



# The VOLUNTEER FOR LIBERTY

Organ of the international brigades

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## THE FIFTEENTH BRIGADE IN ACTION

During the recent actions of the 15th International Brigade I was on an Army Corps Staff for a short time. I had heard of the 15th Brigade, But I had never known it closely. In the course of the actions I am about to tell, I became intimately acquainted with this fine Brigade.

We are assigned to perform military operations in the sector X... A few hours before the operations are scheduled to begin, I take part in a Brigade Staff meeting. The Commissar reports. He speaks briefly, and every word he utters is full of confidence and responsibility. He says: «The battalions are prepared for battle. The officers and commissars are talking to the soldiers. Our comrades are anxious and ready to obey the orders of their superiors, in whom they have complete confidence. All services are fully prepared. First Aid and Medical Services are supplied sufficiently with the necessary equipment and men. We shall work well».

At night the Brigade moves into action. In the darkness the men advance a few kilometers toward the enemy position. They crawl all night. Before the break of day, the soldiers of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion are the first to begin operations. They charge the fascist trenches like a stroke of lightning. The enemy, surprised, surrenders immediately. At dawn the banner of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion is seen waving on the crest of the newly-conquered hill.

The Lincoln Battalion is assigned to storm a virtual fortress, also situated on a hill. It is important to capture that hill to insure the advance of our brigades. The men of the Lincoln proceed to carry on their mission.

I witness the entire operation. By lunch time our artillery lays down a heavy barrage. The fascists respond to our guns. Then the music of the trench mortars begins. When the guns are once again silent, the Lincolns resume

By WLADYSLAW STOPCZYK  
War Commissar of the 45th Division

infiltrating toward the enemy. Carefully and courageously they advance. From our dugout we view the scene of battle as clearly as one sees the palm of the hand. We see the movements of each soldier and we confess it to be one of the rarest scenes of the war.

The mastery with which the Battalion carries on the battle shows that each soldier knows what he is doing. Each knows how to take advantage of each stone, bush, tree stem and declivity in the ground. The Battalion Commander directs brilliantly. Both the

officers and men demonstrate a superb mastery of military technique.

It takes one and a half hours to accomplish their operations. They act with audacity and skill. After nearing the enemy positions they begin to encircle them. They get close enough to be able to throw hand grenades into the enemy trenches. The enemy opens fire. The attackers take advantage of the ground so well and skilfully that even though they throw grenades into the enemy positions, the enemy cannot see who is doing it. This demoralizes the enemy; they are baffled.

An unforgettable scene follows. In spite of a heavy machine gun fire, a few comrades on their own volition dash out and cut the barbed wire. This is done to facilitate the final attack by the battalion on the fascist forces. From the left flank a group of volunteers rush through the barbed wire and hurl hand grenades. A group behind do not allow the enemy to retreat. In this manner the enemy is confused and surrounded by an unbreakable iron ring of the steeled Lincoln Battalion. When the shock soldiers finish their work of demoralizing the enemy, the final and decisive charge is made. With a shout of victory our boys plunge swiftly and drop into the fascist trenches and force the enemy to surrender.

On the top of Mountain X... the proud banner of the Lincoln Battalion of the 15th International Brigade is raised.

Important lessons can be learned from the whole battle. It shows us how we can carry on our future battles against the fascist forces and beat them with the minimum of losses for us (The Battalion had only four wounded. It captured more than 100 fascists, among whom were a few officers). It shows that by employing a good organized plan of attack and defence we can insure victory and at the same time spare the lives of many of our comrades.



FASCIST CRUISER SUNK BY REPUBLICAN FLEET. The "Balears", 10,000 ton rebel cruiser, smoking and wallowing hopelessly after being hit by torpedoes from Republican destroyers in the biggest naval encounter since the World War. The "Balears" was with the rebel fleet, "Canarias" and the "Almirante Cervera", and was sunk 70 miles from Cape Palos after a big battle that took place early Sunday morning, March 8. (Read the complete story in our next issue.)





**WLADYSLAW STOPCZYK**  
Commissar of the 45th Division,  
whose account of our Brigade  
appears on page 1.

## Americans Donate Auto-chir to Spain

A new mobile operating theatre (auto-chir), donated to the Spanish Government by the American people, has been turned over to the General Inspection of the Medical Service of the Army in Barcelona. Other auto-chirs have previously been given to Spain through the American Medical Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy.

The auto-chir was officially presented by Doctor Irving Busch and Dr. Edward K. Barsky, co-commanders of the American medical units in Spain, to Sr. Fernández Bolaños, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of National Defense.

# Don Luis Companys, President of the Generalidad of Catalonia

Señor Companys was born in the village of Tarrós, Province of Lérida. He studied law at the University of Barcelona where he obtained his degree at a very early age.

As a student he founded the Unión Escolar Republicana (Republican Students' Union), an organization with a left-wing tendency which played a considerable part in establishing a new spirit and a new orientation in the centers of higher education.

He was editor of «La Lucha» (The Fight), a Republican newspaper. Through this instrument Companys, together with Layret, Marcelino Domingo and other politicians and writers carried out important work.

