



The VOLUNTEER FOR LIBERTY

organ of the international brigades



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WHAT IS HAPPENING BEHIND FRANCO'S LINES?

The following article is part of a short-wave broadcast made to the United States and Canada, over Station E A R, on Tuesday, September, 7th.

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One of the big questions in the minds of Americans, these days, is: "What is happening behind Franco's lines? What is happening in the territory now held by the Fascists?" It is important to understand what occurs in the fascist rear, not only to possess an accurate picture of fascist strength or weakness, but also to know the maximum fighting power of Republican Spain today. Here, in Spain, of course, we can observe almost at first-hand what occurs in fascist-held territory. We know how the arrogance of Mussolini's officers and the domineering traits of Hitler's officers and men clash even with the Spanish fascists. On many occasions we have heard the noise of heavy fighting behind enemy lines. There have been frequent revolts in fascists-held territory, especially since the powerful July offensive of our People's Army on the Madrid front. And now, with the victorious advance of the Loyalist soldiers in Aragon, we can expect further, and bigger rifts, further rebellions within rebellions, in the fascist areas. There are, in addition to all of this, our partisan units carrying on constant and effective guerilla warfare behind enemy lines; but their activities, for obvious reasons, cannot be spoken of at present.

If you were here in Spain today, you could check up on these things for yourself. A day's ride from Madrid would take you to any of a number of fronts. There

Young Spaniard, Captured Near Irun, Escapes from Fascist Lines at Brunete, and Answers This Question

you would be able to hear the commotion of battle, the flash and sound of rifle-, machine-gun-, and artillery-fire; directed not only against government lines but against some objective deep within fascist territory. But the fascists' fighting among themselves is only one part of the whole story. Most of the firing takes place when the people themselves rise in fascist territory—the people who have been bled by fascism to a greater degree than even the corrupt monarchy bled them; the people who have been victimized and terrorized to an even greater

degree than were the peasants of 16th century Spain, under the life-and-death power wielded by Philip II and his Inquisition. These people have been drained of their man-power and of their meagre possessions; boys of 15, 16, and 17 are forced to fight for the fascists. And old men and cripples are forced to dig their trenches, build their fortifications.

TWO YOUNG SOLDIERS

Just a few days ago I sat at a long table in a Madrid mansion now occupied by the Alliance of

Anti-Fascist Intellectuals, listening to the story of two young Spaniards who had recently escaped from the fascist lines. One, the older and more articulate of the two, is an Estramaduran, the other is a Basque. Both joined the government forces at the very beginning of the rebellion—July 18th, 1936. Both were attached to the Army of the North. Both fought through the heart-breaking campaigns during which Italian arms and men, and German planes, brutally destroyed Guernica and Durango, and captured Bilbao. I cannot give you their names; their families still live—if they are alive at all—in fascist territory. And it is needless, I think, to remind you that whenever the fascists receive a setback, whether military or verbal—they carry out their reprisals, like the corrupt gentlemen they are, on "women and children first".

I'll call the older of the two young Spaniards Frank—which is a fair approximation of one of his names.

WOUNDED IN NORTH

From the very start, Frank fought at Irun, until it was lost, sustaining a wound which should have kept him out of action for four months. But in half that time, on his own insistence, he was back at the front, as commissar for supplies of his battalion. Tiring of this comparatively "safe" job, he returned to the infantry, where he was made sergeant of a machine-gun company. As a machine gunner he fought in Biscay, at Udalla and Ochandiano, and in other towns against the fascist advance, until the 23rd of



Bringing in the captured phalangists.

(Continued on page 4)

OUR SECOND VICTORIOUS OFFENSIVE

After our offensive on the Guadarrama follows our offensive on the Ebro before Saragossa.

After the brilliant actions which enabled us to capture Brunete and take by storm Villanueva de la Cañada, Quijorna and Villanueva del Pardillo, we have now carried out new and more brilliant actions on the Aragon front, which have brought our troops within a few kilometres of Saragossa, and have



allowed us to infiltrate a distance varying from 10 to 15 kilometres into the enemy lines and take by storm and hold positions which were deemed impregnable, such as Quinto, Codo and Mediana; and to lay siege to Belchite and to force it to surrender after fierce street fighting.

Not a month had gone by since our first offensive and already our Army was able to launch a second on a still larger scale with more developed and effective means, with troops trained and steeled in action, filled with enthusiasm at the victories we had already won.

ENEMY SUPPRISED

Our leaders and troops have carefully profited by the lessons of Guadarrama in this new offensive.

We were able to take the enemy by surprise, to disorganise and overthrow his system of defence in a few hours and to obtain results of vast political and military importance. We were able to do this because of the daring with which the plan of operations was drawn up, the perfect manner in which it was carried out in action, and because of the heroism and worth of our soldiers.

All the Brigades which took part in this action have vied with one another in heroism and worth.

The Brigades which had won their greatest glory on the Madrid front have fought side by side with those brave Brigades which for months and months have been defending the cause of

freedom and Spanish independence on the Aragon front.

