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Dear Comrade,

2 weeks ago

Your letter of violent vituperation reached me soon enough. I did not reply sooner, firstly because I was taken up with a big venture for Spain, and secondly, I did not wish to write under the impression of your attack - I might have said some unkind things, and I certainly do not want to be guilty of that, where you are concerned. So I waited until I would be rested a bit from the strenuous efforts I had to make in organising a Concert which I undertook three months ago, and which only took place ~~last Sunday~~. It was successful in a musical sense, but that would not appeal to you very much, I am afraid. I still remember when you "chaperoned" me to a Concert, though you yourself disliked the music. Financially, the affair will not bring half of what I had expected. Still, in view of English conditions and the fact that we have no movement to speak of, £200 or more are not to be deprecated. But, as I said, the result is in no way to be compared with the terrific amount of labour and anxiety put into the venture.

I confess, I do not know where to begin to answer your letter. One thing is certain: I never thought you capable of such an outbreak and such intolerance. For a man who has always stood up for the utmost liberty, even to the extent of being impatient with organisational work, your letter is certainly the most intolerant outbreak I have read in a long while. Now, mind you, I agree with you that the comrades in Holland to continue to be pacifist in the face of the grave dangers from the Fascist pest is, to say the least of it, childish, so is the criticism of some of the comrades in Toronto of the things the CNT - FAI are doing. First let me set you right about Toronto, those who denounced the entry of comrades into the Government were not Anarchists at all. Actually, the comrades we have got in Toronto are heart and soul with the Revolution in Spain and have demonstrated their solidarity in a number of ways; You are therefore doing them an injustice in lumping them together with a lot of outsiders who never were in our ranks. But even they should be granted the right to question the consistency of Anarchists who have repudiated Governments all their lives now being in the same Councils with the Government.

As to the comrades in Holland, they surely are entitled to the right of criticism; they are people who have carried on anti-military work for nearly half a century. They are the direct descendants of Domela Nieuwenhuis's anti-military work. They are fanatically sincere and they have proven themselves of sterling quality and courage not only in speech or press, but also by many of them going to prison again and again rather than to join the army. I must protest, therefore, against your condemnation of these people, though I myself am opposed to their attitude as regards Spain. Certainly they do not deserve the "nice" names you give them.

9/1/37.



As regards your impatience with me - to call it mildly - I can only explain it by your complete reversal of mind and feeling. It is not so very long ago - not more than a few years - when you showed no understanding or sympathy with Syndicalism, when you thought it more advisable for Anarchists to ally themselves with Liberal Democratic elements rather than to busy themselves with bringing to life large economic organisations. Now you have no patience whatever with comrades who refuse to see in the leading Anarchists in Spain demigods whose actions are not to be questioned. Don't you consider this rather a plunge from your former attitude? Your former position regarding all Governments and their danger?

As to your "kindly" tribute to me for my "heinous" offense in my statement that appeared in the "Fr. Arb.St." and "Spain and The World", really, dear Comrade, you seem to have become a regular heresy-hunter, for no one else among the hundreds of comrades and friends who have read the statement have complained of a single infraction of loyalty on my part. Far from criticising the CNT-PAI in my statement, I go out of my way to explain them to the comrades who had asked for light on what seemed to them a breach of principle and rather a useless compromise. I was astounded, therefore, to find that you charge me with "lèse-majesté".

Granted that I were guilty of that, I should consider it a sad day for the Spanish Anarchists if their comrades no longer had the right to express their opinions frankly and honestly. I am quite certain that the comrades in Spain would repudiate such a thing, and I do not think you are rendering them very great service by putting yourself up as "judge and executioner" of everyone who does not happen to approve of every step and decision taken by prominent members of the CNT-PAI. How does that compare with your condemnation of the Bolsheviks and their dictatorship? You could not make peace with them, yet you seem to be anxious to put a ray in everybody's mouth - is that not dictatorship?

Moreover, even if my article had contained criticism or condemnation, you as the ultra-libertarian in our movement should not attack me as you have done; but I insist that unless you have become super-sensitive in regard to the least disagreement with some of our Spanish comrades, you could not possibly have found anything objectionable on my part. As I just wrote Alexander Shapiro, I am the unfortunate orphan who was condemned for what she did and condemned for what she did not. He has attacked me for going back on my Anarchist ideas, because I am not critical of the compromise in the CNT, and you attack me because I appear to have been critical. Fortunately, I have never been able to be "all things to all men". I have gone my own way, though often condemned and burnt in oil by my own comrades, and I mean to continue to my last breath to uphold what I consider right and to attack what seems to me to be wrong, which does not mean to say that I consider myself infallible, but it does mean that, in order to be true to myself, I must decide my own actions and reactions for myself.

Now, while I am heart-and-soul with the struggle of the Spanish comrades, and while I have done my utmost to plead their cause for which I would cheerfully give my life, I must insist that they are vulnerable: they have made terrible mistakes which are already bearing fruit. I hold Federica Montseny, Garcia Oliver and several others of the leading comrades responsible for the gains made by the Communists and for the danger now threatening the Spanish Revolution and the CNT-PAI. My very first interviews with these two comrades have shown me that they are on the "border-line" of Reformism. I had never met Oliver before,

but I had met Federica in 1925. The change since the Revolution swept her forward to the highest top-notch as leader was only too apparent. I was strengthened in that impression every time I talked to her about the compromise she and the others had made. It was too obvious to me that these comrades are working into the hands of the Soviet Government. That in showing their gratitude to Stalin and his régime (though why they needed gratitude in addition to the gold Stalin received for whatever he gave in arms I do not know) dire results were sure to follow. Incidentally, it also meant the betrayal of our comrades in the concentration camps and prisons in Russia. I never saw a greater breach of faith with Anarchist principles than the joint "love-feast" of the CNT-FAI with the Russian satraps in Barcelona. It was a sight for the gods to see Garcia Oliver and the Russian Consul competing with each other in the ~~same~~ glowing tributes to the Soviet Government, or the eulogies that appeared daily in the "Solidaridad Obrera". Not a word did the paper, or Oliver, or Federica have to say about the Russian people, about the fact that the Russian Revolution has been castrated and that Stalin's henchmen are responsible for tens of thousands of lives. It was a disgraceful affair - unnecessary and humiliating! I have not written about this to anyone, dear Comrade, although I felt indignation and could have cried out my contempt of the so-called leaders in the CNT-FAI.