He was Republican deputy for Sabadell in various legislatures and in this capacity always showed his love for the Republic and his admiration for the ideals of freedom and justice.

Before the Dictatorship he founded the Unión of Rebasaires (Peasant's Trade Union) which is today one of the most important peasant organizations in Spain and which is fighting with great enthusiasm for the rights of the workers of the land.

As a result of all these activities he was persecuted by the Dictatorship and imprisoned on several occasions.



When the second dictator (Benguer) fell, Companys was in prison in the Castle of La Mola, having been condemned for his Republican ideas.

Together with Col. Macia he called a meeting of the Asamblea de Izquierdas (Left Assembly) in March 1931 and founded the Left Republican Party of Catalonia. This Party presented its candidature in the civic elections of April 14 and Companys was elected councillor for Barcelona.

He was named Mayor of Barcelona and that very day, April 14, at 1:25 p. m., he proclaimed the Republic in Catalonia. On April 15 he was made Civil Governor of Barcelona, giving up the post of Mayor.

In the general election for the Cortes Constituyentes he was elected by a large majority and was appointed leader of the Catalan group in parliament, composed of all parties and numbering 52 deputies. Later he became President of the Catalan Left Group.

In the Cortes he strongly advocated the granting of autonomy to Catalonia and the passing of the Statute to this effect, always, however, bearing in mind constitutional precepts.

Later he became a deputy in the Catalan Parliament, of which he was elected the first President.

In 1933 he became Minister of Marine and after Macia's death was elected President of the Generalitat (Government) of Catalonia. This was in January 1934. As a result of the revolt of October 6, 1934, he was again imprisoned until February 1936, when he was reinstated as President of the Generalitat by the Popular Front. He has held this post ever since and is respected not only by the whole Catalan people but by everyone in the Spanish Republic.

# Bill's Method of Learning the Language

You hear some fellows say that they can't sit down and learn the Spanish language, it's too difficult, and they gave up doing that sort of thing when they left school. What I say to them is, they're learning a new profession, most of them from the start, so what's

the difference? The language isn't so difficult to pick up. That's what Bill and I found.

I dare say Bill speaks a bit better than I do. He never felt shy of trying. He'd go blundering on with what words he knew, and didn't care who laughed.

When he saw something written up, he'd have a guess at it. The first time we came down in the train, we were pulling into a station when we saw a board up that said «Silbar». I asked Bill what he thought it meant and he said it would be the name of the town.

Next stop, same thing. Bill reckoned one would be Upper Silbar and the other Lower Silbar, like at home. When we got to a third town and it was still called the same, I said we seemed to be dragging this town Silbar along with us. So Bill got busy, and in the end he found the word meant «Whistle».

Same way, when we were travelling on the road, Bill always looked round for what he could see. On the way up to Aragon we stopped beside what appeared to be a pub called «Posada Carmen».

«Pub's what it is», Bill said. «Posada», that means Good pull up for».

Well, he hit it lucky, as it means «lodging house», which is roughly the same. What he didn't know was that «Carmen» doesn't mean «carmen» it's just a fancy name.

He'd got an idea for this «Ulloa Optico» that you see along the roads. He said, translated literally it meant «the Hullo Eye», which would be the Spanish way of saying «the Come-Hither Look». And what was the good of that, I said, seeing that most times it was painted on the wall of an empty barn? Anyway, it turned out to be an optician's advertisement.

When Bill and I were in training, you could still buy cigarettes, if you hit a lucky day. If there weren't any, they'd hang a notice on the door. «No hay tabaco» was their way of putting it. I remember the first time Bill saw that.

«Who cares?» he said. «No one wants to smoke hay».

All that was old days. It didn't take us long to find out what «No hay» meant. We learned that next

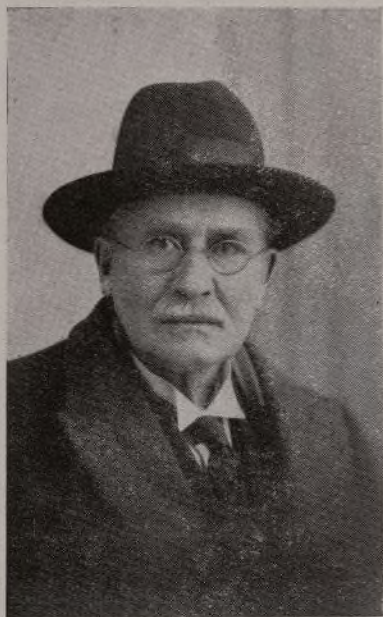
after «Mucho bueno» and «Mucho malo».

Now, being old hands, we say «Muy» instead of «Mucho», having found out that's right. But the Spaniards say «Mucho bueno» to us, I reckon because it sounds funny and makes them laugh.

K. M.







## Tom Mann Greets British Fighters

«The glorious work you have done and are doing» is mentioned with pride by Tom Mann, veteran British working class leader, in a letter written to the British volunteers in the International Brigade. The entire letter, dated February 19, follows:

«My dear comrades of the British Section of the International Brigade: My heartiest greetings to you, and again my very heartiest greetings and congratulations to you for the glorious work you have done and are doing.

