

WHY?

A BULLETIN OF
FREE INQUIRY

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SPANISH CHRONICLE

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MAY DAY, 1942

May 1st has come and gone. This year there was no flag-waving, no "free the Scottsboro Boys," no U-N-I-T-Y. May 1st passed merely as National Health Day, or Tree Day, or some such phony national day. But this lack of May 1st display is not quite as keen a blow as one might have expected. The true spirit of May 1st, disappeared from the May Day demonstrations some years ago, since the slogans and songs depended entirely on what the Communist Party line was at the time.

May 1st, the day on which the working class shows its potential strength, when it leaves the wheels of industry as if in anticipation of some future day, when it can really show the powers that be who makes the wheels go round! This spirit is no longer the keynote of May 1st "festivities." The Union leaders seem to have forgotten the bloody struggle in 1886 when the eight Haymarket anarchists were framed and four killed because of their fight for labor's welfare, and that the next year, May 1st was

proclaimed an international workers' "holiday." But May 1st was never intended to be merely a holiday, to show off Father Devine and clan. It was meant to be a symbol of working class strength, of Labor's titanic power. It should be a threat, a forewarning of things to come when organized revolutionary labor will be able to walk out of the factories, entering them again only under a new and more equitable social set-up.

Those of us who cannot openly manifest this spirit will nevertheless continue to organize and prepare ourselves for the time when May 1st will come into its own, when, as in this verse from the **International**, Labor will say:

*No saviours from on high deliver,
No faith have we in prince or peer,
The slave's own arm his chains must sever
Chains of slavery, greed and fear,
E'er the thieves will disgorge their booty
And to each grant a happier lot
Each at the forge must do his duty
And strike the iron while it's hot.*

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LABOR IN RETREAT

The history of the workers' struggle to improve their well-being and to reap the better things of life was created by the workers themselves. The successes of some of these struggles depended on how much they relied on their own class solidarity and self-initiative. Their failures and defeats coincided with the abandonment of their natural weapon, the Strike. Furthermore the workers made the mistake of placing their hope in political messiahs who strangle and continuously paralyze the workers' initiative and militant energy by leading them through the swamps and manure piles of political opportunism.

With this yard stick we can measure the last two decades of labor's defeat in Europe and its self-surrender in this country. The petit bourgeois emancipators like Lenin, Mussolini and Shickelgruber donned overalls, and started giving lip-service to the workers' deliverance from the oppressors' strangle-hold. These self appointed liberators not only replaced the old knouts but overhauled and perfected the machine of oppression.

An Example

In order to make clear the picture of this great surrender in the American labor field we will take the Maritime unions as an example. Let's examine the facts and sinister forces which brought about the surrender of their strongest weapon—the workers' right to strike. There is, for instance, the paradox of Harry Lundeberg, head of the West Coast Sailors' Union of the Pacific and the Atlantic and Gulf Sea-farers' International Union, A. F. of L. Lundeberg, who always felt at home on a picket line or on any union beef, is now forced to button-hole political parasites in Washington, D. C., on behalf of seamen who do not wish to be regimented into the Navy Personnel. Why should the representative of such a militant union as the S.U.P. be forced to write such pleading words to the Great White Father in Washington, as appeared in the West Coast Sailor, April 10th,

1942, "We plead with you not to allow the Navy to take over the merchant seamen."?"

In 1934, the West Coast maritime workers marched shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy, the employers, and declared their watch-word to be, "*An injury to one is an injury to all.*" Things were different in '34, when all political parasites and so-called labor friends came to the picket lines, pleading with the workers. The workers were strong then.

Yes, one can recall that then the workers did not beg Bill Green to plead with Roosevelt on their behalf. As a matter of fact the powers that be were all raging mad against Labor—even the Great White Father's emissary, at that time, General Hugh Johnson. That was the time when the healthy spirit of the maritime workers put its militant initiative into action. But what happened? A lull set in. After the strike was

Old Deal and New Deal

Under the pretext that overtime pay and forty-hour week hamper production, Robber Barons, Inc., known in Wall Street as the National Association of Manufacturers, has been paying for costly advertisements calling for their abolition.