PERFECT UNITY

This Aragon offensive is a proof of the perfect unity of purpose which exists in all the sectors of battle, among men of all political tendencies: the will to unite all the forces of the people in one block to crush Spanish and international Fascism as soon as possible.

It also provides a proof of the wisdom and energy of the policy of our People's Front Government, which has been able to prepare and launch this great and victorious offensive in such a short space of time, and in the political sphere has been able to bring about the conditions of organisation and military command



which have made this offensive possible.

Without the perfect subordination of all the military units to one central command, without utilising all our forces in a general plan which takes into account all the needs and possibilities of all the battle fronts, it would have been impossible to carry out the movements of troops and the concentration of forces which were necessary for the success of these offensives.

This provides further confirmation of the advantages and necessity of the unity of all the forces of the people against Fascism, the need for a disciplined regular Army which organises and activates all our forces, and for a central command which makes the best use of them and sends them into attack on the basis of the experience already gained and in accordance with the rules of the art of war.

The decision to launch our second offensive on the Aragon front was not made lightly.

We had to attack immediately

and resolutely on other battle fronts because of the need to help our comrades in the North. We had to go to the aid of the anti-fascist people's forces who had risen in violent demonstrations in Saragossa and the surrounding district against Franco's rule. These factors led to the banks of the Ebro being chosen as the scene for our attacks. The vital significance of Saragossa and the whole of Aragon makes our offensive an event of first rate importance for the whole development of the Spanish war.

After the heroic defence of Madrid for which all the regions of Spain and all the political tendencies have given their best forces, it has been possible to make a concentration on the banks of the Ebro for this offensive and to prove to the whole world that the People's Spain, Republican Spain, is united as one man and feels with one heart and one mind the cause of the war.

THE I. B.'S ROLE

For the Volunteers of the International Brigades, representing the world People's Front, who have come to Spain with one desire alone: to help to defend her liberty and independence, it has been a great honor to be able to take part in this Aragon offensive, where, as ever, our International Brigades have written immortal pages of heroism and daring, such as they had already written on the Madrid front, the



southern front, and the fronts of Teruel and Pozoblanco.

In the assault of Quinto, in the brave resistance to the enemy counter-attacks at Mediana, in the conquest of Belchite, our Brigades, together with the Spanish Brigades, have covered themselves with glory.

What shall we say of the two brave Polish Battalions which penetrated into the enemy lines alone and surprised and destroyed

important fascist forces which were going to strengthen their weakening lines,—those two Battalions which advanced until they came within a few kilometres of Saragossa!

It was a real odyssey, full



splendid courage, resistance to fatigue, initiative and capacity for action.

LEADERS PRAISE MEN

All the military leaders have nothing but congratulations and the highest praise for the courage of our volunteers. They attack positions which were considered impregnable in perfect order, if they were "on manoeuvres". It was told by General Walter, Lieutenant Colonel Copic and Commander Richard who had seen them in action and had had the honor of commanding them.

All our Brigades and every one of our volunteers can be proud of the glory won by the International Brigades on the Aragon front. It should make all in the Brigades, all our volunteers, draw the lessons from our last battle so as to do even better, winning new victories in the decisive battles which are before us.

Our victories on the Aragon front provide further confirmation and proof of the lessons of the Guadarrama victory.

We have all we need for victory and we shall win the war.

LUIGI GALLO
Inspector-General of
International Brigades

In the Rebel Zone

They say in Gibraltar that the number of Spaniards who have fled from the rebel zone to this English area are increasing from day to day so that they constitute a real problem. More than 500 have arrived in the last week in spite of the precautions of the rebels.

BRITONS IN SPAIN

In these days, when our Spanish comrades are paying homage to their International Brigade, and when its amazing history is being unfolded anew, its struggles, the hardships it has endured, its vicissitudes; it is time also that we volunteers who make up this Brigade should remember the service and the valor of some of the comrades who are still fighting at our side, and of the comrades who died in giving it its memorable tradition.

Some of us are apt to forget, and some — especially among the newer recruits — are unaware of the difficult days that now follow behind us. Today, with our efficient units, our modern arms, our trained officers, our unified command, it is not easy to remember those other days, the days of confusion, of sabotage, of treachery; the days when our biplanes did not fill the sky, nor did the planes fill all of our arms: the days when we were only beginning to forge our army, and to organize the men who lead it.

Others can tell of the numberless, nameless French comrades who, in the first months of the revolt, poured over the border in their thousands and died that Fascism should not pass; of the brave and bitter German and Italian anti-fascists who faced again the onslaught of Fascism and, dying, staked its progress. I wish to tell of our brave British comrades whose courage and selfless sacrifice have been second to none among the anti-fascists who compose the International Brigades.

SPORTSMEN ENLISTED

In July 1936, when the fascist rebellion broke out a group of British worker sportsmen were in Barcelona for the Workers' Olympiad. They immediately rallied to the aid of their Spanish brothers and fought with them in the streets of Barcelona and in other parts of Catalonia. A second group, cycling in France at the time of the outbreak, immediately crossed the border and put their services at the disposal of the Government. Among the first group was Felicia Brown, a London architect, perhaps the first woman from another country to die for the cause of Spain.

