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Reserved to members
of the organisation

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IMPRIMERIE SPECIALE DE L'ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES TRAVAILLEURS
4, SQUARE JEAN-FALCK, PARIS X* - Le Gérant: JEAN DUPOUX

The resolutions passed at the special congress of the I. W. M. A.

held in Paris, December, 1937

The Special Congress of the I. W. M. A. was an historic event for international anarcho-syndicalism. Convoled by the request of the C.N.T., the Spanish section of the International, and with the consent of all the other sections, the discussion centred round the divergences of opinion produced as a result of the Spanish experience. Moreover, the first thirteen years of existence of the I. W. M. A. were devoted to the development of anarcho-syndicalist organisations in various countries, to theoretical discussion on methods of organisation and the hypotheses of our movement based on our declaration of principle without having any of our sections abandoning their objectives of opposition in their respective countries—opposition directed against the state and all forms of exploitation as well as against the other tendencies of the working-class movement; in 1936, the most important section of the International, the C.N.T., found itself obliged to play its part in a popular movement and a war of capital, international importance. One saw an "Anti-fascist Spain" being formed of which the C.N.T., whether it desired it or not, was a part because the reality (we are not speaking now of the principles of anarcho-syndicalism) forbade the institution of a monopolist power on the terrain of Republican Spain. Nevertheless, the C.N.T. was obliged to take in one way or another, a considerable part of the public responsibility of the country. What was its reaction? How ought it to have reacted? This was the theme of all the discussions in the international anarcho-syndicalist movement.

Two concrete resolutions pointed characterise the decisions of the Congress. One was the expression of solidarity towards the Spanish movement which left despite divergences of opinion, room for confidence and tactical liberty which permits it to do just what it considers opportune in order to serve the cause of the Spanish people and, at the same time, conserve the spiritual tradition of the libertarian movement. This resolution was put forward by the Spanish delegates at the Congress. Moreover, it was agreed — and this was the second important decision of the Congress — to initiate a new international effort with a view to mutual action with other sections of the working-class movement in favour of anti-fascist Spain as soon as possible and to the greatest extent possible.

For the purpose of internal discussion of the anarcho-sindicalist movement which is absolutely necessary if a new common expression of ideas is to be found to enliven and inspire us, it was decided to create this review. The militants in our movement must impose upon themselves self-discipline that must represent always the moral basis of all libertarian movements.

"The Congress asks that these decisions be applied everywhere with a high sense of self-discipline, the essential moral force or our international movement in which the evident desire is to carry forward as rapidly and as completely as possible, all support and possible assistance to the C.N.T. and the Spanish Revolution. In order to study seriously and internally the great problems posed by the Spanish war and revolution, the Congress decides to publish an I.W.M.A. review and it gives its mandate to the secretariat for its publication as soon as possible."

Moreover the Congress decided to "give the C.N.T. full liberty to pursue its plan and, on its own responsibility, the experiment in course," whilst the various sections are invited to assist the Spanish section by all and every means.

The consequence of these decisions can be only that all the public organs, organs of propaganda controlled by the sections adhering to the I.W.M.A., and the oral propaganda of these sections must follow the instructions of the fullest solidarity towards the C.N.T. in allowing it the tactical liberty that the Congress accorded it unanimously. On the other hand, the problems of tactics can and must be discussed in this review.

Besides, the secretariat thinks that it is interpreting the decisions of the Congress faithfully by utilising the review to give an account of the practical work that it is realising, in the spirit of the decisions of the Congress, concerning the organisation of a vast action of

solidarity towards anti-fascist Spain in general and the Spanish Revolution in particular. Among others, the Congress passed the following resolution:

"The Congress places the restitution of anti-fascist and legal Spain and all its international rights as its primary preoccupation. Consequently, the Congress decides that the I.W.M.A. in its entirety, must work vigorously to obtain the cessation of non-intervention which is, in fact, nothing less than the armed intervention of the fascist countries of anti-fascist Spain; to raise the blockade and the control that prevent anti-fascist Spain from being supplied with food and arms whilst allowing every facility in this respect to the fascists."

"Therefore the Congress decides that all the I.W.M.A. sections must agitate in this sense: they must make urgently a vigorous appeal to the masses and try to mobilise them to force their so-called democratic governments to put an end to non-intervention, to the control and the blockade that is paralyzing the military and economic action of the anti-fascist forces."

This review will occupy itself with these two practical questions, inasmuch as the obligation to work in favour of our Spanish comrades, the solidarity towards them, must be placed above the right of criticism.

The latest congress of the I.W.M.A. will take place in August and we hope that by that time the anarcho-sindicalist international will have done all that the December Congress decided with regard to the execution of a vast action of practical solidarity for the C.N.T. in the execution of a vast action of practical solidarity for the C.N.T. that the ideological preparation of the discussions for the Congress, which must keep in touch with the circumstances of the moment and that the anarcho-sindicalist international faithful to the spirit of its founders and its declaration of principles, but equally prepared to receive every new experience that enriches our field of action to be vindicated for the benefit of the people throughout the world in their struggle against the powers of reaction and tyranny — will be able to depart from its past position of lack of contact with the masses and create, upon an international scale, a veritable social revolutionary power that will group in new forms and with a new spirit the forces of the Social Revolution.

I.W.M.A.

Aims and Objects of the International Working-Men's Association

*Adopted by the Constitutive Congress of the I.W.M.A.
(Berlin, December, 1922) and modified by the Fourth
(Madrid, 1931) and Fifth (Paris, 1935) Congresses.*

I. INTRODUCTION.

The time-honoured struggle between exploited and exploiters has assumed menacing proportions. All-powerful Capital, tottering for a moment after the devastating world war and, above all, after the great Russian Revolution and the revolutions — even although less important — of Hungary and Germany, is again raising its hideous head. Notwithstanding the internal struggles that rend the bourgeoisie and cosmopolitan capitalism, the latter thoroughly understand the need to attack the working-class with more unison and force and bind it to the triumphant chariot of Capital.