«I should love to go to see you, and when I learn of the experiences of others who have visited you and fraternised with you, I certainly wish I could also meet you and shake you by the hand and embrace you; I am in good physical health and am able to get about to meetings, but my knees are affected by arthritis, which makes me slow in doing stairs, and having synovitis also I am liable to a sudden pull up, and that would make me a nuisance if I attempted to visit you. So I must be content to talk about you here and do what I can to help in the various methods open to such as me.

«I am sure you will accept our love and good wishes and be fully assured of our very genuine concern in all your doings, and honest endeavours to make things as comfortable as possible for you and yours.

«Comrade Harry Pollitt, as you know, is spreading information about you far and wide, and many of the others are also doing well in this regard. Professor Haldane and Charlotte his wife are also constantly at work in spreading inside information and in stoking up to activity those who otherwise might be laggardly.

«Again let me say I have the privilege of still doing a bit at meetings and in various ways, and count it an honour. In April I shall be eighty-two, so I have had a very fair innings, and must not be too disappointed if Daddy Time makes a call.

«Best Love to you Comrades all,  
«Yours in the Cause,

Tom Mann.»

# A PESAR DE TODO SU MATERIAL BÉLICO APLASTAREMOS AL FASCISMO

El discurso del Jefe del Gobierno ha conmovido al pueblo español. Quizá fuera injusto hacer en este caso una distinción entre el pueblo español libre y el prisionero de Franco, y por eso no la hacemos. El dolor de la guerra es uno en las dos zonas y una debe de ser la emoción de la verdad. Hasta es presumible que el roce humillante con los invasores y los insurrectos disponga mejor que la convivencia en el territorio republicano, para exprimir y saborear la savia de las palabras del señor Negrín. Es fácil apreciar la reacción que el discurso ha determinado en las distintas parcelas de la opinión pública. Los trabajadores, parte principalísima de la resistencia republicana, se han sentido claramente aludidos. De cara al problema de la producción de guerra, que es la mitad justamente del problema militar, el Presidente del Consejo ha destacado el derecho que los combatientes tienen a que se les cubra rápidamente el déficit de armamentos. Ello equivale a confrontar dos deberes, el del que da su sangre y el del que rinde su esfuerzo manual, y al prometerles el jefe del Gobierno a los soldados que tendrían pronto el material que precisan, es que confiaba virtualmente en los trabajadores. Esta confianza no tolera objeciones. Es impropio del señor Negrín fantasear, y cuando transfiere a la industria de guerra el remedio que la situación demanda, podemos estar seguros de que por un procedimiento y otro realizará sus previsiones. El Gobierno cree, y con el Gobierno el pueblo español, que de aquí en adelante no puede prosperar ninguna actitud que le dé de lado a la guerra. Nada, absolutamente nada, tiene fuerza hoy para regatear la ayuda que exige la patria en peligro. Si la democracia con su régimen de libertad individual fallara, el instinto popular acabaría confiriendo poderes rígidos. En efecto, una nación en pie de guerra no debe distinguir entre la responsabilidad del soldado y la responsabilidad del ciudadano, sea cual fuere su función. El supuesto de que la prestación de la vida sea más obligatoria que la prestación de unas horas de trabajo, va pareciendo a todo el mundo una repugnante deslealtad, y faltaría a su deber el Gobierno que la tolerase. Adelantándose a la declaración del Presidente del Consejo, los Partidos y Organizaciones obreras han demostrado que en su ánimo está hacer suya aquella tesis de severa disciplina. Buenaventura Durruti pronunció en Madrid unas nobles palabras, a las que los acontecimientos devuelven actualidad: «Yo renuncio a todo, menos a la victoria.» El esforzado luchador comprendía que renunciando a la victoria el proletariado renunciaba a todo, a la vida y al honor revolucionario. No era, pues, excesivo el sacrificio que se recomendaba a sí mismo.

Juzgamos haber definido la reacción mental de la clase productora, ante el discurso del señor Negrín. Resbalarían en el equívoco los que



hicieran otras deducciones. El ciclo de organización ciudadana para la guerra prosigue. El deber capital aflora, cada día más robusto, sobre los deberes secundarios. Venice la libertad racional a la libertad arbitraria. Las minorías propensas al desconsuelo, por tener la fe enteca y el egoísmo orondo, han sentido con el discurso suscitados sus remordimientos, y hoy reconocen que la voz del señor Negrín es la auténtica voz de la patria. No han dejado, tampoco, los intelectuales, de experimentar la fuerte corriente moral del ilustre hombre de Estado, y un documento, precioso por el texto y por las firmas, avisa que los doctos y los artistas

ven incluida en la política del señor Negrín la causa universal de la cultura.