So far the administration has been cool to these proposals; no doubt because the N.A.M. is just too "Old Dealish" for its own good. The New Deal "friends of labor" will give it all a good sugar-coating. In this regard, there is a sinister smell about the army's taking over of strike-bound plants and others on account of "poor management" (such as the 4 plane plants of the Brewster Corporation seized April 20). It looks as though it won't be long before complete conscription of workers is here—and government-dictated conditions of hours and wages a fact. The New Deal is going to cash in on its so-called progressive reputation. The vanguard of our ruling class won't even have to take the easy chance with an American Bevin to sprinkle the perfume. The spineless policies of our union leadership are enough.

over the workers failed to fortify their union with the revolutionary principle that the workers and employers have nothing in common, and left themselves wide open to class collaboration, kremlin stooges and personal opportunists who started closed membership books. Many a potential young seaman, who could now be filling a union job on the hiring board, was thus driven into the arms of the Standard Oil and Maritime Commission fink holes.

We must also bear in mind the squeeze act the Moscow stooges put on Lundeberg and the S.U.P. They employed various popular Bolshevik methods which rate from crossing picket lines, stabbing in the back and character assassination, to doing a strip on the bed-spreads for the ship owners.

The Coming Struggle

According to the latest *Shipping Digest*, April 6th, 1942, the American-Hawaiian Steamship Co. netted \$2,817,945 for the year 1941. This is the outfit that threatened to crack down on the militant union sailors because they used direct action to make the company cough up some higher war bonuses for the seamen. As usual, the company cried "poverty." While on the subject of huge profits made by the ship owners, it is interesting to note that the S.U.P. asked for an increase for its members to meet the rising cost of living. The same old cry of "poverty" was raised by the owners who passed the buck to the Maritime Commission. But the Maritime Commission cannot be bothered just now with the mere bagatelle of higher wages because it and the navy are planning to regiment the seamen and do away altogether with the "nuisance" of unions.

The maritime unions are helpless in such a situation, for, naively enough, they gave up the right to strike while the ship owners did not relinquish the right to make profits. It is very doubtful if any raise in wages will be obtained at present.

In Lundeberg's own words in the *West Coast Sailor*, April 10th, 1942, "*Drastic measures of the most extreme severity are advanced. The so-called friends of labor come forward with a compromise involving the granting of certain*

"Whisk-broom's" Dirt

Westbrook Pegler, who is always "fair enough" to anti-union bosses, reached a new high in his column in the *N. Y. World-Telegram*, April 21, 1942. He is, as usual, licking the boots of his masters, whoever they may be. Whisk-broom Pegler displays his ignorance again when speaking of the 1917 strike in Bisbee, Arizona at the Cornelia Copper mines led by the Industrial Workers of the World. According to Whisk-broom the militants of the I.W.W. were the Communists of 1917 under another name. Pegler goes on in this vein, eulogizing the union-busting copper magnates of Bisbee, and smearing and villifying the I. W. W. miners who believed in fighting and striking, like men, for their just rights. Whisk-broom licks boots for his porkchops; no wonder he doesn't like unions; none of the finks do.

concessions. While one hand brandishes a club, the other holds out a compromise which labor is asked to accept volutarily."

The above statement indicates that the seafarers in the S.U.P. are still unions of some standing. Not so much can be said of the National Maritime Union which is controlled by the disciples of St. Joe Dzugashvili (Stalin). Their slogan is, "Keep 'em sailing," and without wages if necessary, providing the ships go to Russia. According to the official organ of the S.U.P., the above mentioned squeeze has been worked more than once.

The root of the matter is this: It is up to the workers themselves to realize their own weakness and their own strength; to find their friends among the rest of the producers in this world and to stop looking for political witch-doctors, great leaders and false messiahs who promise to lead them into the land of plenty.

In other words, as one donkey, Mr. Dooley once said, "*Don't ask for rights. Take them! Don't let anyone give them to you. A right that is handed to you for nothing has something the matter with it. It is more likely to be only a wrong turned inside out.*" —W. Y.

PROFITS MUST GO!

We hear it often said these days that *this* war is different, that there are no merchants of death *this* time. Just how much pure bunk that all is, is proved in a recent issue of *Your Investments*, a monthly put out for the benefit of small stockholders. Here's what it has to say of Mr. T. M. Girdler, labor-hating chairman of the board of directors of the Republic Steel Corporation:

"... (he) received remuneration amounting to \$275,000 in 1941. In addition, the Corporation had purchased an annuity contract for Mr. Girdler on which it spent \$50,000 in 1940 ... Mr. Girdler can receive a maximum pension of \$50,000 a year upon retirement. At standard rates, this involves purchasing an annuity contract worth about \$500,000. Mr. Girdler who has been drawing such a large salary from Republic Steel, in December 1941, took on another job as chairman of the board and chief executive officer of the Consolidated Aircraft Corporation. ... Presumably, he is drawing very large salaries from both corporations, and presumably Republic Steel is still paying for his annuity. The logical climax to this situation might be for Consolidated Aircraft to vote Mr. Girdler another annuity, since again, presumably, it is supposed to be difficult for individuals in his income bracket to set aside for their old age, and after all, Mr. Girdler is now in his middle 60's."