Capitalism is becoming organised and from the defensive in which it found itself, is passing to the offensive, on all fronts, against the working-class exhausted by bloody wars and misdirected revolutions. This offensive has its profound origin in two well-determined causes: first, the confusion of idea and principles that exists in the ranks of the labour movement, the lack of clarity and cohesion regarding the present and future aims of the working-class; and the division into innumerable camps, very often enemy camps. In a word, the weakness and disorganisation of the labour movement. Next, it is a result, above all, of the subsequent failure of the Russian Revolution which, at the moment of its outbreak and in reason also of the grand principles enunciated by it in November, 1917, had raised the greatest hopes among all the proletariat of the world, and which has degenerated to the rank of a political revolution having served to maintain the conquest of state power in the hands of the Communist Party whose sole aim is

to monopolise all the economic, political, and social life of the country. This deviation of a social revolution into a political revolution has had as a result the hypertrophy of State Socialism, the consequence of which has been the development of a capitalist system just as exploiting and dominating as any other system of bourgeois origin. The necessity of re-establishing capitalism in Russia has been the aim of world capitalism. State Socialism, called «communism» saved bourgeois capitalism by appealing to it for assistance — to save the revolution!

It is thus thanks to these two disorganising elements — confusion in the ranks of the proletariat and capitalist bolshevism — that industrial and financial Capital feels its forces increasing and its chances of rebirth augmenting.

There is but one sole method against this concentrated and international attack of the exploiters of all kinds: that is the immediate organisation of the proletarian army in an organism of struggle embracing all the revolutionary workers of all lands in one sole granite-like block against which every capitalist venture will be broken and which will end by crushing capitalism completely.

Several attempts have been made already in this sense. Two of these still are hoping to be successful. These are the Amsterdam and Moscow Internationals. But these carry within them the poisonous germ of self-destruction. The Amsterdam International, lost in reformism, considers that the only solution to the social problem lies in class collaboration, in the harmonising of Labour and Capital and in the peaceful revolution, patiently awaited and accomplished, with neither violence nor struggle and with the consent and approval of the bourgeoisie. On its side, the Moscow International considers that the Communist Party is the supreme arbitrator of all revolution and that, in the revolutions to come, whatever is not controlled by the Communist Party will have to be dispersed and consumed. It is to be regretted that there still exists in the ranks of the conscious and organised proletarian tendencies which support this outlook which in theory and practise can have no other meaning than the organisation of the State — that is to say, the organisation of slavery — the wages system, the police, the army, political bondage. In a word, the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat which can never be anything other than a check to the direct expropriating force and a suppression of the real sovereignty of the working-class and which becomes thereby the iron dictatorship of a political clique over the proletariat. That is the hegemony of authoritarian communism — which only means the worst form of authoritarianism, political Caesarism, and the destruction of the individual.

Against the offensive of Capital on the one hand and against the politicians of all degrees on the other, the revolutionary workers of the world must erect a true international association of the workers wherein each member will understand that the final emancipation of the workers will not be possible except when the workers themselves, as workers, in their economic organisations are prepared not only to take possession of the land and factories, but also to administer them in common and in such a fashion that they will continue production.

With this perspective before it, the International Congress of Revolutionary Syndicalists, assembled at Berlin in December, 1922, adopted the following principles elaborated from the preliminary Conference of Revolutionary Syndicalists of June, 1922.

II. Principles of the revolutionary Syndicalism.

1. Revolutionary Syndicalism, basing itself on the class-war aims at the union of all manual and intellectual workers in economic fighting organization struggling for their emancipation from the yoke of wage slavery and from the oppression of the State. Its goal consists in the re-organization of social life on the basis of Free Communism, by means of the revolutionary action of the working class itself. It considers that the economic organizations of the proletariat are alone capable of realising this aim, and in consequence, its appeal is addressed to workers in their capacity of producers and creators of social riches, in opposition to the modern political labor parties which can never be considered at all from the point of view of economic re-organization.

2. Revolutionary Syndicalism is the confirmed enemy of every form of economic and social monopoly, and aims at its abolition by means of economic communes and administrative organs of field and factory workers on the basis of a free system of councils, entirely liberated from subordination to any Government or political party. Against the politics of the State and of parties it erects the economic organization of labor: against the Government of men, it sets up the management of things. Consequently, it has not for its object the conquest of political power, but the abolition of every State function in social life. It considers that, along with the monopoly of property, should disappear also the monopoly of domination, and that any form of the State, including the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, will always be the creator of new monopolies and new privileges: it could never be an instrument of liberation.

3. The double task of Revolutionary Syndicalism is as follows: on the one hand it pursues the daily revolutionary struggle for the economic, social and intellectual improvement of the working class within the framework of existing society: on the other hand, its ultimate goal is to raise the masses to the independent management of production and distribution, as well as to the transfer into their own hands of all the ramifications of social life. It is convinced that the organization of an economic system, resting on the producer and built up from below upwards, can never be regulated by Governmental decrees, but only by the common action of all manual and intellectual workers in every branch of industry, by the conduct of factories by workers themselves in such a way that each group, workshop or branch of industry, is an autonomous section of the general economic organization, systematically developing production and distribution: in the interests of the entire community in accordance with a well-determined plan and on the basis of mutual agreements.