In two months time the group of volunteers had grown and the "Mann Centuria" was formed.

This unit carried out some of the most audacious coups in the early days, among such, an expedition to the Balearics, where they fought doggedly against the fascist invaders. Later, linking themselves up with the German comrades, they went into action on the Teruel and Madrid fronts, where they won the admiration of their fellow anti-fascists. These actions saw the death of some of our best comrades, typical of such being John Cornford, a brilliant student whose death was one of the severest losses to the British student movement in recent years.

VOLUNTEERS POURED IN

At the same time as these comrades were fighting with the "Thaelmann Battalion" other British volunteers were pouring into Spain. In December a British company of about 150 men, insufficiently armed, badly equipped, hurriedly trained, left Albacete for the Cordova front, where the fascist had been advancing. On a moving front without entrenchments, their thin garments providing little protection against the winter cold, robbed even of food by sabotage, they fought for night and day to repel the enemy advances. Three times they gained their objective, thrice were they thrust back by the machine gun fire of the enemy aviation. In those days the red "moscas" had not yet come to terrorise the fascist planes from the skies.

From Cordova they went to Guadalajara and to Casa del Campo. Wherever the fascists made their greatest efforts the British comrades were to be found opposing them. After a two month campaign they returned to the

base to re-organise and to join the British Battalion which was being formed. But not all of them returned, Ralph Fox, beloved proletarian writer of the British people was one of those who did not come back.

BATTALION FORMED

The British "Saklatvala" Battalion was formed early in 1937. On Feb. 11th, the fascists succeeded in crossing the Jarama river and, supported by tanks and artillery, were advancing towards the Madrid-Valencia road. The Battalion was one among others which was rushed up to stem the advance. It was a moving front, a front without cover. It was the scene of the most desperate battle of the war — the scene of our British comrades' greatest effort.

For eleven days and nights the British comrades fought the fascists for the soil of Spain — foot by foot. Hundreds of our comrades were killed, hundreds more wounded. Death and injury denuded the battalion of the majority of its officers — still it fought on. By the 21st, it was evident that the fascists had exhausted their efforts and that they had failed in their objective.

Despite the heavy losses on both sides and the extremely exhaustive nature of the fighting, the Government forces were quickly re-organised and took the initiative in attack. In these attacks the British comrades continued their heroic efforts. When, at long last, calm came to the Jarama sector, this heroic battalion made up its balance sheet hundreds of dead, hundreds of wounded: Madrid had been saved, THEY HAD NOT PASSED.

Then followed the long enervating months of comparative stalemated, months of extreme difficulty during which it was found to be impossible to rest the battalions owing to the peculiar military and political situation in the country at the time. These were the days when the activities of fascist agents were making critical situations in the rear, the days which saw the culmination of such work in the betrayal of Malaga and the uprising in Barcelona. These events were responsible for denying our comrades the rest they so badly needed.

At last, however, the situation improved and the British Battalion was rested. The rest was short-lived for the call went forth again, — this time the OFFENSIVE. Again they took up their arms, again they marched to battle.

Who can say that these men were not brave, these men who stormed Villanueva de la Cañada? At last on the offensive against the hated fascists, despite their fatigue, despite their weariness, they fought like heroes. And what can we say of these dear comrades who paid with their lives for this advance? Company Commanders Meredith and Goodfellow, Political Commissars Brown and Elliot, no braver men fought, no comrades have died more sorrowed.

And so to Quinta, where again our victories are not without a tinge of sorrow. Peter Daly, our beloved Irish Company Commander, has died the only death that he could die.

Cordova, Guadalajara, Casa del Campo, Jarama, Brunete, Teruel, Quinta — these are the milestones in the long history of the British comrades in Spain. It is a long history but not a finished one, because we have still many of these men with us, and many more have come to join them in this struggle and to continue the proud traditions of this heroic battalion.

When the day comes on which we shall proclaim the victory of the Spanish people, we shall not forget to pay homage to the comrades who have made this victory possible. And not least among them shall be our comrades of the British battalion.



I. B. Men Help the Peasants Harvest Their Wheat.

A. DONALDSON

WHAT IS HAPPENING BEHIND FRANCO'S LINES?

(Continued from page 1.)

April, when his brigade was forced to evacuate its position to escape the deadly, vise-like enemy offensive. The brigade took up new positions in the mountains, but if their old position had been the frying-pan, the new one was the fire. All day long, Frank told me, 33 tri-motored fascist planes bombed them, dropping 1100 bombs. Forty enemy batteries kept up a constant, rapid-artillery-fire against them. After one day of this, the roll call told the story; 160 dead, and more than twice that number wounded. Frank, for the second time, was among the wounded.

