, and he handled the case as well as anyone could have done." We think these facts speak for themselves.

STALINIST ASSASSINS FOILED

This time there will be no kidnapping as there was last August 1st when Negrete was embarked by that same Vice-Consul in Valencia on a British boat, from which he was kidnapped by the Secret Police who, as everyone knows, is controlled by the Stalinists, international counter-revolutionists, forgers, poisoners, and assassins.

Negrete will be the principal speaker at a large mass meeting February 10th which the Defense Committee is organizing in New York City, with meetings in other cities to follow. Other speakers will include members of the Committee. Thus the meeting will be an occasion of double significance. It will welcome Negrete back to the American movement after an absence of two years and four months, and will bring together on one platform representatives of various political labor organizations.

We hope that Negrete's report of the condition and treatment of left wing workers, anti-Fascist militants and revolutionists in Loyalist jails will be an impetus to united efforts to assist them before it is too late. At the present writing it is known that a number of Trotskyists, members of the International Communist Opposition (Brandlerites) and workers of other political affiliations and beliefs are facing the fate from which Negrete has been saved. As with Mooney it will be Negrete's duty to carry on in behalf of those who are still in the clutches of the enemy. His letter gives his pledge that he will do so.

With his return will come to an end a difficult struggle to save his life, freedom and reputation as a revolutionist. The important dates of the Negrete case will be found on page 19. In the next issue we will discuss the Lessons of the Negrete Case.

AUTO WORKERS, SAVE YOUR UNION!

OUST BOTH FACTION BUROCRATS AND TAKE OVER!

DETROIT, Jan.29,- Civil war racks the auto union, brother against brother, local against local. Union meetings are turned into free-for-alls. Police are called in to keep order. Fights break out at plant gates, in the plant, on the streets, in beer gardens, - everywhere auto workers congregate. The misleaders of the U.A.W. have finally split the union.

On January 20th President Homer Martin suspended fifteen members from the International Board. Immediately the expelled majority met and voted to impeach Martin on eight charges. Two International Executive Boards now exist in the auto union. Martin has six of its members, and the Stalinist-controlled group the other eighteen. Both factions have organized goon squads to raid opposition locals and to guard their own. Both factions went to the capitalist courts to tie up funds of "enemy" locals and councils and to recover stolen property. Both factions called conventions on different dates. Both factions are spending the membership's money for high-priced legal talent.

The split at the top went to the membership through radio speeches and caucus meetings. Recklessly their top leadership has introduced hooligan tactics into the rank and file membership. Demagogy of both factions have driven militant workers to become goons.

MARTIN'S "PROGRAM"

Martin appeals to the most backward prejudices of the workers by declaring that he will save the union from communism. With 90% of the membership in the Detroit plants of the Catholic faith this slogan swings a good deal of rank and file support over to Martin.

He goes further. He declares the opposition controlled by the Stalinists will give the auto workers the same type of democracy which exists in Moscow. Auto workers interested in democracy in the union are won over by this point. Martin lambasts John L. Lewis for interfering in the U.A.W. and seeking to destroy its autonomy. Here, too, auto workers interested in autonomy go along with Martin.

"Dictator", screams Martin at Lewis in his letter of resignation from the C.I.O. Executive Board. And Martin is correct. But he forgets that he himself is the same arch-dictator in the auto union that Lewis is in the C.I.O. He has arbitrarily set up administrators over locals, suppressed strikes, raided union halls, outlawed sit-downs, had militants fired and slugged, conducted Moscow Trials of suspended International officers*, and at all times collaborated closely with the companies against the wishes and interests of the auto workers. With this record Martin is certainly just the one to shout for democracy.

How does he get away with it? Martin certainly was bureaucratic in suspending the fifteen officers - although constitutionally he has this right. But if the suspended members were real advocates of democracy

* See "Auto Union Purged by 'Moscow Trials'" in REVOLT, Vol.1, No.9, August 27,1938.

as they claim to be, they would have settled with Martin at a special convention. Instead they set up their own executive board, published their own edition of the Auto Worker, elected a new president, R.J. Thomas, and hurried to Washington to get recognition from John L. Lewis himself as the union of the automobile workers.

The truth is the eighteen board members have set up a dual apparatus in the union. The Stalinist-controlled majority group with its train of reactionaries, strong-arm men, opportunists, numskulls, and Socialists, are afraid to wait for a convention, fearing Martin will control it. So they counter bureaucracy with more bureaucracy. They have no confidence in the membership. But this is typical of all bureaucrats.

THE "PROGRAM" OF THE STALINISTS

Then who supports the majority of the board? The bureaucratic suspension of the majority has alienated many workers from Martin. Many workers who have felt the lash of Martin's rule side with the Stalinists overlooking their equally bureaucratic practices. Martin's resignation from the C.I.O. Executive Board leads many workers to support the Stalinists on the "save the C.I.O." slogan. Ades has flaunted the charge before the membership that Martin was preparing to set up a company union at Ford's through Harry Bennet. But the united Executive Board had already endorsed Martin's negotiations with Ford. Still, this argument carries weight among workers with short memories. Finally, the Stalinists, following their practice of calling their political opponents "disrupters", "wreckers" and "dual unionists" start whispering campaigns about secret meetings with Martin to set up a dual union opposed to the U.A.W. and the C.I.O. And this agitation has been effective.