4. Revolutionary Syndicalism is opposed to every centralist tendency and organization, which is but borrowed from the State and the Church, and which stifles methodically every spirit of initiative and every independent thought. Centralism is an artificial organization from top to bottom, which hands over en bloc to a handful of men the regulation of the affairs of a whole community. The individual becomes, therefore, nothing but an automaton directed and moved from above. The interests of the community, which place it in the responsibility of a few, are replaced by individual, personal privileges of a few, variety is replaced by uniformity, personal responsibility by a soulless discipline, real education by a universal organization, that is to say, an organization, from below upwards, of a free union of all forces on the basis of common ideas and interests.

5. Revolutionary Syndicalism rejects all parliamentary action and all cooperation with legislative bodies. Universal suffrage, on however wide a basis, cannot bring about the disappearance of the flagrant contradictions existing in the very bosom of modern society, the parliamentary system has but one object, viz. to lend the appearance of legal right to the reign of lies and social injustices, to persuade slaves to fix the seal of the law onto their own enslavement.

6. Revolutionary Syndicalism rejects all arbitrarily fixed political and national frontiers, and it sees in nationalism nothing else but the religion of the modern State, behind which are concealed the material interests of the possessing classes. It recognizes only regional differences, and demands for every group the right of self-determination.

in harmonious solidarity with all other associations of an economic, territorial or national order.

7. It is for these same reasons that Revolutionary Syndicalism opposes militarism in all its forms, and considers anti-militarist propaganda as one of its most important tasks in the struggle against the present system. In the first instance, it urges individual refusal of military service, and especially, organized boycott against the manufacture of war material.

8. Revolutionary Syndicalism stands on the platform of direct action, and supports all struggles which are not in contradiction with its aims, viz., the abolition of economic monopoly and of the domination of the State. The methods of fight are the strike, the boycott, sabotage, &c. Direct action finds its most pronounced expression in the general strike which, at the same time, from the point of view of Revolutionary Syndicalism, ought to be the prelude to the social revolution.

9. Although enemies of all forms of organized violence in the hands of any Government, the Syndicalists do not forget that the decisive struggle between the Capitalism of today and the Free Communism of tomorrow, will not take place without serious collisions. They recognise violence, therefore, as a means of defence against the methods of violence of the ruling classes in the struggle of the revolutionary people for the expropriation of the means of production and of the land, just as this expropriation cannot be commenced and carried to a successful issue except by the revolutionary economic organizations of the workers, so also the defence of the revolution should be in the hands of these economic organizations, and not in those of any military or other organizations operating outside the economic organs.

10. It is only in the revolutionary economic organizations of the working class that is to be found the power apt to carry out its emancipation, as well as the creative energy necessary for the reorganization of society on the basis of Free Communism.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS of Anarcho-syndicalism



THE SPANISH REVOLUTION.

In a movement of the nature and extent of that which is in the process of being unrolled in Spain since July, 1936, it is not very easy to act always according to, and with complete integrity to, the purity of principles. When the struggle broke out in the streets, it was not on our initiative. We had to accept the struggle as it was presented to us and without despising any species of alliance, in order to bar the way to fascism. Any withdrawal on our part would have meant the triumph of Franco and the libertarian organisation would have been crushed in the dust in Spain just as it was in Italy and Central Europe. So great was the instinct of preservation of the revolutionary spirit that we were compelled to take part and contribute all our efforts without hoping for, in return, the later realisation of all the contents of our programme.

For those who did not live through this hard experience, it is difficult to understand how it was that an organisation of the strength of the C.N.T. had to accept in a hasty fashion, methods of action which it had always repudiated and because of this it is not surprising that these persons have suffered a kind of vexation. Nevertheless, thinking it over, without passion and considering the demands of the reality more than our vows and doctrinaire previsions, there is no reason to be disillusioned.

In Spain, anarcho-syndicalism has not renounced any of its libertarian principles. It is yielding wisely to the circumstances and has known how to draw the best possible from those circumstances. That is to say, it did what it had to do when acting with the desire to jump from theory to accomplishment. An a priori plan of action to be perfected, must always submit to detailed modifications and even to fundamental modifications when it begins to be developed in reality. It is the same with programmes. It is not possible to apply them to the letter, because one cannot always see with an exact mathematical precision, and still less, one cannot foresee

exactly the reason for the particular orientation of efforts during the effervescence of the passions of a people in the midst of revolution.

If that takes place when someone takes the helm and traces the route according to his whim, imagine what must take place when — and this is the case — action must be subjected to that which the divergent criterions determine and when it must operate with a particular tact if the desire is to bring the ship to port.

The revolution is not being brought about in Spain with a view to establishing a determined social-political system, but to oppose thoroughly the worst kind of reaction. It is a defensive gesture of the people and the liberal middle-class. In no way was it a revolution patronised by a section playing with a sufficient margin of credit in public opinion in order to juggle with the probabilities of this adventure.

Spanish anarcho-syndicalism, although representing a very considerable organised force could not make the revolution alone. It is not necessary to give proofs of this now. It is sufficient to understand that if the CNT and the F.A.I. had been able to make the revolution, it is certain that we would not have waited for the fascist uprising. But we were not in that position, neither the anarcho-syndicalists, the marxists, nor the U.G.T. And divided we could not conquer fascism. It must not be lost sight of that of the six million workers workers in Spain, less than a third were attached to the CNT. It does not matter which, no party would have dared to take its chance on this mass. For us this was not the case. From the beginning to the conclusion of our programme, it is forbidden to struggle for the seizure of power. — We had to rely on persuasion. The other parties relied on force and clever manoeuvres of the forces of power.