RESCUE ATTEMPT

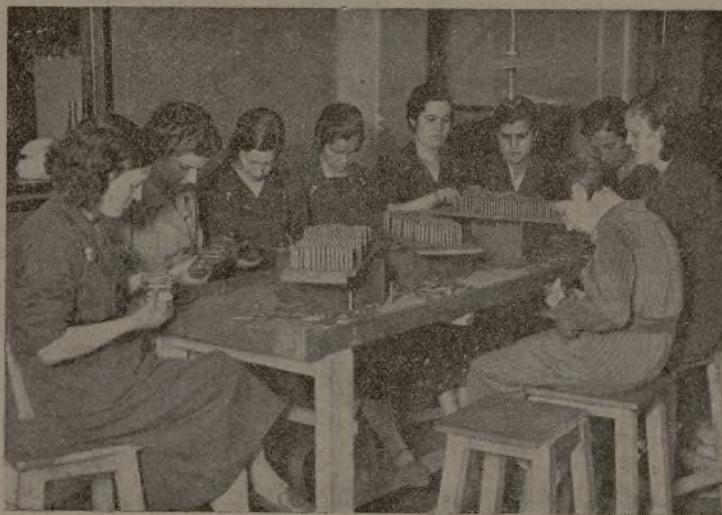
Again, after a short stay in the hospitals of Bilbao and Santander, he was back at the front. But a new fear gripped him this time. He found out that his young wife and two small children were less than five miles from the fascist lines. "There's still time to get them out", he thought and he received permission to go after them.

He set out to save his small family on June 25th of this year. The way was easy—it was his own, small house—he had been over the dusty roads and meadows and vineyards a hundred times before. But when he reached the house his wife and children were gone. In their place he found eight men, eating his own bread, getting drunk on his own wine. They were not Spaniards—he could tell that at a glance. He could have run off, hidden himself in a ditch until nightfall, when he would have been able to return safely to his companions; but the shock and the bitterness in him were too great. "I couldn't move", he told me. "I could only stand there and think—where are they, where are they?" It was here that he was taken prisoner by the fascists, five of whom, as he soon discovered, were Italians, the other three Germans.

From this point on, I'll give you Frank's own words, translated as literally as possible:

IN FASCIST HANDS

"The Germans soon departed, leaving me in the hands of the Italians, who promised that I would escape punishment if I



Girls At Work in an Ammunition Factory.

would join them. I had heard about their punishment, many times before. Seeing I was lost, I said "Yes, I'll join you".

"Then the Italians, with a great deal of soft-soap, told me not to worry, and said they would take me to headquarters to make a statement, and from there they would send me home. From the place called Gallarto, where I was captured, I was taken to San Salvador del Valle, where the headquarters were; and before we got there we went through Ortuella. At Ortuella there was a division of German and Moorish troops; and two of these soldiers, one a German and the other a Moor, came towards me when they saw me, threatening that they would cut my head off. But they changed their minds when the Italians who were guarding me told them that I was not a Red but a national.

POSSESSIONS TAKEN

"At the headquarters, after taking from me all the useful personal belongings I had, such as a watch, 250 pesetas and a few other things, they put me in a dark cell where there were twelve others, some of them old men. They kept us in the cell till eight o'clock in the evening, when they made us get into a truck and took us along to show us to the people of all the towns and villages on the right side of the Bilbao River, telling the people that this was what would happen to them if they didn't behave... At Burcena they made us get down

from the vehicle, taking us on foot to Bilbao, which was five kilometres away.

"In Bilbao, they put us in the Arriaga Theatre, and about 100 of us were kept there for four days. Every 24 hours they gave us a can of beans for four men, and a small piece of bread (150 grammes) for each of us. We slept on the floor, without blankets to cover us nor a sleeping mat to rest on. During this time I was able to speak with an anonymous comrade, who told me that on June 23rd, 28 workers had been taken out of this prison-theatre at midnight, led to the Derio Cemetery, and there, together with thirty other prisoners from Guernica, all of them were shot.

20 IN ONE CELL

"After we had been four days in this hole—on June 29th, at two in the afternoon, when it was raining in torrents, they made us march in formation through all the streets of Bilbao when the rain was heaviest. Naturally we got soaked, as we had nothing on to protect us. After they got tired of making us walk through all the streets, they put us into a number of busses and took us to Victoria. There, soaked as we were, they put us in another prison, twenty men to a cell. We remained here for six days, unable to sleep or even to sit down because the cell was too small even for half our number. In it we had to attend to all our necessities—all our necessities—we were not

permitted out even once. The food was a ladle of soup every 24 hours, and a small piece of bread.

"On our second day at the Victoria prison there arrived a political prisoner who had been brought from Guernica. His face told us, even before he spoke, that he had been cruelly tortured. It was he who told us that the tortures inflicted on political prisoners where he had come from were so terrible that it meant slow, lingering death for all but the strongest.

TAKEN TO BURGOS

"On July 5th, after taking statements from us in an insulting and swinish way, they took us by train to the Burgos concentration camp. In Burgos, in order to impress the conscience of the world when foreign journalists came they gave us very good food, mostly thanks to a good captain who was in charge of us. But after the journalists had been satisfied, and when it was supposed that they would not come there any more, they moved the captain to another place; and things changed, changed very sadly for us.