And just to show that Girdler isn't an exception to sacrificial corporation officials, here's some more figures from the same source:

	1940	1941
<i>Total Remuneration</i>		
Bethlehem Steel Corp.		
E. G. Grace	\$298,144	\$357,794
Burlington Mills		
J. S. Love	91,939	179,653
General Electric Co.		
Ch. E. Wilson	135,000	175,000
Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co.		
H. L. Furguson	70,400	127,000
Sperry Corporation		
Th. M. Morgan	147,243	181,480

*These figures for Mr. Grace are exclusive of salary.

Proposals to cure this cancerous situation have been marked by either not going far enough or by going too far in a wrong direction. The liberals call for higher taxes and a ceiling on incomes. In practice all that doesn't mean a damn thing. The means of non-taxable income are many, and high-priced lawyers have shown themselves quite efficient at hiding the profits. Nor is more stringent state regulation of profits a way out for, as some self-styled radicals imagine, outright government control of industry—a remedy for worse than the disease. These proposals, if effected, can only strengthen our already monstrous state machine and bring it that much nearer totalitarianism. Unless economic and social collapse or dictatorship are to conquer, ultimately, the way out will be found in a free system of production for use under the control of workers' committees and cooperatives independent of and against the state idea.

—ANALYST.....

War For Justice?

"Fort Devens, Mass., April 13.—Private Sellers Judkins, Jr., a 23-year-old race soldier of Birmingham, Ala., was given five years in a military prison after being found guilty by a general court martial here Saturday of leaving his post before being properly relieved. Judkins had been assigned to guard a bridge on the right of way of the Boston and Albany Railroad. In his defense the Birmingham soldier declared that he thought a passing detail of soldiers was relieving him. The five-year sentence is the heaviest imposed here for and offense of this kind since the outbreak of the war."

—Amsterdam N. Y. Star News

Compare that sentence with the plushier fates of Kimmel and the rest of the big fellows responsible for the Pearl Harbor fiasco. Or with the Standard Oil higher-ups and other monopolists recently caught with their plans down. Yet our patrioteers have the nerve to say they are waging a war for freedom and justice!

WHAT ABOUT RUSSIA? PART TWO

In Part 1, (Why—April, 1942) we considered the role of Stalin's Russia in the post-war world. That role we regard as harmful to the best interests of the working class and the revolutionary movement.

Our objections to the regime in Russia are based upon the belief that there is no socialism there. The economic and social set-up is contrary to the very principles and spirit of true socialism. On this point there is a great deal of confusion which must be cleared up. What are, broadly speaking, the basic aspirations of the socialist Ideal? A socialist society will tolerate no classes. All people will enjoy all the products which they will create. The concentration of power in the hands of any single institution will be abolished. The affairs of the people will be administered by the people through their own organizations, (unions, cooperatives, councils, and other voluntary associations), united by common needs and agreement. Freedom of thought, press, speech, etc., and the freedom of the Individual to work out his own destiny will be part of the new order. These rights will be rendered inviolate by the structure and nature of the new social institutions. This is the Ideal which has inspired countless people to sacrifice everything—even their very lives.

We anticipate the objection "*you can't expect Russia to attain all this now. At least the U.S.S.R. is on the right road and will get there some day.*" We agree with the first part of this statement, certainly we do not expect the millenium now. However, *it is with the pernicious belief that, somehow, willy-nilly, Russia is making progress along the road to socialism that we are concerned.*

Without the abolition of classes, there can be no socialism—on this, at least all socialists are agreed. In Russia, where capitalism has been abolished, a peculiar development has taken place. A new class, the bureaucratic class, has been created. This class consists of the State with it's government officialdom, the Communist Party hangers on, the G.P.U. Military cliques, privileged categories of "Shock-brigaders", "Stahkonovites", fawning "poets", "writers",

"songsters" lickspittles of every variety, etc., etc., ad nauseum. *They*, and *not* the workers and peasants have attained "socialism". This terrifying apparatus that chokes the life of the people is in turn subject to the will and whim of a monstrous camarrilla headed by one individual whose word is law.

It is a dangerous delusion to believe that this vast and ever-growing class of social leeches, whose very existence depends upon maintaining the status quo, will voluntarily abdicate to make room for the rule of the freely-elected workers and peasants bodies.