What the membership generally is still kept from knowing is that both factions are competing to serve their masters and the capitalist government. One of the first acts of the new majority board president, R.J. Thomas, was to write to all corporations with which the union has contracts, advising them that "the(majority) international board has emphatically reaffirmed the position of the union to carry out its contractual obligations." The U.A.W. will "meet all obligations", Thomas wrote. Furthermore, Hillman and Murray, anti-Martin members of the U.A.W. C.I.O. Co-ordinating Committee, declared Martin's letter to the C.I.O. "reveals the dictator-mania which was responsible for the contract violations which have occurred..." But the sanctity of contracts with the corporations was the pivot of Martin's 20-point program. What can better show up the unprincipled nature of the fight between these class collaborators?

The violations of contract have not been made at the top at all, but rather by the membership. It is the workers in the plants who have gone beyond the legal limitations of the contracts in order to better their conditions of life. When both factions talk of upholding contracts, they are appealing directly to the capitalists for support, trying to convince them that they and not the other group is better fitted to discipline the workers and keep them in line. This is the surest evidence that both sides lack qualifications for leadership of the auto workers.

Thousands of workers realize that both leaderships are rotten to the core and traitorous to their interests. A sentiment to clean out both

wings of the corrupt leadership prevails. But where can they turn? Not finding an articulate third force in the field, they fall behind one side or the other, and thus play directly into the hands of the reactionary forces in each faction.

Outside of the Revolutionary Workers League, the prevailing political groups in the U.A.W. have not given these auto workers any prospect of a correct leadership, either in the past or in the present. The Lovestoneites in the latest issue of the Workers Age (January 28) declare Martin is acting to protect the union, and that he is the victim of a Stalinist frame-up. They have definitely gone over to the side of reaction in this auto union crisis. The Trotskyists, still holding on to the coat-tails of Martin, farcically attempt to dissociate themselves from both sides in the January 21st issue of their organ, the Socialist Appeal. But among all the "fake leaders whether of the Peiper-Houser type of job-holders, or the Mortimer-Stalinist type of burocrats", they do not mention Martin by name(!) in the entire article, so that workers really question the Trotskyist claim they have broken with Martin. Nor can their call for a progressive wing at this late date hide from the auto workers who know that their past loyal support of Martin immensely confused the real issues to the rank and file.* No worker can afford to forget that the anti-Stalinist line of the Trotskyists now as always will prevent them from presenting an independent line of class struggle to the auto workers in their crucial hour.

THE MARXIST PROGRAM

The first step for the solution of the present problem of leadership is for the workers in the plants and in the locals to refuse to carry out the divisive instructions of both sets of traitors. Cease cracking each other's heads in the plants and locals! Stop being used by those who are not worthy of one ounce of working class respect! Clarify this issue by thorough, democratic discussions and abide by majority decision in democratically-conducted voting. See to it that the viewpoint of those opposed to both wings is presented.

Organize armed protection of your union halls against raids by goon squads of both factions! Maintain solidarity in the plants and thus ward off the attacks of the employers who are sure to seize this critical time to introduce wage cuts, company unionism, and the rest!

The second step: delegates or nominees to the forthcoming convention should go to these conventions with the program of re-establishing the unity of the auto workers in the C.I.O. - where the masses of workers in the industrial unions are. They should not allow organizational measures to be taken which will play into the hands of reaction, which might lead to craft separatism in the auto industry. Only the vicious betrayers heading the present upper crust of the union resort to and seek to maintain division among the workers.

The third step: Start now the organization of a left wing in the plants and the locals, which will discuss ways and means of establishing a democratically-run auto workers union, and a new, democratic constitution. This left wing should come prepared to influence the special convention, presenting a slate of new militant (continued on Page 22....

* See REVOLT No.6, June 4, 1938: "Trotskyites For Sale - Cheap".

Insurgent Unemployed Call National Convention

CLASS STRUGGLE MOVEMENT RID OF BUROCRATIC BARNACLES CAN GO TO TOWN

NEW YORK CITY, Jan. 26, - Delegates from Unemployed and Project Workers organizations from New York City, Baltimore Md., Wisconsin, Harrisburg, Allentown, Lucerne County and Philadelphia Pa., met in Philadelphia on January 21 and 22 in an eastern conference of Unemployed and Project Workers organizations to discuss the question of setting up a national organizations.

Delegates to the eastern conference reported that they represented approximately between 10 and 20,000 Unemployed and Project workers distributed as follows: New York City 4,000, Baltimore 3,000, Lucerne County Pa. 3,000; the delegate from Wisconsin reported that he represented the state organization but gave no number, the delegates from Harrisburg and Allentown Pa. reporting for a few hundred members each. The national convention has to verify carefully these figures in order to convince the Unemployed and Project workers of the country that it is the nucleus of a nation wide movement. The Philadelphia Conference elected a Action Committee which is charged with the duty of preparing the National Convention to be held in Washington, D.C. not later than March 30th.