In order to support the struggle against fascism, an indispensable condition was the maintenance of the cohesion between the heterogeneous groups which, from the beginning, formed the anti-fascist block. And to maintain this cohesion, was certainly not to monopolise a movement that, at the final reckoning, could not develop without the co-operation of all. If the CNT, adhering to the purity of its principles had tried to impose its conception on all the other sections, that would have been equivalent to giving Franco victory. In the same way, if it could not impose its principles, it was to obstruct from struggling against fascism. These two attitudes would have been suicidal. What was important was the crushing of fascism no matter what the price, and it is this, naturally, that takes first place. Because of this we were compelled to make concessions. Perhaps we were further away than the rest of the

world in this sense, due to the fact that we occupied an extreme position.

But despite all this there is no reason for alarm. We had to give way to exigent demands, demands of the hour and from certain sides and this would seem as if a rectification was taking place in the methods of struggle. But is has only the appearance of this. In reality, although there has been intervention in the government of the country, in the plane of economic redactions, what has been accomplished is of great importance and speaks eloquently of the constructive and creative capacity of anarcho-syndicalism. It is obvious that here I am referring to the agricultural and industrial collectivities.

Without stopping at this time, to measure the extent and the volume of the collectivist movement in Spain, almost exclusively part of the federalist organisation, let us return to the profound libertarian significance and competency that resides in its organisation.

It is well known that the CNT, just as the other parties and organisations that form the anti-fascist front, had to refrain from imposing its ideology upon the others. It had to struggle without hesitation or weakness to crush the common enemy and having attained this end, to administer the results of the victory in conformity with what all the other anti-fascist would decide. Ideological and party interests had to be put on one side. That which hatred of fascism had united, rivalry of ideas and narrow fanaticism would split. Spanish anarcho-syndicalism understood this, from the very first moments. Therefore it was obliged to discover the manner in which to understand and give to the movement the greatest possible elan to the left for evading the dangers of dictatorship and avoiding everything that would cause rupture and disorder.

It seemed that there was one point which would be easy to understand: that of economic accomplishments.

Men worship in the faith which best suits his peculiar psychology or else he worships not at all. But he requires, to consume, in order to nourish himself and to live and in order to eat he must firstly produce. Anarcho-syndicalism has proceeded frequently from this great truth. In the same fashion, it has impressed the fact that in a reasonably organised society, each useful individual has a indicated place in the wheels of production and no matter what his manner of thought may be, he must continue to occupy that place.

The anarcho-syndicalist organisation confined itself to these truths. It did not ask from the individual a declaration of principles, nor his profession of faith in order to enter the syndicalist cell. It was sufficient that he was a worker.

At the debut of the movement and when the situation in Madrid, Catalonia and the Levant had been clarified a little, the need was immediately felt of recommencing the tasks of interrupted production. In the name of united action which had to be maintained at all price, if fascism was to be conquered, there was no necessity to speak neither of ideal aspirations nor total accomplishments. In all that related to the reconstruction of economy and its readjustment, there had to be the same discretion. Over and above all was the need to produce and that without any employers. The majority were in agreement with that. It was had stopped to discuss in order to try and harmonise the divergent ideological conceptions we would have run the risk of not being listened to and of taking up precious time in inopportune talk when all the machinery of production needed to be put into operation. And so, the C. N. T. gave an undeniable proof of its constructive capacity just as it had given proof of its elan and revolutionary spirit. It attempted to apply the normal principles of anarcho-syndicalist organisation to the organisation of work. As a worker, each person, whether in a manual or intellectual capacity, had to take the position corresponding to his capabilities on the field of work and fulfill his duty without scruples. As a thinking being, he had the right and the freedom to attach himself to whichever party fitted in with his approach, the sole condition being that it should be an anti-fascist organisation.

Then the period of expropriations, requisitions, and embargos began. It is impossible to prevent some mistakes occurring for it is not at all easy to act with infallibility during the first transformations that mark a new epoch. In every way throughout Spain, there was felt the powerful love of work, this time free and without the odious ignominy that the exploitation of man by man imposed. The C. N. T. had a vast field of action. The greater part of the industries were either completely or partly collectivised. Water, gas and electricity services, transport, building, carpentry, metalurgy, clothing, and climatic manufacturing, textile industries, public services, in fact everything, began to be exploited by the collective regime. And this was especially true wherever the C. N. T. dominated.

Without doubt errors were committed in the organisation of the collectivities but happily these are being corrected little by little. But it must not be forgotten that this work was begun, and this interesting aspect of the Spanish revolution which had relied almost entirely on improvisation according to the needs of the moment must not be lost sight of. Therefore all that we have accomplished during this year and a half of heroic struggle and fertile activity, despite the faults, when examined coldly and dispassionately, will give rise to the admiration of both friends and enemies.

We have worked well and intensely. We have not respected completely our principles. We were not able to. What we claim to have done, and are still doing, is to have crushed the hordes of Franco and accomplished the revolution by remaining essentially faithful to our libertarian sentiments. It is not of less importance that, despite the sacrifices of all kinds imposed by the war, up to the present, we have escaped the peril of dictatorship.

But to return to the new economy. We say that what anarcho-syndicalism has done is of extraordinary importance. Over and above the collectivisation of the greatest part of industry, it has organised and sustained more than two thousand peasant collectivities which are maintained and developed in a libertarian spirit. If the organisation of the peasant collectivities are examined in a general sense, the results of our influence can be seen. The collectivity in the village is constituted with the maximum of autonomy with the fields and machines expropriated from the factious, as the basis. The largest are the co-operatives of production and consumption wherein the work is done in a collective method and the production distributed equidly between the co-operators. Generally, the peasant collectivity gives its members a wage in accordance with the number in the family. Regarding the harvests, after the quantity necessary for means of exchange have been subtracted, the remainder goes to swell the stock of the collectivity to cover the needs of all the members.