Our objector will say, "*Has not private property been abolished in the U.S.S.R. and is this not a long step towards socialism?*" It is this belief which leads people to think that Russia is on the right road to a classless society. The abolition of private property does not necessarily guarantee the realization of socialism. It is not enough. The fundamental question is *who* will exercise control after private property has been abolished. The workers, peasants and the soviets? Or will it be the State and its satellites who will exercise the dictatorship designed to keep the workers and peasants from running their own affairs through their own organs?

Who Shall Control?

It was this question of who shall control which caused a series of protests by a large number of workers in and out of the Communist Party in the formative stages of the Russian dictatorship. The history of this movement and its true nature is either ignored or misrepresented by the "historians" of the Kremlin. We can, however, refer to the Kronstadt Affair, the "Workers Opposition" led by Madame Kollantay, the Makhno Movement in the Ukraine, the numerous strikes which took place at that time. All this was drowned in blood by the usurpers of the Russian Revolution. Only then, were the usurpers of the Russian Revolution able to consolidate and extend their power.

From the economic point of view, the transfer of the means of production and distribution from

private ownership to state control does not change the fundamental relationship between ruler and ruled. The State is the Boss who has taken the place of the Capitalist. The soviet worker is therefore dependent upon his boss for his living. He works for a wage set by his boss, at a place designated by his boss. His dwelling, his food, clothes, the training and disposition of his children, what he reads, sees, hears, thinks—all, are determined for him by his boss. He is in short, slave to the State and has no rights that his boss is bound to respect. Far less than his fellow worker in the Democratic countries has! By what right, therefore, can this state of affairs be identified with socialism.

Statism Not Socialism

It is the dogma that socialism and statism are synonymous which is responsible for the confusion in the labor movement. The belief that once private ownership is converted into State controlled economy, all cultural, social, and individual freedom will automatically follow, is wrong. The authoritarian socialists have failed to realize that the State in itself constitutes a class in itself. Such transfer of power is merely jumping from the frying pan into the fire.

What then, is this new social order in Russia? It can be properly called State Absolutism. State Absolutism has nothing in common with a free society. *What has happened in the U.S.S.R., is taking place throughout the world. The contradictions of capitalist society are being solved by the establishment of State Absolutism. This explains why every country on the globe is in a lesser or greater degree strengthening the power of the state at the expense of the workers. The capitalist system is being absorbed into the ever growing orbit of the state. The normal functions of society are becoming state functions. This is the situation which the working class will be faced with in the post-war period. All movements designed to build the new social order will have to take this fact into consideration. The socialist movement therefore, will have to redefine socialism in the light of the tragic debacles of the past. This question will be dealt with in future issues.*

—Ivan

THE DEAN OF CANT

Whenever some padre or sky pilot declares himself champion of the workers' lot, beware, fellow worker, beware!

Once in 1905 a Russian padre by the name of Gapon asked the workers of Petersburg to follow him to the gates of the Czar's palace where bread and caramels would be handed out by the Czar himself. Sheep-like the workers of Petersburg followed the father only to be met with a hail of bullets.

Here is the story of another character who turned his collar aft, his pantaloons forward, donned a black capote, and started out to misrepresent the good name of a Jewish carpenter, a rebel who was nailed to the cross by Gauleiter Pilates by order of a Roman Fuehrer. This padre was appointed Dean of Canterbury Cathedral not so long ago by his majesty, the King of England, George VI himself. In 1935 the good Dean paid a visit to another padre, one Charles E. Coughlin. Coughlin, now on the payroll of Hitler's Jewbaiting racket, was at that time in the silver racket. The papers, reporting the event, quoted the now high and mighty Dean of Canterbury, the very most Rev. Havelet Johnson, praising Father Coughlin as being 99% right. And this is the very same man who has lately made a fortune peddling his book **The Soviet Power**, the book that Park Avenue proletarians consider the most enlightening book on a wonderful country, Soviet Russia, and its great leader, Stalin. Padre Johnson says:

"We profess Christianity, but in Russia they practice it." I wonder how the padre would like to taste the Christianity that a worker in a Russian shoe factory gets when he demands the same living conditions and wages the commisars are used to. I wonder how he would like to receive some of the Christianity practiced by the G.P.U. inside of the Lubianka: Christianity via the firing squad.

—L. L.