The Philadelphia conference marks the highpoint of the revolt of organizations against the burocracy and class collaboration of the Stalinist leadership of the W.A.A. nationally. Up until the eastern conference this revolt was scattered over a wide area, the different groups having no connections with each other and no central leadership. The Wisconsin and Baltimore splits took place before the W.A.A. convention in Cleveland, October, 1938. The Harrisburg, Allentown and Lucerne County Pa. organization never really were part of the W.A.A. Originally they were part of the National Unemployed Leagues which were organized by the American Workers Party in 1932. When the Leagues merged with the Workers Alliance and the Unemployed Councils at the Washington Unity Convention in April, 1936, these organizations did not accept the new leadership and policy and have maintained an independent existence.

The most influential organization in the Conference was the Unemployed and Project Workers Union of Greater New York. The history of this organization is as follows: In August, 1938, the Chauffeurs and Auto Mechanics Union of the Workers Alliance, led by Henry V. Rourke, locally prominent Socialist, after a bitter fight against the burocratic and class collaborationist leadership, broke away and continued as an independent organization. Fifteen other locals, which also fought the official leadership and policy, split from the Workers Alliance after the Cleveland Convention and together with the Chauffeurs set up the Unemployed and Project Workers Union of Greater New York. The new organization had about 5,000 members. In November the six locals of the Workers Alliance in Harlem, with about 2,500 members, all Negro workers, split over the same issues and set up the Africo-American Unemployed Union. The two new organizations have maintained fraternal relations.

The U. and P.W.U. adopted a constitution which states that unemployment

will be with us as long as capitalism is allowed to exist; that war will never settle the unemployment question but will only aggravate it; that the only way to fight for adequate relief is by mass action led by an organization with a class struggle policy. The convention elected a Local Action Committee for the purpose of getting in touch with other insurgent groups in the Workers Alliance to build a new national unemployed organization. The Philadelphia conference and the coming National Convention are thus the result of the initiative of the U. and P.W.U.

This militant constitution was adopted under the pressure of the militant rank and file who were thoroughly disgusted with the Workers Alliance. But shortly afterward the Socialists who were the largest group in the leadership, the City Central Committee, began to put through a right wing policy. Every so often, Rourke, the President of the organization, made red-baiting speeches against left wing workers. A number of left wing workers who applied for membership were excluded on flimsy technical grounds.

The City Central Committee has thirteen members. There are five Socialists, two Trotskyists, and six independents. The efforts of independent members of the committee to stop Rourke's red-baiting failed because the Trotskyists refused to support them. In the exclusion of the left wing workers the Trotskyists voted with the Socialists.

This struggle reached a crisis recently. On January 16th the Socialist-controlled Action Committee suddenly advanced the date of the Eastern Conference which had been set for some time in February to January 21-22, and changed the location from Washington D.C. to Philadelphia. The Socialists claim that this was necessary in view of the impending dismissals from WPA. At the same time they saw an opportunity to get control of the apparatus of the new organization.

On January 17th members of the organization learned that President Rourke had written a circular letter to the members of Congress in the name of the U. and P.W.U. The letter was not dated. Significant parts of the Rourke letter follow:

"UNEMPLOYED AND PROJECT WORKERS UNION
79 East 10th Street, Manhattan

Henry V. Rourke Congressional Letter General Organizer

To all members of the 76th Congress
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Gentlemen:

"The Unemployed and Project Workers Union, an organization of approximately five to seven thousand members who reside in New York and who work on W.P.A. as laborers, chauffeurs, auto mechanics as well as others who live on Home Relief, Old Age Assistance, Board of Child Welfare or Social Security; wishes through its General Organizer Henry V. Rourke to draw the attention of members of Congress to a number of facts which are put in chronological order below.....

"The Unemployed and Project Workers Union will cooperate and do everything in its power to place its members on Jobs in private industry.....

"It believes and it teaches the members of the Union that we must carry on a campaign to secure jobs in private industry.

"Congress by passing a law establishing a Thirty Hour Week in Industry and such other measures can hasten the time when there will be an end to relief and W.P.A.

"But until such time as the American Worker can find a Job for himself in private Industry, it is the duty of his Government to pass the necessary legislation to provide for him and his family adequately.....

"The Unemployed and Project Workers Union allows no Political Party or any Political Group or individual to bring into the meeting hall of the Union or into any meeting of the Union any Political literature or discuss anything of a Political nature.....

"We defy any individual or any group to prove that the Unemployed and Project Workers Union is in any way connected with any Political Party or in any way carries on Political Activity.

"I can assure you, Gentlemen, it cannot be proven.....

"To be a member of the Workers Alliance is the same as being a member of the Communist Party.....

"The Unemployed and Project Workers Union states that its records, and files are open for examination by Federal, State and City officials at any time.

"In closing may we state that Mr. Henry V. Rourke and a committee will be in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, January 18, 19, and 20th, 1939.....

