

File

S · I · A

SOLIDARIDAD INTERNACIONAL ANTIFASCISTA (International Anti-Fascist Solidarity)

Sponsors—

Mr. THOMAS BURKE
Dr. STELLA CHURCHILL
Mr. HAVELOCK ELLIS
Mr. LOUIS GOLDING
Miss SIDONIE GOOSSENS
Mr. LAURENCE HOUSMAN
Mr. BRIAN HOWARD
Mr. C. E. M. JOAD

Mr. MILES MALLESON
Mr. GEORGE ORWELL
Dr. C. V. PEARSON
Mr. JOHN COWPER POWYS
Mr. LEWELYN POWYS
Mr. HERBERT READ
Mr. REGINALD REYNOLDS
Miss REBECCA WEST

Rev. JAMES WHITTLE

ETHEL MANNIN
Hon. Treasurer
EMMA GOLDMAN
Hon. Secretary

London Office:

21 FRITH STREET
SHAFTESBURY AVENUE
LONDON, W.1

Telephone: GERard 868

3rd February, 1939.

Dear George,

I have your letter of January 5th. I confess I cannot make head or tail of the motive which prompted Angelica to proceed against you. As I have written you in my last letter, it is so unlike her to want to "punish" anyone or go to Court, that if it were not you who wrote me about it I simply should not believe it. I should consider it downright libel against poor Angelica who has always been so pathetic to me in her unworldliness and her practical inexperience. I admit the events of the last twenty years and especially the many disappointments Angelica has already had with her erstwhile pupil Mussolini and her erstwhile Communist party is quite enough to change anybody. Nevertheless I still feel that she was either influenced by her lawyer or by other people to go through with the trials and other such ghastly things. I have written her this week. I don't know how much influence my letter will have. I have told her that I do not consider you capable of anything underhand or mean and that I was surprised that she who had always impressed me as one of the last Mohicans among Russian idealists, should have gone to Court to have you prosecuted.

You will not ~~xxxxxxx~~ take it in bad faith when I tell you that the whole matter seems piffling to me in the face of the horrors to which nearly a million people are exposed who have evacuated from Barcelona. That puts everything else in the background for me, anyway. I have not been able to think of anyone or anything else. I am haunted day and night by the modern Dantesque spectre of the unfortunate refugees and the utter indifference of the international proletariat.

You tell me you and your wife have been active for Spain. I am glad of that. Certainly food is desperately needed more now than before, not only for women and children but also for hundreds and thousands of men, but all that is not going to save them from Franco's victory. Nothing but direct economic action

on the part of the masses will compel the Governments of the so-called democracies to lift the damnable Non-Intervention Pact. Even at this 11th hour the workers and peasants of Spain could win. Without it they will be subdued and exterminated. Another thing is the fair play and justice practised by the various Spain Relief Societies in America. If these are absent there as they are here, then the C.N.T., the F.A.I., the Libertarian Youth and the S.I.A. will have gotten nothing from your activities and that of all the others. In England the numerous Spain Relief and Medical Aid Societies are entirely directed and guarded by the Communists and they have practised the most outrageous discrimination ever since the anti-Fascist battle began. I know whereof I speak because on each visit to Spain, which means 1936, 1937 and three months ago, I have made it my business to make a thorough investigation with this result- that of all the money collected in the United States and in Great Britain not ~~xxxxxxx~~ one solitary penny went to the millions who represented the C.N.T., the F.A.I., the Libertarian Youth and International Anti-Fascist Solidarity. As late as two weeks ago I received a letter from Mariano R. Vazquez, the General Secretary of the International Confederation of Labour, ~~xxxxx~~ and a letter of the Secretary of the Ironworkers' Syndicate, addressed to the Ironworkers' Federation in Great Britain, with a thousand names attached of their members who had received no aid whatever although they had been starving with the rest of the civil population, begging that something should be done to send these people food parcels. That is unfortunately too late now since there is no saying how many of these thousand workers are still alive, or who succeeded in evacuating. I ask you, has there ever been a ~~xxxxxxxx~~ more outrageous discrimination than this damnable attitude to everybody who does not swear to every word that emanates from the mouth of Stalin.

Whether you know it or not, the Communists have played a most disastrous part in the struggle of the Spanish people. On my last visit I succeeded in taking out enough documentary evidence of the open and secret sabotage and treachery that will damn Stalin's adherents in the eyes of the whole world once it becomes known. This is of course not the time to give it publicity, but I am only telling it to you that you may know that your well-intentioned help which you and your wife have given to Spanish relief has certainly never reached any of the two million and a half members of the Anarcho- and Anarchist Organisations. Incidentally it is also the new foreign policy of Stalin which has sanctified the Non-Intervention Pact and which has denied the Republican Government (not that I hold any brief for it) the necessary arms to defend itself against Franco, his backers and international imperialism. Some day we may be able to meet and thrash this out, for the present you will not blame me for my bitterness against the Moscow gang that has helped to destroy a most magnificent beginning started by the Spanish people through their constructive work.

[2/3/39]

3

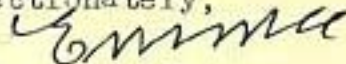
I see that the humanitarian President has suddenly become infatuated with the need of ~~xxxxxxxx~~ defending the democracies. What a farce it is. However, you know as I know, that the real motive is to give the merchants of death a chance to sell more arms that will hasten war. Certainly I loathe Hitler and Mussolini, but I be damned if I will permit their jingo-mongering to believe in their genuineness any more than I did in the world war. Already the same slogans are abroad, to save the world from Fascism, to destroy Hitler and so on and so forth. All these are nothing but empty shells. There is not a word of truth or honesty in these proclamations. Only if the German and Italian people would rise as the Spanish did would I consider an armed defence justifiable. Never, if the new war will be motivated by imperialist interests and imposed on the peoples by the Governments. One would have expected that most thinking people had learned their lessons from the last war and the so-called peace which came in its wake. Lo and behold, the very people who have gone through that ghastly experience are again being deceived. They have simply learned nothing whatever from the last conflagration. I wonder does anyone individual or mass, ever learn from experience?

I am sorry, my dear, that you do not see Gilbert more often. What an idea of permitting his wife to come between you and him. Surely you two should be big enough and I take it fond enough of each other not to permit such a breach. I really do feel sorry. By the way, do you know anything of Nunia. I have not heard from her since I was last in America, when she had already lost her hearing, was very unhappy and disgruntled. Let me know about her when you write again.

I am keeping in touch with American affairs. I know the reaction that has set in and the renewed witch hunting, so I do not entertain much hope of being readmitted to my erstwhile country, but I will sail for Canada anyway just as soon as my wonderful Spanish comrades have got their bearings back and have reorganised their forces.

Give my greetings to your wife.

Affectionately,



P.S. So far I have heard nothing from Hershes. If I were to go via France, I should look them up in Paris, but I don't intend. I must go the cheapest way possible, so it will have to be from some English port. If you have their address, send it to me.