"While we were here in Burgos, old men and sick men with high fevers were forced to work together with us. Early in the morning we had to go down into the prison yard to hoist the Monarchist flag, give the fascist salute, and successive cheers for the Generalissimo, for fascist Spain, for the fascist army; and then we had to shout, as loud as we could "Glory to General Mola!" One comrade, for not submitting to these whims and not saying the appropriate things, was shot. These performances of cheers and salutes we were forced to go through three times a day; in the morning, at midday, and in the afternoon.

FASCIST HINTERLAND

"After we been in this concentration camp a little more than a month, with old men and sick men working at heavy labor, building a road, we were taken to Burgos station and placed on a freight train at 9 o'clock at night and taken to the Madrid front. During the journey through Burgos, Valladolid, Salamanca,

Caceres and Toledo, in towns and in villages and in the country, we did not see a single man between 20 and 50 years old—we saw only women, many of whom were in mourning. There were also half-starved little children, who came up to the train to try to get something to eat.

"We asked these children where the men were, and they told us that the ones who had not been shot were at the front. At the Bejar station, in Salamanca, we asked a boy if there were no men in the place. He replied that the fascists had shot nearly all of them, adding: "They shot my own father". We asked him how many brothers and sisters he had, and he told us: "Five"; and that the oldest sister, who was two years older than he was, was fourteen years old. While the boy was telling us these things, a sergeant in our escort heard him, and went up to him and kicked him several times and beat him viciously with a stick.

ONLY WOMEN AT WORK

"Not only did we not see men in towns and villages, but we did not see them in the fields either. The land work, such as the harvesting of wheat, is being done by women.

"After we had witnessed all these calamities on our journey, we arrived on July 27th on the Madrid front, where they set us to digging trenches near Brunete, working like this from 4 till 11 in the morning, from 5 in the afternoon till 9 o'clock at night, and from 10 o'clock at night to 3 or half past three in the morning. Then they would take us off to breakfast and bring us back to work again at 4 or half-past four. All we had for food each day were two small tins of sardines. We had to get our water from the river, although a sweet spring was only fifty yards away. But the water of that spring was only for officers.

LEGLESS MEN DRIVEN

"If any prisoner, worn out by overwork, let himself fall asleep, or did not fall in quickly enough for work at any time, he would be beaten in a barbarous way with cudgels wielded by the sergeants. As a shameful example, men who had lost legs and arms — war victims — were dragged along with us to the edge of the

3.000.000 JOIN RANKS OF C. I. O. IN 20 MONTHS

The Committee for Industrial Organization was 20 months old in July this year. Since November 1935, when eight international unions came together to do the job which the American Federation of Labor failed to tackle, almost 2,000,000 workers have been organized for the first time, declares Edward Levinson in the current issue of Photo-History.

Together with the founding organizations, the C. I. O. totals today over 3,000,000 men and women. Counting the supporters of the C. I. O. who remain temporarily within the fold of the A. F. of L., the C. I. O. has, in less than two years, displaced the A. F. of L. as chief spokesman of American workers, Levinson says.

The growth of unionism under the C. I. O. has been the most widespread and spectacular in the history of the nation, creating a new and powerful force which is affecting economic and social trends and which will exert even greater influence as the next decades unfold.

Membership of the C. I. O. as of July 1 this year is:

United Mine Workers of America.....	600,000
Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers.....	450,000
United Automobile Workers.....	350,000
International Ladies Garment Workers.....	252,000
United Textile Workers.....	350,000
Amalgamated Clothing Workers.....	180,000
United Electrical and Radio Workers.....	100,000
Federation of Woodworkers.....	80,000
International Typographical Union.....	80,000
United Transport Workers.....	70,000
Oil, Field, Gas and Refinery Workers.....	60,000
United Rubber Workers.....	55,000
National Maritime Union.....	75,000
Pacific Maritime Federation.....	40,000
Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers	30,000
United Shoe Workers.....	25,000
United Retail Employees.....	25,000
United Office and Professional Employees.....	25,000
International Fur Workers.....	35,000
Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers.....	19,000
Federation Flat Glass Workers.....	15,000
American Newspaper Guild.....	15,000
Miscellaneous	150,000
Total	3,083,000

All besides the International Typographical Union are formally affiliated with the C. I. O. The Typo's president Charles P. Howard is C. I. O. secretary but the union has not yet formally affiliated.

firing line. A legless man would be given a pick, placed in a sitting position, and told "Get to work!" A man with only one arm would have to make full use of it. Old men, priests, doctors and school teachers, were forced to work with us.

"As the majority of the prisoners were Basques, and many of these had Catholic sentiments, we agreed one day when we were on the Quijorna front that a Friar from Los Salixianos de Bilbao

should ask permission from the prisoners' commander to pray at meal times. When our Friar asked for permission, the Commander flew into a fury, hurled himself upon him, hit him in the face and said he would not allow such prayers, least of all from such a hypocrite.