Fuera de España sin duda alcanzará el discurso hondas resonancias. Palabra por palabra, en la dicción y en el espíritu, lo que ha dicho el señor Negrín es en cierto modo una réplica a lo que ha dicho Hitler. Europa ha tenido quien, enuncie la doctrina de la agresión, pero también quien diga cuál debe ser la conducta de los pueblos que no se resignan a ser colonizados por el fascismo. La República española echa mano de la moral que guarda en sus arcaes el viejo y duro pueblo, y con ella se promete triunfar. La consigna a las naciones vacilantes es bien clara: contra los grandes aventureros internacionales sólo existe una fórmula: querer luchar. Finalmente, formando cadencia, más bien tenue, con las prescripciones de nuestro Primer Ministro, la Cámara de los Diputados francesa ha contribuido a resucitar la creencia de que la democracia y la cultura no están desamparadas. Los señores Chaumets y Delbos, oficialmente, han repetido que Francia no es indiferente a la independencia de España. Este sentimiento de amistad encuentra base sólida en el hecho de que la República española, por boca de su Gobierno, renueva su vocación de pueblo libre y su empeño de mantenerla desesperadamente, hasta el último hombre y el último cartucho.

THE VOLUNTEER FOR LIBERTY

## The VOLUNTEER for LIBERTY

ORGAN OF  
THE VETERANS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADES  
(AMERICAN CHAPTER)

We dedicate this first issue of the VOLUNTEER FOR LIBERTY to the memory of our fellow Americans who gave up their lives in Spain.

These men were brave, though they disliked being told so. Their embarrassment before extravagant praise--an embarrassment which we all shared--arose from their realization that courage is not something which is known only in Spain or which rises miraculously only in the presence of death. It must not be, it can not be divorced from the complex texture of character, growing through natural development and built solidly on experience. Most of these men learned lessons of devotion and self-sacrifice in the labor movement in America. Their going to Spain, was merely a logical extension of their actions here. They themselves saw nothing sudden or startling or surprising in all this.

We are proud to do honor to these our friends and companions, with whom we marched and beside whom we fought.

GREETINGS TO OUR NAMESAKE! We reproduce the masthead and leading editorial from the organ of the Veterans of the I. B. Everyone will agree when we wish this new paper a longer life than our own Volunteer hopes for

Ayuntamiento de Madrid



# CANADIANS IN SPAIN

Since the first volunteers from the North American continent arrived here more than fourteen months ago, Canada has sent more than 1,000 young men to Spain. Canada, a country with a population of 13,000,000, can certainly be proud of this living, fighting fact — its contribution to the struggle of world democracy against fas-



cism, its contribution to the fight of the people of Spain.

The people of Canada, who slumbered peacefully for a long time under the illusion that fascism would never become a major threat to the rights of democratic countries, were abruptly awakened to reality by the news flashes of July 19, 1936. Those events are many times over twice-told tales — too well known to be repeated now. Suffice it to say that the people of Canada made their feelings known in no uncertain terms. Throughout the Dominion, Committees to Aid Spanish Democracy were formed. In September, 1936, the official voice of Canadian labor went on record as fully supporting the Spanish Government, while the great masses of unemployed in the large Canadian cities demanded that the King government send them to Spain.

## DIFFICULTIES OVERCOME

Such a demand was not approved by the King government, which immediately took steps to hinder the development of Canadian support to Spain. Passports were made extremely difficult to obtain. A law was passed penalizing Canadian citizens who fought in foreign wars. Intimidation of

individuals was carried to the limit by the Federal police.

None of these things, however, could break the determination of thousands of anti-fascists who intended to come to the aid of their Spanish brothers, whatever the costs. Stimulated by the news of the first International columns fighting in the defense of Madrid, the first Canadian volunteers left for Spain in December, 1936, at about the same time that the first volunteers from the United States were leaving. At first they came in small, inconspicuous groups, arriving at the training base in the early days of January, 1937. The first group came from the city of Toronto. Among them were Thomas Becket, who was captured at Jarama when the truck in which he was riding drove into fascist lines, and Frederick Lackey, who was killed during the attack of February 27. Lawrence (Larry) Ryan, who was wounded on the same day, is now in a Canadian sanitarium recovering from tuberculosis contracted while fighting here in Spain.

## SECOND GROUP ARRIVES

On February 9, nine more Canadians arrived. Of these, Joe Campbell, French Canadian from Montreal, was killed on February 27; and Sargeant Jack Steele was sent to the Officers School from the Jarama front because of his good work in the lines. He commanded a machine-gun section in the Lincoln Battalion during the Brunete offensive of last July. Today he is back in Canada, heading the rehabilitation work for returning Spanish war veterans. Arthur Morris, a member of the James Connolly section of the Lincoln Battalion, was killed on the 27th while attempting to bring in a wounded comrade. He was killed, but his memory lives on, as do the memories of other fine comrades such as Adrian Van der Brugge, Elias Avieser, George Loskowsky, A. M. Garcia, Fred

Lackey, Liege Claire and Francis Morin. These were our dead.

Among those who came through the battles at Jarama as well as Brunete were Izzie Kupchik, Mike Kushni, Lucien Lattilupe, Mike Zagar, Harvey Hall, Bedard, Porier, Roger Biladeau, Walter Marinuk, Thomas Russell, Pat Stevens, Martin Trier, James Dames and Wally Dent. The last two named were wounded at Jarama. Good fighters, every single one, Franch Canadians, English Canadians, Slavic Canadians. Industrial workers and unemployed youths, men of all professions, who joined the Lincoln Battalion and fought side by side with their American brothers, side by side with the whole Spanish people, against the mercenaries and dupes of Franco and international fascism.