As the collectivity cannot live in complete isolation, Committees of Federations of Collectivities are created to embrace the national tasks of culture and these form Regional Federations and lastly from the last-named is created the National Federation. Thus can be observed the federalist and libertarian regime which is proper to anarcho-syndicalism. Naturally the collectivities also have their details. And some of them are of a serious nature. Group egoism is awakened and developed and gives us many a worry. To a certain extent, that would have been overcome if we had not lost the political power which caused us equally to lose a good part of the economy of the country. We must insist upon that. It must be seen clearly what we have been able to accomplish, and the reasons for our attitude and that which, from a certain angle, represents rectification from our norms of struggle.

For the moment, we do not propose to establish anything more than that anarcho-syndicalism has not ceased acting in a libertarian manner, that it has accomplished, on the economic field, a profound revolution, and that it will do a great deal more when it is freed from the dangers represented by the activity of the fascists both inside and outside of Spain.

H. NOIA RUIZ

The present situation in the international anarcho- syndicalist movement

Towards the end of the world war a new era seemed to have opened for the European people, an era of decisive struggles characterised by profound political-social transformations of the social structure. The Russian Revolution progressed rapidly from its bourgeois stage to its second, that of definite proletarian intervention in the destiny of a great country which, in contradiction to certain Marxist interpretations, went forward resolutely to inaugurate an epoch of socialist realisations without passing through the stage of highly developed capitalism. This ground current of socialist realisations had through and through, a libertarian and popular sentiment as the slogan of the commencement shows: "All power to the Soviets." That is to say to the workers' organs which, freely elected, had, in every way, a highly federalist significance.

The repercussions of this revolution in the countries of Central Europe was very weak indeed because the workers' movements, social-democratic in character, possessed neither the revolutionary dynamism nor the constructive capacity to permit them to go beyond that which is called bourgeois democracy. Thus was terminated a revolutionary situation that had commenced during the war and which contained enormous possibilities of new social progress based on workers' direct intervention in the public and economic life of a number of countries. At the same time, one is able to see quite definitely what sustained Russian Sovietism, monopolised by a political party whose theoretical inspiration had staked that the proletarian state would very shortly be superfluous and would give way to a free society based on new forms of communal life determined by the free decision of producers, freely associated. Russia also ceased to insist on the world revolution and engaged itself in a path that, little by little, transformed the country into a new power in the sport of capitalist states. The tendency appeared in the creation of a one hundred per cent totalitarian state. Meanwhile, in Central

Europe, the revolutions of the post war period had miscarried because of the incapacity of the workers and the treachery of leaders. The capitalist crisis and the social problem were aggravated day by day. An era of intervention by the state in the social life, tending to suppress all class conflict based on direct action, began. This tendency, called "democratic" by the Marxist leaders, blinded completely by their conceptions of State Socialism, led directly to fascism.

That was the line of a new historic development commenced after the revolutions lost during 1917 to 1920 — a line of social reaction, of authoritarianism and centralism increasing. This was in 1922, when world revolutionary syndicalism, foreseeing that the two tendencies of the Marxist movement (communist and socialist) were unable to put a check on the new defects taking place, and day by day were corrupting more and more the proletarian forces, decided to indicate a new way to the world proletarian and proposed a regeneration of the emancipating proletarian movement based on direct action and the free determination of the workers united in their organisations of a federalist character. Those who were disposed to follow this path united in 1923, in the new International Working-Men's Association, deliberately giving to their international the name of the first international within which there never had existed political division, and which had been inspired by the direct and declared struggle for social emancipation.

The delegations from syndicalist organisations which came to found the new international were representative of two continents. From America, Chile, Argentina and Mexico were represented also the Scandinavian countries and those of Central Europe. Italy, the Iberian Peninsula and the Russian anarcho-syndicalist minority which still existed actively, also sent their delegates. Based on diverse traditions, differing among themselves to a certain degree, regarding the interpretation of tactics and the forms of revolutionary syndicalist organisation, they discovered unity notwithstanding, on all the important points of their analysis of the social movement. Their opinion was united on the immediate task of the workers' movement and on the libertarian conception of workers' emancipation in general.

The Congress definitely rejected the idea of adhering, as revolutionary and syndicalist organisations, to the Programme of Moscow that wished once more to court the sympathies of our movement. The policy of Moscow was characterised as "anarcho-syndicalist" and, as was stated in the resolution adopted relating to this question, "the subordination of syndicalism to the party politics of the state" was the essential essence of the statutes of the Red Syndicalist

International and rendered impossible, from true revolutionary syndicalism, any reconciliation with Moscow.

In the other important resolution, the Congress testified its desire to do everything possible for workers' unity and to continue an exchange of ideas and impressions with Moscow to attempt, once more, despite the various divergences, the establishment of a basis of economic unity of the universal working-class. In protesting against the repression exercised against revolutionaries in all lands, the Congress made particular note of the repression suffered by the revolutionary workers in Russia, where after the bloody liquidation of the heroic resistance of Kronstadt, every tendency to workers democracy had disappeared for ever.

Through the medium of a special resolution which defined the tactics of direct action that the anarcho-syndicalist organisations recommended to the international proletariat as weapons to be used against capitalism and oppression, the Congress gave its basis of struggle to the international organisation and accepted the text of the declaration of the Principles of Revolutionary Syndicalism, the spirit of which is to be found in a manifesto addressed to "The Working People in All Lands and of All Languages" by Rudolph Rocker. This manifesto stresses, with extraordinary clarity, the real sentiments of the liberating movement of the proletariat, and prophetically announces the destruction of the workers' movement if it persists in its false authoritarian and state methods. With reference to the post war period, the manifesto declares:

"Never before was this simple truth demonstrated better, than during the last four years that the political parties, by reason of their being, were incapable of solving the social problems conformable to a new order and a superior civilization and in typical manner the socialist parties have given incontrovertible proof of this. The grand historical significance of the modern proletarian movement lies, not in its policy, but in the economic plan of the social revolution — it being unimportant to which party the worker is affiliated. That which is important is its productive quality and creative factor in the social life."