FEW SPANIARDS

"The majority of the forces we saw on these fronts were Moors

and foreigners, and three battalions of young Spaniards, of the 1938 and 1939 drafts. The Spanish soldiers are treated very badly, very poorly clothed, underfed, and full of misery. Some of them told us that they had been at the front for three months, and they still had not been given blankets. They all greatly desired the war to end. They are tired, without enthusiasm, without fire. And their most often asked question is: "When, when will the war end?"

This is Frank's whole story —except for one last thing: he and his companion got fed up with the drudgery of trench-digging, and one night they decided, as many had before them and many others since, to make a break for the Loyalist lines. How they succeeded in escaping is another story, one that will have to be told at another time.

FASCIST SPAIN TODAY

What concerns us most in this account is the picture of fascist-held Spain today. The people, sucked dry and empty, wait hopefully for the government troops to conquer their towns, their fields and villages, so that they will be liberated from the bestial rule of Franco and his German and Italian masters. And sometimes, when it gets so unbearable that even death is preferable to continued life under fascist rule, they rise up in a last, desperate effort, doomed to failure because they have no arms, because their young men and mature men are far away. It is the sound of their struggles that we hear on the government side of the war-front. Each rising of this kind saps the strength of Franco, already greatly diminished after a year of battle. Each flash in the enemy sky tells us, more clearly than words that the people are waiting for us to advance, to conquer, to free all of Spain. And since July the offensive has passed into the government's hands. With this fact already a reality, with dissension growing ever greater in Franco's rear, the true government of Spain grows surer every day that victory is in sight. How close this victory is depends not only on the People's Army's growing strength, but also, to a great extent, on the actions of the democracies of Europe and America.

E. R.

THE NYON CONFERENCE A STEP FORWARD

In spite of the efforts made by Germany and Italy to torpedo it up to the last moment, the Nyon Conference has been held, and has taken decisions which will be immediately put into action.

In two months, more than 30 vessels had been victims of the new reign of piracy in the Mediterranean. Faced with this situation and the firm attitude adopted by the Soviet Union, it was not possible for Britain and France to continue to turn the blind eye. Italy would have liked to see this problem, like so many others, "dealt with" at London, of which the Fascist powers have so many pleasant memories, and where such consideration has always been shown to their sensitive feelings.

NYON DECISIONS

The decisions of the Conference may be summarised as follows:

The Governments participating in it will order their warships to protect any merchant shipping not belonging to either of the conflicting parties in Spain. Any submarine which attacks another vessel, thereby constituting a breach of International Law, will be counter-attacked and if possible destroyed.

In the Western Mediterranean the protection of shipping will be carried out by Britain and France. In the Eastern Mediterranean, the task will fall on the Governments concerned. On the high seas excluding the Adriatic, and up to the entrance of the Dardenelles, the British and French fleets will protect shipping. The other powers participating in the agreement with a Mediterranean coastline undertake to give these fleets the support required.

SUBMARINE RULES

The powers participating in the Conference will send no submarine out to sea, except in certain zones reserved for manoeuvres, without previously notifying the other powers, and in this case every submarine will sail on the surface and be accompanied by a surface vessel. No foreign submarine will be allowed in the territorial waters of the contracting

powers, except in the case of unavoidable necessity, or subject to pre-arranged conditions.

The powers are to recommend their merchant vessels to follow certain main routes in the Mediterranean. Any power wishing to withdraw from the agreement must give thirty days' notice.

The agreement was signed by the nine powers present at the Conference, namely: Britain, Bulgaria, Egypt, France, Greece, Rumania, Turkey, the U. R. S. S. and Jugoslavia.

NO "PRIVATE LAKE"

The agreement is a first and important step against the acts of piracy by the Fascist aggressors. The Mediterranean ceases to be their private lake. And the presence of strong British and French naval forces means that Italy's dreams of domination in the Mediterranean will disappear in smoke.

There are some grave defects. Litvinov pointed out in his speech: "I regret the absence of the State which has suffered most from piracy: Republican Spain... The presence of Spain will be a contribution to the pacification of the Mediterranean." But Republican Spain has been excluded from the agreement, and her merchant shipping is not protected by the agreement. While the agreement does not recognise Franco as belligerent, it does not give the Spanish Government its rights in International Law. The decisions taken only refer to submarines, but vessels of other types have played their part in the piracy, and planes have sunk two Soviet ships.

ADVANCE FOR PEACE

As "Izvestia" says: "The Conference was called on the initiative of Britain and France, but the concrete results have been due to the activity and the correct line of Soviet diplomacy which declared its position with the needful firmness and determination before the Conference took place."

Notwithstanding its serious defects the Agreement represents an advance for the forces of peace and collective security, and a serious setback for Fascist aggression.



Women Shock Brigade Workers Meet.

Written During An

AIRPLANE ATTACK

Dawn still sleeps; but we awake,
Aware that soon those shadows in
The sky may hover.

Everywhere about us the earth is raw,
With wounds from shells and bombs, and holes
Dug by men.

Blood has flowed here, has wet this earth
On which we lie; and blood will flow again —
But our thoughts are not of this.

We oil our guns, adjust our clothes,
Dig deep the earth — prepare to hide in it,
To hug it close.

And then those shadows come! We seize upon the earth
We have prepared — become part of it —
Become earth...