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The training base for the English-speaking volunteers was transferred to another town, from which the first group of trained Canadians left for the front. They



were the major part of a section of forty men selected from the «recruit battalion» to act as replacements for the Lincolns. Placed under the command of Joe Armitage, they left by trucks for the Jarama front on April 17. After a long tiresome journey, they arrived at 15th Brigade Headquarters, where they were met by Lt. Col. Claus, who made a short speech. From there they marched to the Battalion kitchen, where they had a good feed. Captain Marty Hourihan, Commander of the Lincoln Battalion, gave them a short talk on what was expected of them, then placed them in charge of Lieutenant Paul Burns, who marched them up to the Jarama front. The various company commanders and section leaders met them, and they were distributed where they were most needed.

On May 19, one of the Canadians among these forty, Bob Kerr, Commissar of one of the sections, was taken out of the lines and assigned to the Base as representative of all the Canadians in Spain. His main purpose was to give all necessary assistance in



**MAJOR ED CECIL SMITH, Commander of the Mac-Paps, in a photo taken shortly before he won his new rank.**

the formation of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion.

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The Lincoln still needed replacements to reach full battalion strength. From the ranks of the Washington Battalion, a new American unit in training, forty Canadians were selected to join the Lincoln. This second section of forty, commanded by Paddy O'Neil, moved up on the evening of June 13, together with the Washington Battalion. They arrived at a town 15 kilometers from the Jarama front, and there they were quartered. The following afternoon the Canadian section was assigned to the ranks of the Lincoln.

There were many notable young lads among these forty who were killed on July 6, the first day of Brunete, their first battle: Jimmie Kane of Toronto, an active member of the Longshoremen's Union; Paddy O'Neill, section leader of the Canadians, lumber worker and World War Veteran, who was killed because he refused to leave his men but continued to advance even after he had been wounded; John Oscar Bloom of Edmonton, 22 years old; Bryce Colman and Joe Armitage, men who were loved not only by their comrades-in-arms but also by the civilian population of the town where the battalion had spent many weeks.

## CANADIANS AT BRUNETE

During those twenty bitter days of fighting on the Brunete front, the people of Canada lost a number of brave fighters. John Deck, Canadian seaman, chief scout of the Lincoln Battalion, and Nick Harbocian, young member of the Cooperative Commonwealth Youth movement, who had



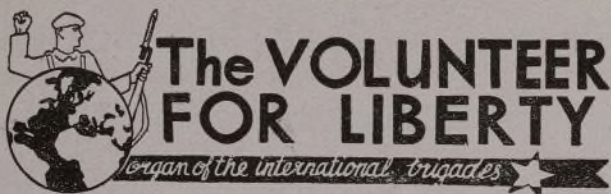
**BRIGADE ENTERTAINS a visitor: the men listening to Earl Browder during his recent visit to Spain.**

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF JOHN DOE

John Doe is an ancient fiction. When the man in the street needs a name, this is what he is issued with. No man of flesh and blood bears it, or if he does, it was his parents' error. For public purposes there is no such individual. He was invented to make life easier for English-speaking people. A volunteer of the Fifteenth Brigade found him on the postal regulations, and for the next few minutes his life became harder.

The volunteer discovered that he was instructed, when addressing his home letters, to follow the example given, which had John Doe fitted out with a handsome sounding apartment. He took this literally and was upset.

He wanted to know who this guy Doe was, and why letters had to be addressed to him. It particularly worried him to think that his private letters were to be opened and read by someone back in his country of whom he had never even heard. Such is fame, even for an ancient fiction.

The answer, so far as the volunteer is concerned, is that this time there is nothing in a name. It would be more than unfortunate if such an accident were to discourage him from keeping in touch with the people at home. For an International volunteer, it amounts to a duty. It is a temptation to scout this obligation, on the grounds that soldier's duty is heavy enough without it. To put it bluntly, most men who do not write home avoid it because they dislike it. There is always time to write during periods of rest or reserve.

The feelings of friends and relatives are worth a moment's thought for their own sake, but that is a man's own affair. There is a far more important reason why letters should be written. People at home read the bare outline of our news in their journals. They cannot catch from the newspapers the real feeling of the men themselves, or the spirit by which our army grows; and this is ultimately our strongest weapon. Only personal messages can fully convey this feeling.

One letter from a soldier is worth a headline in bold type, half an inch deep. It has a truer ring. When such letters get home, they are passed on, quoted, read out at meetings, and everybody listens to them. Our friends at home depend on us. If they know we have a good spirit, they will catch it. In turn, the spirit they show will affect the policy of their governments and therefore, in the end our letters are ammunition for our own guns.

Just now, we want all the ammunition of this kind that we can get. Recent events have given everybody a sharp awakening. This is the moment to put over a big barrage and keep them awake. It is to be hoped that volunteers will remember this, and when they are not in action will use their time to advantage by telling the world that they are very much alive.