During the years that followed this Congress, in every country where the I.W.M.A. had its centres, the greatest effort was made to oppose the degeneration of the political movements of the Marxist type, of anarcho-socialism, Bolshevism and reformist syndicalism. But due to various causes, the anarcho-syndicalist forces did not make any progress. In Central Europe, the economic crisis of capitalism, for many years destroyed any possibility of enlarging the workers movement and, at the same time, encouraged authoritarian

Bolshevism and fascism that were able, in various ways, to advance without encountering any serious resistance on the part of the workers. Everywhere, the progress of fascism changed the social panorama. Bourgeois nationalism in the democratic countries infiltrated itself into the workers movements in all countries. The Franco-Russian alliance and the policy of the "Popular Front" annihilated all perspective for the movements that had a truly social-revolutionary character. Anti-imperialism, anti-militarism and direct action, as demanded by the I.W.M.A., had less and less repercussions. At the same time, European fascism and fascism in Latin America developed. Only in the Iberian Peninsula was anarcho-syndicalism able to conserve and maintain its strength. Better said, only in Spain there was the spirit of active opposition to fascism maintained. Only to the forefront. This spirit manifested itself many times, in 1933 and 1934 and in the great events of July 1936.

But the Spanish movement was an anachronism. It developed almost completely isolated from other countries and was inspired by revolutionary conceptions sufficiently in touch with social realities of the 20th century in the social realisations which it proclaimed. However, fascist Spain, adhering to the I.W.M.A., was the sole positive and promising factor in revolutionary dynamism in the struggle against contemporary fascism.

These were the objective factors that determined the diminished possibilities of international anarcho-syndicalism after 1923. It was not, as we would commit a great error if we did not admit that the lack of tactical clarity and the divergences within our own movement itself also played a part in this marionette. The countries where the movement was maintained more easily were those with traditions more or less federalist and revolutionary, such as Spain and to a lesser degree, the Spanish countries of South America. In the Germanic countries, on the contrary, national conditions favoured the authoritarian movements, Mordm and Fascism. But lack of a practical conception of the daily struggle as to the tactics to employ against fascism — not in theory, but in the unceasingly menacing struggle — and the first steps to take for the rectification of socialist countries where we have large organisations, these have had their part in the weakening of our movements. These were faults common to all.

The C. N. T. after July 19th, was compelled to compromise because it was evident that their programme could not be applied to the latter. In the midst of a struggle that imposed formidable sacrifices upon it — the C.N.T. tried, and is still trying, to elaborate

a tactic that is in harmony with the real situation as well as its historical ideology at the same time. If it has been hesitant, if it has been uncertain, if it has committed errors, it is because the C.N.T. is forced to resort to improvised solutions to meet the demands of the daily problems. And it immediately submits the practical consequences and theoretical and tactical errors to the international movement.

In Spain, however, the theories of anarcho-sindicalism have found twofold confirmation. After the triumphal course of fascism to Europe there came a halt. In Spain, thanks to the direct action of the workers, fascism encountered the first opposition it had known in contemporary history. It is well known that during the first decisive moments in July everywhere in Spain where the popular front anti-fascist was imposed, and not the armed workers in direct action on the streets, fascism triumphed. Anarcho-sindicalism has not taken its place in history because of this but because of the intervention of the syndicalist workers in the economy and administration of the country. By this the imposition of a totalitarian movement was impossible and a new kind of social reaction and the basis of a new economy of fascism and which remains one of the bases for the future struggle notwithstanding the deliberate falsehoods of politicians — was created.

But let us state it frankly: anarcho-sindicalism equally has exposed its faults. Unwilling to move towards the experiment of totalitarian social renewal, — an experiment acknowledged by the greatest part of the international comrades — it was obliged, consequently, to collaborate with other sections of various kinds. Unable to escape from the necessity of assuming charge of a part of the responsibility for the life or the death of the people, it did not discover any help in the theories of anarcho-sindicalism nor any indication regarding the needs of the hour. There were only proofs of an attitude of frontal opposition to the totalitarian social revolution. The C.N.T. could not choose for either of these solutions.

It is as a result of the situation created by the anti-fascist movement in Spain, the discussion within anarcho-sindicalism itself, and before the necessity of putting forward anarcho-sindicalist progress on a world scale, — progress based on the grand and historic intervention by anarcho-sindicalism in the Spanish anti-fascist struggle, notwithstanding its moral isolation from the rest of the world — that it is our duty today to draw conclusions from the Spanish experience, without being afraid to sacrifice narrow conceptions and prejudices cultivated during many years. As I see it, there are three primordial conceptions as a basis for discussion.

(1) — The anarcho-sindicalist movement itself requires to act according to a political line that each time, must be the result of a collective analysis of the general effect of the political and national and international social situation.

The tactic "All or Nothing" is impossible. In the anti-fascist struggle as well as in the periods of declared revolution, there must be adjustment with the possibility of partial realisations and partial syndicalist intervention in the life of one or many countries. For such an attitude two things must be prepared: a gradual tactic must be elaborated which will have reference to the obtaining of these partial realisations and interventions, to their defense, and to methods of collaborations with other sections and official organisms of bourgeois society which remain. Such a tactic, elaborated collectively, on the other hand, must be applied equally by all, based on an organic discipline that, up to the present, has not been possible due to the exaggerated influence of individualism upon anarchism and anarcho-sindicalism.

(2) — Notwithstanding the tension existing between the numerically important anarcho-sindicalist organisations, obliged to have an attitude of collective responsibility, and the weaker organisations that are devoted solely to propaganda, international anarcho-sindicalism must bring about a concentration and a unification for its international activity.