Not a finger moves: expectantly we wait —
Some fearfully — for a sign: are they theirs,
Or ours? marked with red or black?

Then suddenly the roar! Earth again is torn,
Into a million parts leaps high; and shrapnel spreads
And mingles with the smoke.

More! and more! Closer! More deadly!
Intenser — bombs — cries of pain from mules and men,
All covered by earth and dust...

Then silence... The beasts have gone...
We tear ourselves from the earth,
Become men again.

DANIEL HUTNER
American Volunteer Killed In
Action — September, 1937

sion. A relatively decisive answer has been given to Italian pretensions in the Mediterranean. The agreement is only a first step, but the very fact that this step has

been taken is of great importance for the preservation of the peace of Europe.

A. M. E.

BREWERY CARRIES ON UNDER ENEMY'S FIRE

During the 14 months of civil war in Spain, profound changes have taken place in the economic and social conditions of this country. Since the July 18th uprising of the military clique headed by General Franco, in the interests of German and Italian Fascism, we have all heard of the great progress made in the destruction of the feudal relations in the countryside, the granting of land to the peasants—the former possessions of the nobility and the idle parasitic absentee landlords.

Life has also taken a new turn for the city industrial workers. A visit to some of the Madrid factories gives ample proof that present social changes are also bringing economic improvement and industrial freedom to the toiling masses of Spain.

BEER FOR THE MEN

We enter the gates of Madrid's largest brewery, "El Aquila" beer factory. The delegation, consisting of a group of German, American, Polish and French anti-fascist fighters is keenly interested in how the factory workers are making out. We are met at the entrance of the plant by the director, who shows us around. A glance at the factory walls indicates that we are very near to the front. The workers of "El Aquila" are only a few kilometres from the fascist lines—carrying on their work in the midst of the great war for their national independence. We are informed from the outset that, due to war conditions, production is only 20 percent of normal, i. e. 50,000 litres of beer yearly as against 250,000 in past years. It is easy to understand this fact, when we are told that of the 550 workers of this brewery, some 300 volunteered for service in the army to defend their city against the fascist invaders. Those who remained, mostly elderly workers, are not exempt from the murderous designs of the fascists. Only last week a shell from the fascist artillery from the Usera-Cerro Rojo fascist lines, struck the plant, killing five workers peacefully engaged in production. On entering the director's office, we noticed the walls covered with portraits of young men—all "El Aquila" heroes who gave their lives in defense of their government and their liberty.

The workers in this plant carry on despite the shelling by the fascists. Due to the nearness of the front, we learned that no production is carried on at night, as the electric lights would be a perfect target for the fascist artillery. The men work from 7 a. m. to 1 p. m., every day of the week—although paid for a full day's work. This plant, formerly the property of a stock-holding company, is now run and managed by the workers through their elected committees, under government control and supervision. The president of the company having died in the early days of the uprising, the workers undertook to run the plant and they run it well, indeed. No interests are being paid to former stock holders. The profits of the plant going exclusively to the workers and their families.

WORKERS' CONTROL

The workers through their trade unions (all workers organized into trade unions), elect a committee of seven to administer the affairs of production and distribution as well as those of social welfare of the employees. The committee consists of six UGT and one CNT members—a direct reflection of the fact that some 450 workers were in the UGT and 30 in the CNT at the time of the outbreak of Franco's rebellion.

Despite the difficulties created by the war, the plant manages to buy raw materials (barley) from the peasants in Toledo province, coal from Tarancon, and to import

hops from France to the extent of 2 million pesetas annually, and to keep things moving. The beer produced is sold to private cafes and restaurants, although mainly to the Intendancias of the Army, for use for the front, for distribution among the fighters of the People's Army, who so valiantly defend the great city of Madrid.

WAGES INCREASED

The workers' wages have risen to about 5 pesetas more, daily, than before. The wages now range from 12 pesetas daily for unskilled men to 20 pesetas for the more experienced and skilled workers. The plant has set up a social insurance fund, whereby the disabled workers—those who fought to stop the fascist hordes at the gates of Madrid—are amply provided for. The widows of "El Aquila" workers, who have fallen in the war, receive 5 pesetas daily from this insurance fund. We visited the large and clean communal dining room where dinners are served to the "El Aquila" workers for 2 pesetas, as well as the plant first-aid station and clinic. There is also a library where workers can spend their time reading and in self-study.

A visit to the "El Cafeto" factory of Simon Martinez revealed to the delegation a situation very similar to that described in the brewery. This factory, still privately owned, is also controlled and managed by a joint UGT-CNT workers' committee. This factory, famous in Spain for its production of chocolate, is now producing chocolate and coffee exclusively for the Army Intendencia. Out of the profits of the plant, the committee pays the taxes to

the government and keeps the balance for the purchase of raw materials (sugar, coffee beans, nuts, etc.). Here too we saw half of the 120 workers previously employed now in the ranks of the People's Army. The other half carry on production and in their spare time maintain a poultry farm. The "farm" is on an old football field adjacent to the factory. Starting with some scant donations of chickens, rabbits, ducks, goats and pigeons by peasants in Madrid province, they are building a permanent poultry farm to provide eggs to military hospitals, and, through care and attention, increasing their live stock to be able to supply many a chicken dinner to the soldiers wounded in the struggle for democracy.

