

World Socialism

WHAT NEXT IN SPAIN?

By HERBERT ZAM

REPUBLICANISM cannot solve the Spanish problem. This is made evident every day by tremendous unrest among the workers and peasants, the general strike against fascism in Madrid and other places, the seizure of land by the peasantry and the growing gap between liberal republicanism as represented by Azana and the organized workers led by the Socialist Party and the trade unions.

When Azana became premier, some people thought that the road had been opened to a long period of "peaceful" development in Spain on a bourgeois republican basis. In truth, however, the Azana government was only a stopgap, set up because of the even balance in the relation of forces between the proletarian revolutionary elements and the liberal bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

The present efforts of the Azana government to develop a permanent basis for power inevitably drives it to the right and leads to the sharpening of the struggle between Republicanism and Socialism. It is therefore not accidental that the press reports on Azana's last speech in the Cortes: "He was applauded by the right, but the Socialists were demonstratively silent."

This breach has become almost unbridgeable since Azana postponed the municipal elections, which were to have been held April 12. It was the reactionaries who had demanded this postponement.

It was clear that after the parliamentary victory, with the revolutionary energy of the masses unleashed, an even greater victory would be scored in the municipal elections. It was further clear that the Azana party, which had profited most by the "peoples' front" electoral bloc because the proletarian forces had underestimated their own power, would not emerge so strong from the municipal elections. Thus present developments point to a rapid break of the "peoples' front" and a rapprochement between Azana and the reactionaries around Gil Robles.

Azana Forced To the Right

This, of course, is not a surprising development. The Spanish revolution started out as a bourgeois revolution, and attained its first objective in the setting up of the bourgeois republic. But under present circumstances, when decaying and declining capitalism makes it impossible for the bourgeoisie to play a progressive role, even as against feudal remnants, while the sharp economic crisis, which causes the main anger of the workers to be directed not against the feudalists, but against the capitalists, any permanent or durable alliance between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is out of the question, except with the proletariat as the servant of the bourgeoisie.

The latter is what Azana wants, and the failure of the proletariat to bow to Azana drives him into the arms of Gil Robles. This is also clear to the reactionaries, who have begun to woo Azana assiduously. A very keen capitalist reporter as early as Feb. 29 sent a dispatch to his Chicago paper as the first of a series. The rest were never printed, because undoubtedly they were too "hot." In this article, the reporter interviews a Catholic priest, a man of influence in reactionary circles, and quotes him as follows:

"Wait a few weeks and you will see. Azana will have to take sides with us against the Red Mob. His troubles are going to come from the left,

not the right. We have always opposed him because he is against the church, but this time he has got off to a good start and we see that we are going to have to count on him for protection, just as he is going to find that he is going to have to count on us for support."

This estimate has proven entirely correct in the few weeks since it was made. The Spanish revolution, as a bourgeois revolution, had the support of at least the liberal capitalists. Now that it threatens to follow the historic road of transformation into a proletarian revolution, the liberal capitalists become reactionary and turn against it.

No Partial Revolutions

But while historically the process of transformation of bourgeois into proletarian revolution has already begun, it still lacks one of the essential elements for even initial success—a revolutionary party that can place itself at the head of the masses and lead them to successful struggle. The Socialist Party is today really two parties. One, led by Prieto and Besteiro, is satisfied with the bourgeois republic, conceives of the proletariat as a "constructive opposition" in a long process of capitalist development, wants a permanent alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie and is opposed to any extra-parliamentary actions.

The other, led by Caballero, Bueno and other revolutionists, looks upon the present as only the initial stage of the revolution and desires to proceed to the struggle for the Socialist Republic. But while this tendency has an obvious majority of the Socialists in the country, it is not yet free to act independently. This situation will undoubtedly be clarified at the Congress of the Party, to be held in June,—in Asturias, very appropriately. Something of what the revolutionary Socialists have in mind was indicated by the reporter referred to above:

"Unless they are outwitted and outmaneuvered, the Marxists are not going to waste ammunition on any more partial revolutions. They are going to hold their fire until they are reasonably sure of achieving their aim in one big push—Bolshevism in Spain."

And that they have no illusions either about the role of the capitalists or about the means to be used was indicated by a question the reporter asked a leading Socialist:

"Do you hope to achieve this revolution of yours without violence —?"

And in the words of the reporter:

"The only answer was a contemptuous snarl . . ."

No Illusions On Communists

Nor do the revolutionary Socialists have many illusions about the new line of the communists. They are in a united front with the communists, as well as with the syndicalists and other working class groups, because they realize the value of unity, even with smaller groups, in awakening the class consciousness and will to struggle of the masses. But they do not intend to be diverted from their main goal by



Consumers'

By BENJAMIN

How the Cooperative

(In response to numerous requests for history and principles of consumers after carry from time to time such this material be clipped and saved with a fairly extensive survey of Socialist viewpoint. At the same time any questions put to me concerning

When the cooperative movement began it did not know where it was going. It did not know that it would develop into a consumers cooperative movement. Nor that the consumers cooperative movement could be a powerful weapon for revolutionary working class activity.

The cooperative movement was a by-product of the paradise 28 weavers of Rochdale, England, planned for themselves back in 1844. They set themselves six major objectives when they drew up their charter of association. All six failed of realization. One project, however, in refusing to travel the road planned for it, because it contained a fundamentally sound idea, developed into the consumers cooperative movement we know today.

1844 Bleak Year

1844 was a bleak year for the weavers. Records of that year reveal that one-fifth of the families of Rochdale slept without blankets. This is significant be-

the fetish of an all-inclusive and permanent "peoples' front."

This is indicated by the reply of the Socialist to a question by the reporter on the difference between Socialists and communists in Spain:

"There isn't any," was the answer, "except that we think with our own brains and the communists think with the brains of Moscow. We are intransigent and the communists have become opportunists. They subordinate the interests of the world revolution to the interests of Russian foreign policy, and if it served the interests of Russia they would ally themselves with the bourgeois parties, whereas we remain revolutionaries."

This may not be an accurate description of the new communist line, but it should serve to illuminate one of the questions that so many people have in their minds: Will the Spanish revolutionary Socialists remain satisfied with the accomplishments of the "peoples' front" or will they continue marching onward toward the proletarian revolution?

Whether or not, Caballero will become the Lenin of Spain is unimportant. What is important is that there is a powerful movement in Spain which is determined that Spain shall become the second workers' republic in the world.