Sincerely yours,
Henry V. Rourke
General Organizer for the Unemployed and
Project Workers Union"

Rourke's letter is a lying, fawning, stool-pigeon, patriotic plea for recognition. The Union did not authorize Rourke to write this letter. Even his fellow Socialists disclaim any responsibility for it. He was not authorized to wait on Congress on January 18, 19, and 20th, or any other day. The Union does not believe that there will be a time when there will be no unemployment under capitalism. It does not campaign for jobs. It does not cooperate with the government; it fights it. It does not contend that every worker in the Workers Alliance is a Stalinist or a member of the Communist Party. It does not exclude political discussion; the entire relief question is a political issue. Rourke wants to exclude independent working class politics for the sake of capitalist politics.

And, finally, the Union has never said its records and files are open for examination by the capitalist politicians of the Federal, state, or city governments. Its files are the property of the membership and must be protected precisely against these officials.

Rourke's letter was brought up at the Eastern Conference. The Conference decided that it was the problem of the U. and P.W.U. On January 23, the

City Central Committee of the U. and P.W.U. took the following action: it denied any responsibility for this letter. It censured Rourke. It elected a sub committee to issue press releases. All future communications must be passed on by the City Central Committee before issuance. All these decisions were passed unanimously. A motion to expel Rourke was tabled until the following meeting which is scheduled for January 30th. The independents were for immediate action. But the Socialist-Trotskyists combination tabled it.

Whether Rourke is expelled or not the struggle between the policy laid down last October and the policy he stands for will culminate in the National Convention in March. If the Socialists win, the new organization will be another edition of the Workers Alliance. All the workers who want to build a militant movement of unemployed and W.P.A. workers will support the fight of the independents for a class struggle policy and leadership. Those who can, should attend the convention for that purpose.

Klan Wizard and Catholic Bishops

Bury Hatchet . . . IN HEAD OF LABOR

Are you a member of a C.I.O. union? Then study the following facts carefully.

On January 16th the Associated Press reported that a new Cathedral of Christ the King would be dedicated in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 17th. "Dennis Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia will head the group of Catholic dignitaries at the services."

Bishop Gerald P. O'Hara of the Savannah-Atlanta Roman Catholic Diocese arrived in Atlanta on the 16th "to conduct services consecrating the altars of the cathedral." Bishop O'Hara announced he had invited Dr. Hiram W. Evans, Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan to attend the dedication ceremonies.

Dr. Evans announced his acceptance. "A few months ago Dr. Evans announced that the Klan had abandoned racial and religious issues, and that he planned to have its efforts devoted to fighting 'communism and the C.I.O.'" "Bishop O'Hara said that the church 'never was anxious to make any issue' over the Klan and that he regarded the invitation to Evans as a matter of no unusual significance."

Time was when the Klan was out to get "niggers, Jews, and Catholics". Looks like it's burying the hatchet with the Catholic Bishops --- in the head of labor?

"The cathedral stands on the site of the former national headquarters of the Klan," stated the Associated Press. Unfathomable are the ways of the Lord!

Correction: Page 6, second paragraph from the bottom, should read "enforced inactivity" instead of "enforced activity".

IRISH NATIONALISTS PANIC BRITISH "DEMOCRACY"

IRISH WORKERS MUST UNITE WITH OTHER COLONIALS IN STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION

The specter of the Irish revolution again haunts the British Empire. A new outburst of terrorist activities by Irish nationalists has broken out in Ireland and England. One of those captured, Mike Campbell of Belfast, protested when brought to court against "English occupation of Ireland."

The Irish nationalists carefully timed their move. On January 28th Prime Minister Chamberlain, speaking before the Birmingham Jewelers' Association called upon the English people to make the greatest sacrifices in "arming to defend democracy". For whom?

Ireland is a skeleton in the closet of British imperialism. Hitler and Mussolini take advantage of the contradiction of imperialist "democracies" suppressing peoples struggling for democratic self-rule by stirring them up against the mother country. They hurl Ireland into the faces of the so-called British statesmen. And "umbrella" Chamberlain must throw them concessions to keep them quiet. In the same way Fascism justified Jewish persecutions by pointing to lynching in the "democratic" United States.

The British ruling class moved at once to suppress the terrorists. Following a series of ten explosion in London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and other cities in January, heavy guards were posted at all power plants, gas works and reservoirs in England and Scotland. The burliest detectives were assigned to guard British cabinet members. Well-known Irish nationalist leaders were sought for deportation from England. Flying police squadrons swept down into the Irish districts of London and the big provincial cities. Nevertheless, in spite of these precautions, on January 19th a violent explosion shook the rear of a hotel in Ireland where Frank Chamberlain, son of the British Prime Minister, was staying on his vacation.

According to Scotland Yard, the present wave of terrorism is promoted by the Irish Republican Army, and there is no cause to doubt this statement. The 1921 Treaty between DeValera and the British government gave 26 southern counties in Ireland dominion status separate from the six northern counties comprising Ulster. The movement has ever since demanded unity of Ulster and the Irish Free State into one Irish Republic free of British rule. The present government of the Irish Free State is certainly not behind the present wave of terror. DeValera and Cosgrave, reconciled to the present state of affairs, merely give lip service to unification. They condemn the use of violence although they themselves have come into power through violence. Under the Irish government today the Republican Army has been driven underground. But it continued to exist, and just prior to the new outburst called a meeting to reorganize the movement.