In the "El Cafeto" plant too the workers wages have increased to as high as 14 pesetas daily for the more skilled workers; and through their direct management of the plants, they are able to bring about great improvements in their daily life. They have their discussion meetings, hear reports of their elected committees and take an active part in the administration of the plant. A wall newspaper keeps them informed of events at the war front as well as on the industrial front.

The delegation left these factory workers with their clenched fists raised and the traditional "Salud" on their lips. We had the feeling that the workers on the industrial front, in the rearguard, are also conscientiously carrying on and contributing to the great fight for a great, free, independent and prosperous Spain.

D. M.



«They Advanced as if on Manouvers» — Gen. Walter.

SPANISH GROUP FORMED TO AID EVACUATED KIDS

The Ministry of Public Education and Health recently created in Paris the Spanish Committee for Evacuated Children with Juan Comas Camps as director. This group will be responsible for the settlement, organization, education and inspection of those Spanish children who have been sent abroad since the war started, regardless of the organization that assisted in their evacuation or now contributes to their maintenance.

The main objective of the delegation is to coordinate the efforts made by various foreign commit-



tees, which it hopes to accomplish by placing all colonies and nurseries for Spanish refugee children abroad under its control and given them centralized direction.

The delegation will take a complete census of all Spanish evacuated children in collective colonies and private homes, endeavoring to increase the number of children in colonies and decrease that of children in homes. In special cases where children have to be placed with private families, preference will be given Spanish emigres, of course after previously making thorough investigations of the surroundings and circumstances.

Special attention will be paid to the education of the refugee children. On August 6 the Government published a decree whose purpose is to prevent the children from losing contact with Spain culture or forgetting the language. At the same time they will benefit by the culture of the country in which they have their temporary residence. The education and teaching of the children will be under the care of Spanish teachers.

Of special interest to foreign committees is the fact that in colonies totally or partially supported by foreign groups, they can, in accordance with the Delegation, designate a person to act in its name in the administration. The teaching staff and the educational regime will depend exclusively on the Delegation.



EL CAMPESINO

Non-Intervention Finds New Victim

While the Chinese delegate was defending his people's rights before the League of Nations and demanding the application of the Covenant of the League on their behalf, the decision of the United States was made public to forbid all future export of arms to Japan and China. This not only constitutes a retreat before Japanese imperialism it is a serious blow to peace in the Far East. The results can only be favorable to Japan. Her fleet is in a position to blockade China which has no powerful war industry, and will experience all the difficulties of Republican Spain.

The U. S. A. has laid the basis for more "non-intervention". The situation produced by such a policy in Europe should have served as a warning, and it is no secret, moreover, that the ambitious military plans of Japanese imperialism include an attack on the United States.

It is an ominous sign that the first act of the farce of "non-intervention" is now being played in the Far East.

Canadian and British Labor Support Spain

OTTAWA (Sept. 17).—The Trade Union Congress of Canada has declared itself in favor of a boycott of all goods exported by fascist nations. The Congress endorsed the policy adopted by the International Federation of Trade Unions in regards to the civil war in Spain and in the struggle to safeguard democracy.

NORWICH (Sept. 7).—The Trade Union Congress placed on record "its high appreciation of the gallant struggle of our Spanish comrades and those of the International Brigades against Fascism, which is a deadly enemy of trade unionism, and most heartily wishes them every success against the common enemy".

The Congress also adopted a resolution in favor of loyalist Spain, deploring the fact that the British and other governments continue to deny the legal govern-

BATTALION OF FASCIST DESERTERS AT CARABANCHEL

MADRID.—On one of the Carabanchel fronts there is a battalion composed almost entirely of deserters from the rebel trenches. Many of these soldiers have received honorable mention "in the official reports and others have" had their bravery rewarded promotion to higher rank.

There is one who has conducted himself with such bravery that he has reached the rank of lieutenant and enjoys both the respect and the love of his subordinates.

Another of these deserter soldiers is a man about forty. He was a well-to-do manufacturer of tiles at Aranda de Duero before the war. He could not live under the oppression of the Fascist regime even though the rebels of Aranda had nothing against him. One day he decided to leave the town with his wife and thirteen-year-old son. After several days of walking they reached the Republican lines stop.

In the fascist propaganda talks to our lines, they invite our soldiers to desert to their side. One night, the men of this battalion of deserters answered, "Don't waste your time on us, we have already escaped from fascist territory".

Recently some runners from this battalion started for the rebel lines at night with Popular Front propaganda posters. On the way they came up against a rebel watch but succeeded in avoiding it. They posted the posters on the walls of a house practically in the rebel trenches.

ment of Spain the right under international law to purchase the necessary arms and equipment thus affording support to the fascist rebels.

The Congress expressed its complete solidarity with the Spanish government and called for an end to the farce of non-intervention.