To volunteer for service in Spain is in itself effective propaganda, especially among acquaintances whose convictions are not very strong. Personal contact with the war sets them thinking, and often talking. If a volunteer can bring himself to write to these more distant sympathisers as well as to the circle of his closer friends, he will be following up the work already well begun and spreading propaganda where it is needed. He can probably remember certain friends who have no convictions at all. Far from neglecting them, he should do his best to fill the vacuum. Letters from men in the fighting line, whatever the war, are read with more interest and attention than is given to casual correspondence.

## IN THE FASCIST ZONE

Reports continue to seep out of Gibraltar about shiploads of Italian infantrymen docking across the bay. Ditto with the German « technicians » on the northern seaboard of Spain. Whenever Hitler or Mussolini shoots his mouth off about withdrawal of troops and « regulation » of foreign combatants, it means there are a couple of thousand new guns shooting dumdums in Spain. Or a new squadron of planes bombing the kids playing soldiers in the streets of Barcelona, Valencia, Tarragona, Lérida... Continuing with Gibraltar: last week we spoke of the artillerymen deserting to the Rock from fascist-held southern Spain. It's driving de Llano's yes-men nuts. Because of it they have been forced to station a large detachment of cavalry in the area between Spain and Gibraltar. And shore watchmen are equipped with machine guns. In addition all the territory between Tarifa, Algeciras and La Línea now is unwilling host to battalions of border guards (removed from front duty to stop the leakage), under orders to open up on any boats or men sighted attempting to escape. Meanwhile, Yes-Man-in-Chief de Llano is belching more quietly these days, and not in public anymore. It seems de Llano's boss, Franco, got orders from his bosses in Rome and Berlin to make the Seville donkey stop braying...

Last week we referred to a Berlin dispatch about the sad state of the Nazi cinema. Here's an additional quote: « The German desire to cooperate with Italy and Japan has been checked by the technical inferiority of Italian and Japanese films and the resultant impossibility of forcing the German public to attend theatres where they are showing. » Movie celluloid seems to be the only highly-inflammable material that won't do its stuff for the fascists... There's a guy in the machine gun company of the Lincoln-Washingtons who says the hell with all this stuff about the fascist zone. He's got his fists ready for a guy back in the States. « I once thought he was a pal », says this anonymous American, « but he's turned out to be a dirty fascist provocateur. He keeps sending me clippings of restaurant ads that read like this: « Whether you say Po'k, Pork or Porrrk, you'll enjoy this good he-man dish that starts lips a-smacking' — Grilled fresh pork chop, grilled to a crispy brown outside —

juicy and tender within — made with Sauce Diable and flanked with a generous serving of... We'd better stop right now, before somebody else gets sore... But that « crispy brown outside » is reminiscent of an old crack about the Nazis. If you don't know it, ask your Cabo...

A glimpse of what life in fascist-hed Spain is like is contained in the following extracts from an account of one who has lived in Galicia, in the Province of Pontevedra, on the eastern coast of Spain, just north of Portugal: « The war atmosphere is noticeable by the martial noise made by the phalangists and « civil guard gentlemen ». The soldiers are carefully kept separated from the civilian population. Besides, it is difficult to make out which are the Spanish soldiers and which are the foreigners. At the beginning the phalangists deliberately wore the uniform of the regular Spanish soldier, whereas the soldiers went around in mufti or were given Portuguese uniforms. One was not permitted to say that they were Portuguese uniforms, nor were the people allowed to go near the soldiers to determine whether they were Spanish or Portuguese.

« The German soldiers generally wore civilian clothes, but Spanish artillerymen wore uniforms made of the brown German cloth. The Germans were intended to pass unnoticed. It was a crime to pronounce a German name, so much so that they were never referred to as « Germans » but « individuals ». When the papers published anything about the Germans or when they officially referred to them, they merely said « Three individuals arrived » or « The individuals who are staying at the Hotel X... » This was enough. Everyone understood.

« The docks of Vigo were last summer exclusively controlled by « the individuals ». They were in charge of unloading all the war material which came from Hamburg, and knocked-down planes which came escorted by their personnel. The trains came right up to the pier to load, and then the war material was transported to the bases of the « Nationalist » army. The Germans were at all times extremely discreet about their movements, and they tried to hide themselves from the Spanish people like real criminals. Italians were (and are) in — Galicia too. But we'll save the account of their antics for the next issue.





# THE ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION

Last of a Series of Five Articles Dealing with  
Military Questions, by the Commander of  
the Battalion of Instruction N.º 15  
MAJOR ALLAN JOHNSON

In every-day life, in almost every action of the individual and collective body, certain definite questions arise in a definite sequence. These questions have to be answered, even if not consciously, and they are what, why, where, how and when. Just as in every other phase of life, so in military operations, large and small, these same questions must be answered before a decision can be reached on which to base any military plan of operation. The answering of these questions, in other words the analysis that is required, is called the estimate of the situation. It is made, not only by commanders of large units who have to actually write their analyses down to entirely assimilate them, but they are also made by subordinate commanders and even individual soldiers.