Historically the struggle of the Irish emancipation has been an extremely important one. Karl Marx, founder of Scientific Socialism in the 19th century and his collaborator, Engels, closely followed the Irish question. They sought to find support for this nationalist movement among the world

proletariat of their time. To Marx the emancipation of Ireland was a necessary step for the overthrow of the British aristocracy. He wrote:

I have become more convinced - and the only question is to bring this conviction home to the English working class - that it can never do anything here in England until it separates its policy with regard to Ireland in the most definite way from the policy of the ruling classes, until it not only takes the initiative in dissolving the Union established in 1801 (read the 1921 Treaty - ed.) and replacing it by a free federal relationship. If not, the English people will remain tied to the leading strings of the ruling classes because it must join them in a common front against Ireland. Every one of its movements in England itself is crippled by the disunion with the Irish who form a very important section of the working class in England. The primary condition of emancipation here - the overthrow of the English landed aristocracy - remains impossible because its position here cannot be stormed so long as it maintains its strongly entrenched outposts in Ireland." (Marx's emphasis. Marx to Kugelmann, November 29, 1869.)

DOES THE REPUBLICAN ARMY REPRESENT THE IRISH WORKERS?

The present struggle is for a "new Ireland". And by a new Ireland the Irish capitalists, who dominate the Republican Army, want an Ireland in which they and not the British aristocracy will have the right to exploit Irish labor. In the words of their posted proclamations: "We call upon England to withdraw her armed forces, her civilian officials and institutions and her representatives of all kinds from every part of Ireland, as an essential preliminary for peace and friendship between the two countries...." That they will resort to any means to win their end was evidenced on October 14, 1938 when the nationalists of Armagh telegraphed Hitler to help terminate the partition of Ireland. The national capitalists are always ready to sell out to foreign imperialists in order to keep the working class at home in subjection.

The only solution for the Irish working class in this historical period lies in their emancipation not only from the British imperialists, but also from the Irish bourgeoisie.

The Irish workers should participate fully in the national movement against Great Britain. They must coordinate this revolution with that of the toiling masses of Great Britain, India, South Africa and the other Dominions against their common imperialist exploiter. This will be the end of the tottering British empire and the emancipation of teeming millions of oppressed.

In this struggle the Irish workers will gather the forces for their own independent revolutionary workers party, destined, as a section of the new Communist Fourth International, to lead the world revolution.

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MEXICAN TROTSKYISTS GO IN FOR GANGSTERISM

INTERNAL DISPUTE AGAIN SHOWS IDENTITY OF BUROCRACY AND OPPORTUNISM

It is a tested law of Marxism in the field of organization that opportunists must inevitably, without exception, force their anti-working class policies on the rank and file of the movement by violence. They cannot live in the atmosphere of democratic centralism.

We have learned this lesson in our practical experience with the Comintern and its American section. Later we encountered it in our struggle with the "bolshevik-leninists" (Trotskyists), who, though opposed to the Communist Party, have never completely rid themselves of its methods and opportunism.

We present below the appeal of the membership of the Mexican Trotskyist group because it so strikingly illustrates the crude bureaucratic outcroppings anticipated in previous issues of REVOLT which have arisen there in the desperate attempt of the farcical "Fourth International" set up by the Trotskyists, to ram its clique politics down the throats of their Mexican followers.

We may expect even more cowardly episodes from these "opponents" of the Stalinist G.P.U., episodes more closely resembling the methods by which they themselves have been victimized.

But why this new raid, this theft of the organization's property, this assault on comrade Flores who attempted against odds to defend the hall?

Why this vile train of lies and slander against serious revolutionary elements, the majority of their own Mexican section?

It is the old story, ever new, the changeless law of capitalist politics: PRICK AN OPPORTUNIST AND YOU FIND A BUROCRAT! CORNER A BUROCRAT AND HE SLITHERS INTO THE SWAMP OF OPPORTUNISM!

The Mexican comrades are learning this lesson anew. Let them learn the Marxist antidote: BREAK WITH CENTRISM! FORM WITHOUT AND AGAINST THEM THE GENUINE ORGANIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM! BEGIN TODAY TO BUILD WITHOUT AND AGAINST THE OPPORTUNISTS THE VERITABLE PARTY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

The appeal follows:

To the comrades of the International Communist League, Mexican section of the Fourth International. Greetings!

Dear comrades:

We address ourselves especially to those who for certain reasons could not attend the meeting called by comrade Hipolites Flores yesterday. This call of comrade Flores was written in such terms that you could not get

a true picture of the great injustice, of the gross anti-proletarian act committed on the night of the 17th of this month against our organization

Our headquarters was completely sacked by Messers Culveaux, who is not a member of the organization, Langarica and C., the representative of the "Pan-American Buro of the Fourth International".