SPANISH CHRONICLE

CIPRIANO MERA

Cipriano Mera, well known militant of the anti-fascist militia, and former brick-layer of Madrid, has been sent back to Spain and shot. The collaboration between Franco and Vichy, and the pressure put on the Sultan of Morocco was sufficient.

Mera, sick with a lung disease, could have sailed on a Portuguese steamer and escaped this fate had he been willing to forsake his companions.

A demonstration in Mexico, prepared by the Libertarian and Marxist forces, to protest the persecution and assassination of Mera, will soon be held.

THE APOSTATES

Led by the ex-minister of Justice in Spain, J. Garcia Oliver, and a group of renegades—libertarians yesterday, today, aspirants for political power, are now working on the constitution of a new political party, to be known as The Workers' Labor Party.

Do these amateur politicians expect to do better than the professional one who are responsible for the plight in which the workers of the world find themselves? The position of the C.N.T. (now in exile) is definitely opposed to this movement.

We reprint here the last official statement of the C.N.T.:

"The C.N.T. has learned from experience. It intends to remain an independent labor movement, to chart its own course at all times. Such a movement must be free of all political domination. A labor movement permeated with a revolutionary and federalist spirit, the soul of modern syndicalism, needs no self-appointed political saviours.

THE FIGHT GOES ON

The third anniversary of the "defeat" of the Loyalists is being celebrated by the Franco fascists. The following shows that their "victory" is far from complete.

From "Faro De Vigo," a Falangist fascist newspaper, dated October 28, 1941, we quote as follows:

"Santander, October 27, 1941—
This afternoon the civil guards have performed a paramount service; a continuation of the raid carried out last week in Ceceiras, where the troopers shot to death the red "bandits," Nemesio and Rafael Arce, known as "El Nemesio" and "El Ferroviario."

"The first Commandant in Chief, Pablo Gonzales Anguiano was informed that in the house at 26 Santa Lucia Street, was hidden the leader of the "bandits," Jose Lavin Cobo, known as "El Carinoso," and ordered his capture. The civil guards forced him from the house, and in the shooting which ensued, the bandit was killed. A sergeant of the guards was seriously wounded, and another slightly injured.

"With the killing of this "bandit," and also of the other two by the "Benemenita" (honorable) civil guards, The Province of Santander, the field of their activities, can rest in perfect tranquility forever."

El Carinoso

Evidence shows that the Spanish anti-fascists are still fighting the Franco government, the fascist regime which the democracies made possible. There is no confirmation from the Spanish workers themselves that the leader of the guerilla fighter of the mountain is dead. He is called, very affectionately, El Carinoso (a friend of the poor).

This news has been announced by the fascist press several times to demonstrate the "efficiency" existing in the Franco paradise. Who is the Carinoso? Carinoso refers to two workers from Santander who are noted for their courage in the defense of workers' rights. One is a native of the picturesque town of Solares. The other is a dock-worker. Both are strong men, possessing dynamic personalities. Both were militiamen, (part of the freely-organized Loyalists fighting Franco). Trapped when Santander and North Spain fell under the domination of perfidious Franco, they retired to the mountains, there, to fight to the death. Which is El Carinoso?—but what does that matter?

The Seven Hundred

The story of the struggles of these two courageous fighters is truly inspiring. It is sufficient, since space forbids, that in the mountains of Cantabrica, seven hundred well-equipped men continue battling the Franco regime.

In order to exterminate the guerilla fighters, every means is being used. Bribery, the persecution of their families, etc. The fascists have launched an offensive with an entire division plus mercenary troops from Africa, Legionaires, and Civil Guards. They designated as a war zone the area close to the mountain where the guerilla fighters had entrenched themselves. They evacuated all those who live near the war zone. Yet

the brave fighters remain unconquered. Fascists who go into the stronghold of the guerilla "bandits" never return. Because the mountains are honey-combed with intricate caves and grottos. It is easy to get in, but almost impossible to get out.

The history of Spain is replete with colorful exploits of famous "bandits" who have taken from the rich to help the victims of persecution. These exploits have occurred (with variations of time and place) throughout the history of the people of the Iberian Peninsula. True to this custom, the "bandits" have come to the plains to avenge crimes and punish betrayers. One of their feats was to go to a well known fascist "Falange," and take the arms and ammunition stored in his house. In this case, the fascist who was characteristically enough, a butcher, thereafter no longer displayed his pro-fascist sympathies.

Now, let us interpret it correctly, and let us be "Carinosos"—sympathetic and lovable as such is its meaning. Humanity is in sad need of great and profound Carinoso.

TO THE READERS

With this issue, the very limited funds at our disposal are almost exhausted.

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