The C.N.T., in a manner of legitimate defense before the enemy of all the world and also before the incomprehension of a large number of its own foreign comrades, and under the inspiration of certain others who had an interest in their propaganda, thought it ought to create its own international propaganda apart from that of the I.W.M.A. which has, in certain cases, harmed the interests of the international anarcho-sindicalist movement — that interested congress of the I.W.M.A. in December 1937, that a favourable change began to operate for a real collaboration between the C.N.T. and the I.W.M.A. and vice versa. But only an absolute and systematic mutual penetration will be able to guarantee a work that in all its plans, will be truly fertile. That does not prevent the C.N.T. — within the I.W.M.A. and in accord with it always — from sustaining or creating a network of international propaganda which will be wholly and completely C.N.T., or even C.N.T.-U.G.T. in place of that of definite anarcho-sindicalism. But all this must be organised for a definite indicated accordingly in paragraph IV upon the basis of a political line common to all the anarcho-sindicalist sections.

(3) — The fact that responsible intervention by one of our sections in a revolutionary war which, because of the reason of the inter-

ational proletariat, look the aspect of a war for national independence, become necessary, obliges us, after the absolutely necessary revision of certain anti-militarist conceptions, to prescribe the principles of anti-imperialism and anti-nationalism of the I.W.M.A. and all its sections, in new forms. This is necessary in order to avoid one of these sections or the I.W.M.A. itself, through lack of historical foresight, from being used as an instrument in the hands of some imperialist power.

This necessity imposes itself without there being any need to add details. Besides, I have no wish to speak again of certain symptoms due to the fact that I have already drawn attention to them in my report given at the Special Congress of the I.W.M.A.

We can be surer than ever that the social and political development up to 1936, have justified a thousand times the fundamental ideas expressed in the Congress of the formation of the I.W.M.A. (December 1922 — January 1923). We are sure also that the Spanish experience has confirmed once more the worthy principles or anarcho-syndicalism in its methode of struggle and in its constructive principles. It is only necessary that at the same time, we recognise the mistakes made.

Only a dogmatic spirit, completely incapable of occupying itself with the practical side of life can pretend that it is able to have a theory that, without ever having had the occasion to apply it, is confirmed integrally in its first attempt at total or partial accomplishment. It is impossible. The theory is abstract, rationalistic; it is merely an intellectual construction. But in life, there are many irrational factors. The psychology of the masses is not the same as that of a man of advanced ideas who in his spiritual isolation reflects upon the best methods for social emancipation. A practical conception such as that of revolutionary syndicalism, born of the struggle for daily bread within capitalist society, contains within itself the inspiration of social ideas that still advance and cannot foresee all the necessities of a period of collective responsibility of organisation and of profound social repercussions and revolutionary possibilities. That must be understood.

If we understand the immediate necessities, if we try to learn something of the sufferings and the sacrifices of our Spanish comrades, these sufferings and sacrifices will not have been in vain.

We will remain faithful to the spirit that inspired the founders of the I.W.M.A. and those that went before them. Anarcho-syndicalism is faced with a decision: whether it will stagnate into some kind of

sectarianism and cease to be a factor in the struggle — which would mean the total isolation of our Spanish comrades — or whether it will begin to be a real force that will collect and collaborate efficiently in the bringing together of a new working-class movement in all lands, a movement that will be in the position to realise the aspirations of liberty and justice of the first International which have been so cruelly injured by traditional socialism.

R.

The possibilities of the I.W.M.A.

It is true that the I.W.M.A. has not achieved all that was its object to do at its foundation. Almost a whole series of countries have fallen victims to fascism and the movements in these countries were eliminated from public life. Everywhere, the Russian propaganda has created numerous obstacles to our activity. These obstacles were particularly noticeable in the years that followed the coming to power of Bolshevism. If the I.W.M.A. had done nothing more than oppose a barrier to actual communism and prevented its influx into the libertarian and anarcho-syndicalist centres, that would have been an effect worthy of its work.

But the events of Spain have, without doubt, contributed very much to draw the public attention of the entire world upon our movement in such a manner that today, the time seems to have come when the I.W.M.A. will find better than ever before, a favourable field for its activities.

(Extract from a letter of Rudolph Bocker, dated 23 October, 1937.)

Regarding the Boycott and Embargo Plan elaborated by the I.W.M.A.

Confirming to the decision taken at the Special Congress of the I.W.M.A. held in Paris from the 6th to the 17th December 1937, the newly appointed Secretariat appealed to the International Syndicalist Federation (F.S.I.) to bring about the united action of the international syndicalist forces with a view to organising the universal boycott of merchant ships, produce, merchandise and other goods from the fascist countries. However, the I.W.M.A. did not receive a favourable reply from the F.S.I.

Therefore it remained for the Secretariat of the I.W.M.A. to fulfil the mandate it had been given by the Congress, to work out the means for putting into practice the measures of economic restraint decided upon by the Special Congress. The Secretariat did so, and no doubt by the time these lines appear in print, all the I.W.M.A. centrals will have received copies of the Plan. Consequently, they will be in the position to study it and to give it each in his own sphere, the details necessary for its rapid and rational application.

I think the Plan speaks for itself and does not require much further commentary on my part. Nevertheless, I think it will serve a useful purpose if I point out here the sentiments that guided the Secretariat in the development of the Plan. If I give the reasons for our choice, and if I explain what moved us to develop the decision taken by the Congress in such a natural fashion.

CONCEPTION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PLAN

Above everything else, the Secretariat agreed to give a *solid legal base* to the Plan. It desired essentially that the Plan rest, not only on the decision of the Congress, but on an incontestable course with which public opinion was familiar and which could not be disputed by our adversaries. In our opinion, it was impossible to discover a more solid basis than that which was supplied to us in Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the most important part of the International Pact of Geneva.