As you know, it was simply a raid, because there was no decision either of the general assembly of our organization or of the "administrative committee"; rather the act of removing all of the property of our organization was committed by these three individuals in secret. The proof of this is the fact that they were discovered accidentally by comrade Hipolite Flores who was passing by our headquarters when these three individuals were carrying the last bundles into a waggon. They carried all our property which seemed to them of any value to the minority group to an unknown place, out of our control, and at the headquarters itself they destroyed bulletins and other papers which they considered harmful to Schachtman, D. Rivera and Company.

Comrade Flores immediately tried to stop the raid, but was injured in doing so and threatened with further violence by C. and Langarica. Desperate and outnumbered comrade Flores called a policeman. C. fled at top speed. Their vehicle was taken to the station where comrade Flores insisted that a record be made of the raid on our organization. Taking advantage of the fact that our organization functions illegally in that it is not registered with the bourgeois state, Langarica insisted that it was property to which he was entitled, and he called in Genaro Gomez (racketeer leader of the Bakers Union and regarded as a model revolutionary by Trotsky - ed.) and his brother, a judicial representative, to support his claim. In this manner he succeeded in being released without bond.

We must note that in the raid Langarica was drunk (probably to give himself more courage and to drown in alcohol the feeble twinges of revolutionary conscience still in him). This is the explanation, dear comrades, of the convocation, the anguished call of comrade Hipolite Flores. Only eleven comrades met, and they decided, after discussion, to summon all of you to a council for next Friday, the 27th of this month at 8 sharp, at a place which we will advise you of in due time. To the above the undersigned are in agreement.....

At this meeting we will have to reorganize the life of our organization on an absolutely democratic basis, to finish once and for all with the regime of imposition, of command, and of intrigue of the representative of the Pan-American Buro, who from the very moment he began his miserable work in our midst completely disorganized the whole life and the entire activities of our organization.

We hope that you will respond to our summons in this crucial hour with the spontaneity of a true bolshevik-leninist conscious of his duty toward the working masses of Mexico and of the entire world.

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

The emancipation of the workers is the task of the workers themselves.

Group of comrades of the L.C.I., Mexican section of the Fourth International

Mexico, D.F., January 21, 1939.

CHRONOLOGY OF NEGRETE CASE

1936

(See story page 6)

- October.....Russell Blackwell, pen name Rosalio Negrete, thirty-two, American citizen, active eleven years in the American and Latin-American labor and revolutionary movements, member of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Workers League, leaves for Spain, without a passport following refusal of State Department to give him one valid for travel in Spain because of his record as a revolutionist. Blackwell, former National Secretary of the Young Communist League of Mexico, had been deported from Mexico in 1927 for revolutionary activity, and from Honduras in 1925. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle headlined its story: Honduras Jails Blackwell in Red Revolt Plot. Blackwell was accused by the American fruit companies of inciting the banana workers to revolt.
- November.....Arrives in Barcelona; makes contacts among revolutionary workers in CNT, FAI, and POUM. Sends reports to U.S. on general situation and problems of constructing revolutionary party in order to develop anti-Fascist struggle into social revolution.

1937

- March-April..Active contact with left wing developing in POUM against opportunist policy of leadership, and with Friends of Durutti against compromising policy of CNT leadership.
- May.....Wounded slightly during insurrection of Barcelona CNT, POUM and other workers against monstrous provocations of the Catalan government, and the police controlled by the Stalinists. Urges extension of the struggle, creation of soviets.
- June, 15.....Escapes dragnet for foreign revolutionists and leaders of POUM and Friends of Durutti following suppression of POUM and Friends of Durutti after insurrection is crushed. Goes into hiding.
- June-October..Continues agitation for revolutionary policies underground.
- November, 17 and 20..Writes from Barcelona for papers and money in order to be able to return to the U.S. (Mail from Spain takes four to six weeks to reach New York City.)

1938

- December, 1937, January, February, 1938...No action taken by the League. Blackwell sabotaged by Dehler who controls the League apparatus. In the meantime Blackwell writes he is making efforts to leave by his own efforts (December 31, 1937) and will "see a bit of Spain before leaving it." (January 29, 1938. Struggle against sabotage carried on by League comrades.
- March, 8....Group of individuals, nucleus of present Defense Committee, issues appeal for funds to selected list of people. \$75 cabled to contact in Paris.*
- March, 10..Blackwell writes from Madrid saying he would return to Barcelona within a week and then leave the country.
- April, 5...Negrete writes from jail in Cuenca that he had been arrested March 18. Letter is signed R. Martin, expresses the hope of being released shortly and asks that we "take no action for the present."

* The next issue of REVOLT will contain a complete financial statement on the case.