## PLAN BASIS OF ACTION

The content of the estimate of the situation falls into a certain formula. The reason for sticking to this standard is to habituate soldiers to thinking in definite terms in order that in moments of crisis they may be habituated to carry this out without loss of momentum.

The form generally required in all armies is:

First paragraph—*The Mission*—In other words the answer to "what am I to do, what is my general task"? Second paragraph is an analysis of the—*Opposing Forces*—and is subdivided into (a) the forces of the enemy, their number, their material condition and equipment, their physical condition, their morale, their reserves, their position on the terrain and so forth. The second paragraph (b) is a similar analysis of our own forces. The next main paragraph is the enemy's situation and intentions. We know his strength, approximately, and his general condition. We ought to know the general lay of the land and then we analyse in detail, if possible, plans. They may be either to attack or defend in some special manner. By elimination we choose the most probable of these plans and consider them seriously. The next paragraph is our possible plans, based upon our analysis of the plans open to the enemy. We consider what possible plans we can use and in some detail we analyse these possibilities. We weigh, seriously, for instance, the possibility of attacking and defending in some special position. We discuss the problems in each case, their advisability or inadvisability, and advantages and disadvantages, their

strength and their weakness, and once again by elimination we choose the most probable plan that we can use. This plan is then finally written out into the fifth paragraph of the estimate of the situation as our decision. It is upon this decision that the field order is based.

Although all this work may appear simple and sometimes unnecessary

it is a good experience for subordinate commanders to practise making estimates of the situation at all times, in order to familiarise themselves with the many possibilities that are open to them. Especially under modern conditions of warfare where a great deal of latitude and initiative lies within the realm of the subordinate commander.

The knowledge of how to make a correct analysis or estimate of the situation is also the foundation for issuing correct field orders, oral or written, during an action, and since so much depends upon the brevity, conciseness and clarity of these field orders, it is quite obvious that before they can be either clear, concise or brief, their essence must be thoroughly understood. No commander can issue such an order and carry it out with determination unless he knows exactly what the situation is and how he is going to carry into effect the decisions he does reach and knows exactly how, when and where these must be done.

## GEORGE FLETCHER of the British Battalion

Among those who received good service awards at Christmas was Lieutenant George Fletcher. Like others from Lancashire, he is a man with a genial manner; but it is a hard job to make him talk. His own past history interests him far less than Spain's present moment. He commands the machine-gun company of the British Battalion.

He has been a soldier since 1915, when he joined the Lancashire Fusiliers. He enjoys an outdoor life of action, and he doesn't care for sitting still, as those who have heard his famous song hit "Keep one finger moving" will understand.

During the world war he took part in the Gallipoli action, and made the difficult landing, which he describes as an experience rather more exciting than the warmest moments at Brunete. The Turks had laid barbed wire under the water, and this had to be passed under shell-fire from batteries on the hills above shore. One would guess that this was the toughest moment of Lt. Fletcher's life up to the present time, but he doesn't say much about it. Once the beach was reached the difficulties evened out a little, and the rest of the action was easier work than the fight for Mosquito Crest.

## EXPERIENCE USEFUL

After the war, Fletcher remained in the service, and spent some years in India. By 1936 he was contemplating a return to civilian life and had certain speculative ideas about marriage. He was out of soldiering for six months, but the appearance of armed fascism in Spain changed his plans again. He arrived in this country in May of last year. His



experience with fire-arms of all sorts was an asset at the training camp, where he soon picked up the special features of the weapons which the Republican Army was using, and began to instruct those with less experience than himself. When the sections competed in dismantling and reassembling, their arms, Fletcher could beat anybody. He has deft fingers and an accurate eye. In training, and since, he has proved himself a first-class rifle shot.

He first saw active service in Spain at Brunete, where he was wounded in the shoulder. When his wound was finally healed, he was offered a position at the new training camp, but preferred to rejoin the Battalion. He went into action again at Fuentes de Ebro.

## ON DISCIPLINE

Lt. Fletcher has watched the growth of discipline and organisation in the Republican Army with the satisfaction of an old hand. He

knows what it means. In his opinion the formalities of discipline, far from complicating a soldier's life, make it easier. Even in an Imperialist army he found that out, though discipline there is not used solely for the purpose of raising the soldier's level of efficiency. Where he traces the main difference is in the importance that the Republican Army attaches to the development of intelligence in the private soldier, on the assumption that the more a man knows the better he fights. An Imperialist army is compelled by its own conditions to discourage the rank and file from knowing too much about what is going on, in case it occurred to them that they were being used in someone else's interest.

The distinction creates a new atmosphere in which a man can get to grips with his job. Discipline clears the air and makes everything easier to follow. For the individual it becomes a matter of practical soldiering, equivalent to keeping his rifle clean or his feet in trim. For the Army as a whole it is a measure that makes the machine more compact, cuts out delay and increases the force of its striking power.

The deft fingers of Lt. Fletcher are put to many uses. During his training days he constituted fifty per cent of the Company Band, for which he provided percussion with a pair of spoons. He can always be relied on for a good number at a social evening. The only success he lays claim to is that he brought tears to the Alcalde's eyes with his acrobatic song-hit. He thinks this must be the reason why he received his award.