Granted that to save the Anti-Fascist situation arms from Russia were needed, but why was it necessary to make it more than a business deal, for which Spain paid heavily in gold and the CNT paid in the loss of much of its position and its strength? Surely, no one with any clear vision could be blinded to the motive of Russia's "sudden" interest, after three-and-a-half months of the Anti-Fascist struggle in Spain. Now the real motive is beginning to be recognized by the very people who sang hosannah to comrade Stalin; it was for no other reason than to get possession of Madrid and, if possible, to increase the armed Communist forces in the rest of Spain, in anticipation of the "happy" moment when the Anarchists can be exterminated, as they have been in Russia. By right, I should have given this to the public; I should have written about all this. My silence was ~~not~~ a measure ~~of~~ consent of the betrayal of the comrades in Russia. I readily admit that. I did not do it because I did not have the heart to expose Federica and the others in our press outside of Spain. Yet, you come along and throw brimstone and fire on my head because I dared, if you please, to explain some of the blunders of the leading members of the CNT-FAI in my statement. I consider it very unkind, to say the least of it.

You ~~me~~ assume, dear Comrade, that I knew nothing about the Spanish movement before I came to Spain. What do you base this assumption on? You seem to forget that we had a very strong Spanish movement in America for many years, that I was connected with "Cultura Proletariat" all through the years, ~~when~~ Pedro Esteve was editor, that I have read nearly everything you and Ricker have written about Spain. Not only that, but I have always held the Spanish Anarchists to be a shining example of consistency, courage and fortitude. Actually, if I had not always believed in them implicitly, I should have left Spain after that disgraceful pact between Russia and the leaders of the CNT-FAI, and certainly should not have raised a finger in their aid or support. It was precisely because of my abiding faith in the Revolutionary resiliency of the Spanish Anarchists, and the certainty that they will wake up soon to the danger of their compromise that gave me courage to go out and work as I have worked in England since I returned here. I do not think, therefore, that I deserve your censure.

9/7/7.



However, that is not the important thing - what is of utmost importance is that our comrades in Spain have had their eyes opened; that they now see the danger lurking in every corner from the Marxists, and that they are coming out openly in their papers and Bulletins, calling the necessary alarm. The Jesuits of the Stalin brand are hard at work preparing all kinds of pitfalls for the comrades; they are hard at work in every country. In England they spread the rumour that Catalonia is sabotaging Madrid. They even succeeded in influencing the "M.Guardian"; as you will see by my letter of protest published in the "M.G." of April 24. In fact, their sudden discovery of Democracy as a beautiful bride is nothing else but the deliberate intention of the Soviet Government to destroy the Revolution in Spain, and and they are losing no time to achieve this. I would not be surprised if Caballero and the Communists were to make a separate peace with Franco, provided the latter would assure them of safety of their own miserable hides. All that should never have been given a chance to raise its head. It was done, unfortunately, through the compromise of the comrades of the CNT-PAI.

Do not lose any sleepless nights, dear Comrade. I am not writing this to others, and I would not have written about it to you had you not delivered yourself of such a ferocious attack on my poor innocent head.

I have asked you once before to write me exactly what you mean about all of us having "frittered away our Libertarian ideas" and not having done enough to make Kropotkin and Bakunin known? I hope you will explain it next time you write. To me it is sheer nonsense, but speaking only for A.B. and myself, I can only say that all our years were devoted to the presentation of the ideas and writings of both Kropotkin and Bakunin. If we did less ~~of~~ Bakunin's works, it is only because we did not have them in English and our work was mainly in Anglo-Saxon countries, but to say that we have not done our share in popularising our teachers' works, is to be guilty of lack of understanding and appreciation of our activities.

Well,

~~which~~ I am afraid we will probably not come to any understanding. You seem to feel about Federica and the Urales family as a mother does about her "chicks". nobody must touch them even remotely. I myself have admired them for years; I admire her brilliant oratorical abilities, but I can say that she has feet of clay, and I can see no reason why it should not be admitted. She has ~~gone~~ gone terribly to the right, and wearing a revolver in the belt does not make it any more left. However, I am certain that the comrades, when they come to see that politicians, whether in pants or skirts, whether Anarchists or Socialists, must be watched. They will go from the fundamental principles as they always have in the past.

As the International Anarchist Conference has been postponed until July, I am remaining here until the end of this month. I must go back to give a report of my achievements here, and also to suggest some new methods by which our campaign can be developed to spread out so as to reach greater numbers.

Fraternally and affectionately,
(in spite of our disagreements).

I hope you are
would over the stand
at Barcelona
Beck Submission

to Chabela's command. No
protest from them against
the paid murder of Bernier
by the Communists - Bernier
one of the dearest minds in
our ranks, and one
of the bravest fighters in
the anti-Fascist struggle
in the Revolution
of 1936. His death
our comrades will meet
with the loss of the best
and most devoted worker
the politicians in our
ranks. It is heart breaking
C. G.