- April-May...Was probably released. I.W.W. seaman, returning from Spain in June reports having seen a man in Barcelona on May 1st, whom he identifies from a photograph as Blackwell. Discussion and close questioning tend to corroborate his report although there is a residue of doubt. Persistent efforts to check details are unavailing.
- May, 19....Writes from Room 12 of the Ministry of Marine in Madrid, notorious prison in the hands of the Stalinists, asking that action be taken to "settle that matter with Hull." Uses pen name, R. Negrete, in signature.
- June, 21....Blackwell's appeal for help received. Edna Blackwell wires State Department, Washington, requesting investigation and repatriation.
- June, 24....State Department asks proof of the citizenship of Negrete and information about his leaving the country since it has no record of same. Problem is raised of establishing identity of Negrete and Blackwell whose citizenship can be proved.
- June, 27....Proof of citizenship of Blackwell sent State Department.
- June, 28....Second appeal for help, dated June 5, received, this time from Buenavista Prison, Madrid.
- June, 29....State Department wires it is making inquiries.
- June, 30....John F. Finerty, one of Mooney's attorneys, retained.
- July, 11....Finerty wires from Washington that the Madrid Secret Police who are holding Blackwell are willing to deport him if the U.S. government will give him a passport, that he has given the State Department his assurances of the citizenship of Negrete-Blackwell, and that the State Department is "calling Valencia today authorizing issuance of passport."
- July, 26....Blackwell released "in consul's custody for repatriation".
- July, 29....State Department asks \$200 for transportation expenses.
- August, 1...\$125 sent to State Department for transmission to Consulate General at Marseilles to which Blackwell is to be sent. Contact at Paris asked to transfer money to Marseilles.
- August, 1...Blackwell embarked for Marseilles on British vessel in Valencia harbor by American Vice-Consul. Secret Police kidnap him from vessel before it sails and put him in prison. Representation made by Vice-Consul. Police refuse to release Blackwell.
- September...Negotiations begun by the League with labor organizations to set up a defense committee.
- September, 20..After a long exchange of correspondence by mail and wire the State Department reports: "In reply to the vice-consul's inquiry as to the nature of the charges against Blackwell, he was informed that Blackwell was considered to be a dangerous revolutionary and an enemy of the state. In support of this statement, the Chief of Police stated that Blackwell had signed a statement admitting that he had gone to Spain to break the Popular Front; that he was in close touch with the leaders of the POUM and FAI; and that he had participated in the May, 1937 uprisings in Barcelona." State Department reports having instructed Charge d'Affaires at Barcelona to take up the case with the Ministry of State.
- September-October..Further interchange of correspondence in which League pounds the need of preparing defense in view of possibility of trial by sending counsel to Spain for which it demands assurance State Department will issue passports; and in which State Department repeats that probabilities are Blackwell will be released without trial, and refuses to issue passports. All efforts to break the story in the capitalist press meet a stone wall. United Press says the case is loaded with dynamite.
- October, 11-22..Trial of leaders of the POUM. Blackwell's name mentioned by the prosecution as a "known" fascist agent together with Maxton,

- Member of Parliament in England, Brockway and McNair, all leaders of the Independent Labor Party of England. Espionage charge dismissed by court. Two accused freed and others given eleven and fifteen years.
- October, 18....Blackwell Defense Committee set up in New York City with members of the Revolutionary Workers League, Socialist Workers Party (Trotskyists), Independent Labor League (Lovestoneites), Social Democratic Federation, Challenge (anarchists), Canadian League for a Revolutionary Workers Party and other groups and organizations; and a number of individuals of no political affiliation. Anita Brenner elected Executive Secretary. First steps decided on are trip by Edna Blackwell to State Department; publicity in labor and capitalist press; and legal and financial assistance.
- October, 31....Olay, representative of the CNT in the U.S. receives a letter dated September 19th from Secretary Inigo of the Juridico-Social Section of the CNT in Barcelona saying they have made an investigation into Blackwell's case at Olay's request and have been informed by the Military Investigation Service (controlled by the Stalinists) that Blackwell is a Trotskyist, author of Trotskyist books, former secretary to Trotsky and a spy sent to Spain by the American authorities; and that they are suspending further efforts in Blackwell's behalf pending assurances that these things are not so. Olay and Carlo Tresca promptly cable the CNT denying the charges and assuring it of Blackwell's revolutionary integrity.
- November, 4....Edna Blackwell and Liston Oak visit State Department. Learn that Spanish Loyalist Minister of State and Minister of Justice favor Blackwell's release but "local authorities" are blocking release. Norman Thomas, John Dewey, John Dos Passos and others wire State Department asking efforts to secure safe release and repatriation.
- November, 5....Case is broken in capitalist press in a favorable light. Defense Committee begins general circulation of individuals and organizations for funds. Trade unions begin responding with donations.
- November, 8....Trotsky writes to the American and Spanish Consulates in Mexico City denying that Blackwell was ever connected with him in any way and adds: "I do not know whether the other accusations against Mr. Blackwell are of the same kind...."
- December.....Espionage charge against Blackwell dropped.
- December, 10....State Department writes that Minister of Justice has informed Charge d'Affaires Blackwell must stand trial and that trial will take place soon; but that after sentence is known consideration will be given to releasing him in custody of consular officials. State Department instructs Charge d'Affaires to continue efforts to secure release without trial.
- December, 12....Defense Committee protests that position of Minister of Justice implies conviction and excludes acquittal; requests vigorous protests to the Spanish government. Requests instructions be given to secure best counsel available at Committee's expense.
- December, 16....State Department replies, stating it has transmitted these points to the Charge d'Affaires. The implication is that he is to act on them.
- December, 30....Trial for high treason. Acquittal. Sentenced to deportation.