M. T.



# LETTERS FROM HOME

Stay as Long as You  
Can, Advises Veteran

Dear T....

Your letter arrived, as usual, more than a month after you had written it. Received The Volunteer for Liberty and the other material long before — the song books and other little booklets, and then the French book of the 15th Brigade. Could you tell me if they are going to print that book in English? I showed it to a number of people and all of them said they would like to buy it if it were in English. Most of the material you have sent I've given to the Friends of the Brigade; the rest I use myself, showing things to different people. The song books I am going to lend to different choruses around here.

The Philadelphia Friends of the Lincoln Brigade are now at 1011 Chestnut St., Room 818. They have also been receiving Volunteers and posters. Dan Elkins, secretary of the FLB, asks that you send him as many cards, posters and other material as possible. They could be sold or used as prizes to popularize their work.

The boys who have returned are Walcoff, Hy Rosner, Harry Wallach, Jacobs, Rochester, Chime-lofsky, Melnicoff, Harold London from the Washington Battalion, and Brenner, who was an aviator. We have already established a chapter of the Veterans; it is called the Wickman-Barrelli Chapter...

You mention in your letter that you often wonder whether it is possible to readjust oneself completely after having been to war. Well, it is difficult. When one is at war there are a number of things that happen; and one gets

used to them. Then you come to a peaceful country, and you have different kinds of worries. When you go to meetings there's a lot of talk but little action. They do not understand the meaning of discipline, as men do who have



been at war. Another thing is that things go too slow... I wish it was possible for me to return to be in Spain still. In Spain we were able to be always with men who were men, men who spoke as friends and did not have — could not have — anything to hide...

Well, Pat, Dan and the boys send their best regards. The boys say that whatever you do, stay there in Spain as long as you can... Salud!

BILL FRATT

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British Labor M. P.,  
Ted Williams, Hears  
From Miners Federation

Dear Ted:

During the visit you and your colleagues are making to Spain, kindly convey to the heroic people of that country the deepfelt gratitude of the British miners in their fight for the cause of economic freedom.

To the miners of Asturias, those giant gladiators of immeasurable gallantry, give a real British miners' appreciation for their glorious work.

Wherever you go, whoever you meet among the fighters and workers for Spanish liberty as against tyranny, thank them in our name. Their good cause must spread throughout the length and breadth of the world.

Yours fraternally,  
Eddy Edwards, Sec'y.  
Miners, Federation  
Gerfota Britain

# NUEVOS RECLUTAS

«Ayudar, organizar y capacitar a la juventud». Palabras dichas por el Secretario general de la J. S. U. Palabras, que necesitamos aplicar inmediatamente. Pronto llegaran a las Unidades jóvenes reclutas. Sangre joven y dispuesta a luchar. Pero todavía con poca experiencia. Desde el momento en que el recluta llegue a la Unidad empieza nuestra tarea. Hay que ayudarles desde todos los puntos de vista. Si no saben como hay que aprovechar el terreno, hay que enseñárselo concienzudamente,

explicarle como se debe proteger de los ataques de los aviones, como se construyen refugios. Cada soldado veterano debe hacer todo lo posible para que lo que él ya sabe, lo sepa también el nuevo recluta. El recluta debe aprender a escribir a leer. Para ello, cada veterano le debe prestar su máxima ayuda. En los ratos de tranquilidad debe dejar por unos momentos el fusil a un lado, y empuñar las otras armas que son el papel y la pluma. Se deberán organizar escuelas de Transmisiones, Sanidad, etc. para los nuevos reclutas, donde este pueda llegar dentro del menor espacio de tiempo a poder llevar, por la capacitación obtenida, galones ganados merecidamente. Se les deberá dar charlas, explicándoles por que deben luchar a muerte hasta el aplastamiento final del fascismo. Si son labradores, se les deberá dar charlas de lo que la República del Frente Popular ha dado a los campesinos y a los trabajadores de la tierra. Si son obreros, se les explicará el cambio operado en las ciudades, en el que ya no existe un solo parado! Todos en pie a recibir a los nuevos reclutas, y a capacitarlos para que lleguen a ser una de las armas más poderosas para aplastar a la invasión fascista!

F. N.



# 21 BOMBARDMENTS FAIL TO DAUNT VALENCIANS

«Children first» is the motto of the Junta Passive Defense of Valencia, which has just published data concerning its work in the first seven months of its existence. The Junta, its work hastened because of the 21 bombardments which Valencia has undergone, has begun the construction of eight bomb-proof shelters adjoining schools, and it has carried out works to protect four clinics. In one of these a tunnel had to be

built to communicate with a bomb-proof shelter in which a special operating theatre can be set up.

The Junta has also built an emergency hospital with two operating theatres and twelve beds. It has built three bomb-proof shelters inside the city and two in the outskirts. It looks after the upkeep of the shelters previously constructed and the installation of powerful air-raid warning sirens.



Las tres condiciones  
esenciales para vencer

VALOR  
DISCIPLINA  
FE en la VICTORIA



Ayuntamiento de Madrid

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