Moreover the knowledge of this particular Article—and this implies the knowledge of the complete text—is popular among the workers' public opinion in general, political parties and economic pacifist and philosophical groups of all kinds. And it was absolutely certain that neither the governments nor the so-called anti-fascist parties and groups

could be opposed to the provisions of this Article. These provisions are such that if they had been put into force—under the conditions for which they provided—there could have been no doubt that neither Italy, Germany, nor Japan would have been able to continue their brigand and exterminating operations for one hour more either in Spain or China; and that Franco himself, deprived of all assistance, would have been conquered within a few weeks as he could have been.

We sought and exposed the reasons why Article 16, contrary to the solemn agreements taken by the Powers assembled at Geneva, was not applied. To give an indisputable base to the Plan of the I.W.M.A. to demonstrate the cause of the total bankruptcy of the governments, was a primordial and indispensable need and with such a base, we stood on a firm ground.

By thus giving a legal base with regard to the application of Article 16, the repetition of acts so deplorable and so prejudicial to the cause of peace and the interests of those people menaced by fascism or those made the object of its present lust for power, would be made impossible. And so it was necessary to interpret in a just, intelligent and humane fashion, the provisions of the Covenant with the purpose of mobilising the masses on a firm basis in order to force their governments and all those who maintain them, to act in conformity with their pledged agreements and in accordance with the demands of a situation that became increasingly formidable each day.

The I.W.M.A. Secretariat arrived at the position where it found itself immediately after the one hand, the governments, under the pretext of ignoring certain particular interests that were opposed to the Plan, refused to ignore certain particular interests that were opposed to the Plan, and on the other hand, that the provisions of Article 16 of the Covenant must be humanitarian. The arguments relative to these two problems are to be found in the Plan itself. We were of the opinion that these arguments cannot be opposed by any person or good faith, no matter what his situation and responsibility might be.

PUTTING INTO OPERATION THE DECISION OF CONGRESS

After a serious examination of the problem which it had to solve and after having analysed the text of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Secretariat was compelled, logically, to approve the idea of developing and completing the decision of the Special Congress of the I.W.M.A. There is no doubt that if the Congress itself had had the time necessary to study the whole question it would have acted and decided in the same manner as did the Secretariat.

CONCLUSIONS

On the other hand, the Secretariat thought—and in my opinion, with reason—that it could not possibly propose a Plan that admitted sanctions that were of less importance than those provided for in the Covenant itself. As a beginning, as has been stated before, these means had to be rendered practicable and they had to be made known and accepted. Thus the Secretariat thought it right to add the embargo to the boycott with the purpose of creating a complete circle round the totalitarian states and this by this double application gave all the necessary efficiency to the considered measures.

HUMANISING THE MEASURES DECREED BY THE COVENANT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Remembering the miseries sustained by the German people during the war of 1914-18 and the opposition of certain Scandinavian powers to the application of economic sanctions, the Secretariat considered the reasons for this opposition in order that the Covenant might be made applicable.

After a minute examination, it listed the merchandise and products which, alone, should be made the object of the boycott and embargo. The Secretariat was guided in its choice by the double consideration of not harming the living conditions of the people existing under fascism, and of striking the fascist states in their vulnerable point as such a way as would force them to cease their criminal activities. The Plan which has been elaborated carries evident signs of these considerations.

PROPAGANDA AROUND THE PLAN

So simple, so clear, so humane must it be, it is evident that the Plan of the I.W.M.A. will require an intense and constant propaganda for its total understanding and for its application by all—that is, the workers and the consumers. This propaganda must not only convince people of the necessity of facing up to fascism but also the need to revise thoroughly all the false judgements held and above all the need to force the governments to act in an appropriate manner to fulfil their most elementary duty that results from the agreements solemnly taken by them.

Only by the popularisation of this Plan, only by the clarifying of public opinion in all the interested countries, only the justification for action arising as a result of that public opinion, only by the providing of the means to overwhelm the governments and bend their will to that of the people; only in this way can the Plan succeed.

The Plan of the I.W.M.A. contains the indication of all the means to employ to attain the desired result.

In drawing up this Plan, the Secretariat of the I.W.M.A. had not only the desire to fulfil its duty but also it had the conviction that it was giving the workers a weapon of struggle which up to the present they had lacked. It feels certain that apart from the workers affiliated to the I.W.M.A., all those others, irrespective of their affiliation, will make it their duty to participate in the practical form indicated by the Plan for action against overpowering, devastating and destructive fascism.

It also wants to think that the International Syndicalist Federation, in view of the evidence and convincing of his duty, will not persist in its unjust and unjustifiable refusal to participate in such an action against fascism at the very time when, notwithstanding its recent victories, fascism is in the midst of an internal and external crisis which is making its existence very precarious indeed.

Certainly the task undertaken by the I.W.M.A. is a difficult one. But it is not insurmountable. I am convinced that with the assistance of everyone, it will have a happy conclusion.

And so, to work! To work immediately!

Pierre BÉZANT

EDITOR'S NOTE

Circumstances over which we had no control have postponed the publication of the first number of our international review, slated for the month of April. The next issue, that for May, will appear at the beginning of the month. The principal cause of the delay was lack of material. We desired to avoid, and we wish to avoid, having the secretaries of the I.W.M.A. as the sole collaborators. At the last minute, we received numerous articles and a great part of these will be reserved for the second and third numbers. We hope that our militant comrades will continue to collaborate in this review with the aim of it becoming a veritable organ of fertile and positive discussion in favour of the common cause, and a preparation for the next Congress of the I.W.M.A. which will take place in the month of August.