1939

- January, 20....Blackwell embarks for Marseilles. Arrives January 23rd.
- January, 26....Scheduled to embark from LeHayre.
- February, 4....Scheduled to arrive in New York City.

SALUD, COMPANERO!

(continued from Page 10:

courageous candidates for offices in our union. Such candidates for offices should be chosen on the basis of their devotion to the interests of the auto workers, their foresight and understanding of the problems before them. The auto workers need leaders of principle and character.

The fourth step is that before and after the convention the left wing should give direction and support to every militant move of the rank and file in the plants and in the locals to make the union an instrument of struggle against the employers for the strengthening of industrial unionism, betterment of working conditions, and for the training and education of the workers as a class for the far bigger problems that are still ahead. This means an indorsement of the right to strike against the opposition of the stink bombs that compose the two opposing factions at the top - not just on paper but in the most positive sense, in the struggle itself.

Stop the union splitters!

Save the union for the membership and not for either set of capitalist agents at the top!

Maintain solidarity in the plants! Organize armed protection of your union halls!

Build the left wing and transform the internal struggle in the union into a struggle against the capitalists and their agents!

For a democratically-run union!

For a new and class struggle leadership in the auto union!

Forward with class struggle industrial unionism in auto!

BUILDING SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

Last month the highest soviet authorities adopted measures to tighten up labor discipline by reducing the amount of time lost through absence, and to discourage soviet workers from leaving one job for another.

The object is to increase labor productivity (the speed-up) and thereby decrease manufacturing costs.

The labor regulations provide: first, if a worker is late three times in one month or four times in two months, he will be discharged. Second, vacations will be given only after a worker has been employed for eleven consecutive months in the same institution. Third, the worker must pay as social insurance for temporary disability, 50 to 100% of the worker's wage, depending on the length of his employment, his membership in a trade union and similar considerations.

The Russian Soviet Government has long ago ceased to represent the interests of the Soviet working class. In Russia a new revolutionary Marxist party must be built.

IN THE RICHEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD

OPTIMISM

In 1932 J.D. Sotler bet R.E. Collins that Louisiana's \$5,000,000 capitol building will stand up 500 years. The bet was \$2.50. Collins and Sotler signed papers and banked the money under contract at 4 per cent interest. The contract specifies that the bank shall pay the bet to the heirs of the winner. In 2432 - IF things continue as now - the original \$2.50 will be - \$2,084,495,605.22.

Some people are optimists. They think the capitalist system is going to last 500 more years!

INFORMATION PLEASE

In the discussion in the United States Senate on January 17th on the confirmation of Frank Murphy as Attorney General of the United States, Senator Bailey of North Carolina criticized Murphy for temporizing in the sit-down strikes of auto workers in 1937. Bailey said, "When mobs become riotous, the law officers must suppress them. It is not up to them to consider whether there be bloodshed or not. Our's is a government of law, and the ministers of the law must preserve the law, even though the preservation involves bloodshed...I am sorry to say that bloodshed is necessary in the preservation of law."

That's telling them, Senator. But does this apply to mobs who lynch Negroes in your own South?

WORKERS CHILDREN MUST SALUTE FLAG IN FREE SCHOOLS

The salute to the American flag is a symbol of patriotism and a gesture of love and respect. School children can be compelled to salute the flag. So ruled the Court of Appeals of the State of New York. In Germany school children are compelled to salute the Swastika.

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THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES RECOGNIZES:

That in capitalist society the lot of the working class is exploitation, economic and political oppression, poverty, and the horror of ever-recurring imperialist war;

That for the working class there is no escape from this fate except through the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system which, with its destructive wars, chronic crises and permanent paralysis of immense productive forces cannot play a socially useful role;

That the capitalist state is an instrument in the hands of the capitalists for the subjugation of the workers; an instrument of the dictatorship of the exploiters over the exploited, either masked as a "democratic" government, or openly revealing its true role as a fascist or military government;

That the interests of the workers can never be reconciled with the interests of their oppressors and exploiters; and that, consequently, between these two classes a class struggle must go on until the working class overthrow the capitalist class;

That the emancipation of the working class can be attained only by the working class itself.

RECOGNIZING THESE THINGS TO BE TRUE, THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE IS DEDICATED TO THE FOLLOWING AIMS:

The relentless waging of the class struggle to develop it into the proletarian revolution;

The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the instrument for the construction of communism, a classless society based on collective work and ownership of the means of production;

The establishment of the council (Soviet) form of government;

The building of a revolutionary party as the leader of the working class in the daily class struggle and in the proletarian revolution. Since the emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers of all countries, the League strives to build a world party, uniting the revolutionists of all countries in the Communist Fourth International;

When the workers are called upon to go to war in defense of imperialist interests, the League will strive to persuade the workers to turn their arms against the imperialists of "their" country, to turn the imperialist war into a civil war to overthrow capitalism.

WORKERS WHO ARE IN AGREEMENT WITH THESE AIMS AND ARE WILLING TO WORK FOR THEM, SHOULD JOIN THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE, U.S. (REVOLT).

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