

The Volunteer

JOURNAL OF THE VETERANS OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE

"...and that government of the people,
by the people, and for the people,
shall not perish from the earth."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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We Must Remember!

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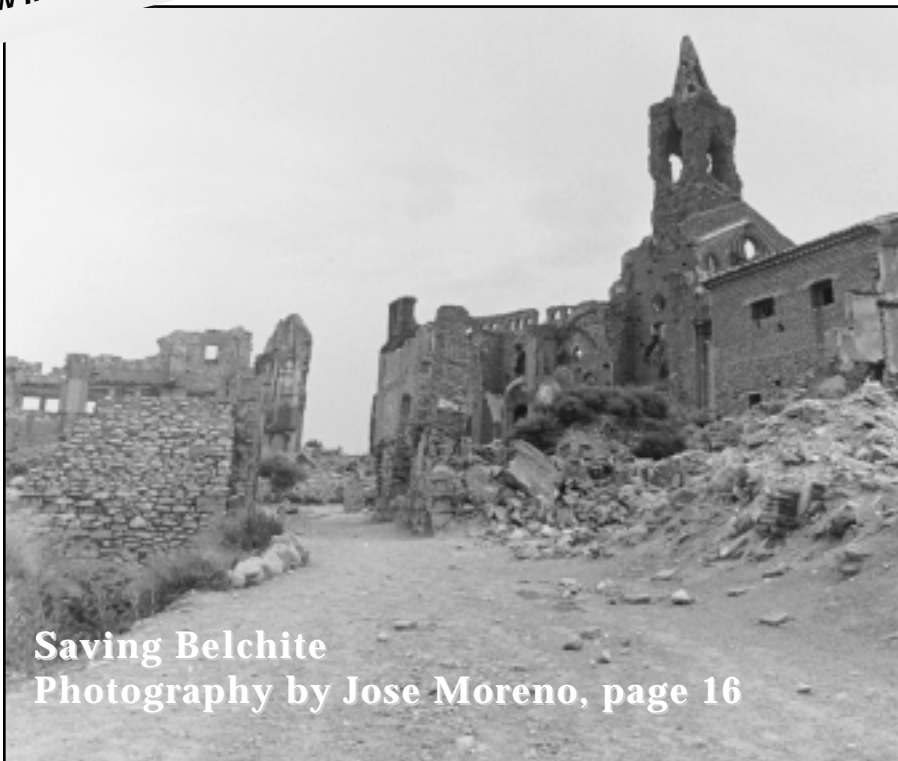
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Author Gina Herrmann poses with ex-Spanish soldier Emma Roca, photography by Sofia Moro Valentin-Gamazo



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Photography by Jose Moreno, page 16

VETERANS SUPPORT VIEQUES!

For many years, people in Puerto Rico have been fighting to end the U.S. Navy's use of the small island of Vieques as a bombing range. Since the death in April 1999 of civilian security guard Daniel Sanes-Rodriguez and the injury of four others by 500-pound bombs during target practice, a mass movement to stop the bombing has swept across Puerto Rico.

Local residents and supporters set up camps on the bombing ranges and have vowed to stay until the Navy pulls out. People from across the political spectrum have united for this cause, including statehood, commonwealth and independence parties, labor unions, student organizations, all religious groups, and even Puerto Rico's governor.

The continued bombing of Vieques has caused massive environmental and human damage. The 9300 residents have a 26% higher rate of cancer than the rest of Puerto Rico, the result of radioactive contamination from depleted uranium shells. The land and surrounding waters, as well as the economic livelihood of the local fisherman, has been severely damaged by the navy's five decades of destruction.

President Clinton recently announced cancellation of training exercises planned for December 1999. This is a significant victory, but his plan would continue the navy's bombing and occupation for 3-5 more years. The people of Vieques have made their position clear—"Not One More Bomb"—and have rejected Clinton's plan. They are determined to continue this struggle until they win:

Whereas it has been a long standing position of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade to oppose United States government's intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, it is hereby resolved that we ask our fellow veterans and friends to support the campaign of the Puerto Rican people to stop using Vieques as a bombing range for the U.S. Navy.

**NO MORE BOMBS!
PEACE FOR VIEQUES!
GET THE NAVY OUT
NOW!**

Letters to ALBA

Dear Editor,

A response to Milt Wolff.

I was so outraged by your letter that I waited to calm down before responding. There is a time and a place for "street" language. The Volunteer, which reaches many more than our limited membership, is not such. But your "colorful" language is not my main problem with your missive. It is your tone and attitude to comrades who differ with you, an attitude which I find arrogant, disdainful, and contemptuous. Are you not aware that many tried and tested fighters in the Good Fight could not agree on policy in the Serb-Kosovo conflict? For many the issues were not black or white, but rather a complex gray.

"What are we, followers of Mahatma Ghandi or antifascist soldados in the good fight," you say. Were not Martin Luther King and the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee our brothers in the fight for freedom and justice? Does not the choice come down to historical context?

You close with a call to action, "spraying the (Serb) homeland with a bit of reality." Shall we equip our wheelchairs with machine guns and teach those nasty Serbs a lesson? Come now, Milt, you have never lacked physical courage; wouldst it were matched by civility and wisdom.

Yours,
Abe Osheroff

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First International Forum on the International Brigades Held in Spain

By Robert Coale

In Getafe, Spain, once a working class area near Madrid that was bombed by fascist airplanes, a handful of war veterans and scholars gathered last November for a three-day conference that examined the international dimensions of the Spanish Civil War. Billed as the "First International Forum on the International Brigades held in Spain," the conference was organized by the "Asociacion de Amigos de las Brigadas Internacionales" and co-sponsored by the City Council of Getafe and the University of Carlos III.

The conference was a long-term goal of the "Amigos" and an integral part of their campaign to perpetuate the legacy of the Volunteers of the IBs. And the veterans in attendance clearly enjoyed the recognition they received as well as the opportunity to recount in detail their experiences during the war. Among the veterans who spoke were the Lincoln Brigade's Milton Wolff; Lise London of France, widow of Aurthur London and former secretary to Andre Marty in Albacete; Jules Paivio of Canada; Hans Landauer of Austria; Eugeniusz Szyr of Poland; Mihail Florescu of Rumania; Giovanni Pesce of Italy; David Goodman of England; and Michael O'Riordan of Ireland. Other countries that sent volunteers to Spain were represented by historians who reviewed their contributions to the antifascist fight, including Hungary, Holland, New Zealand, Canada, and Cuba.

In addition, a number of scholars from around the world helped to place the autobiographical dimensions of the commentary into a historical perspective.

The format of the program allowed for discussion of a wide variety of topics that ranged from Professor Enrique Moradiellos's "The European Powers and the Spanish Civil War" to Peter Carroll's "Social Origins of the Lincoln Brigade" and Fraser Ottanelli's "Radicalism and the Shaping of Ethnic



Identity: Italian-American Antifascist Volunteers." British veteran Dave Goodman presented a poignant piece about the British Battalion. [See page 7]

It was clear from the outset that this was not to be simply another conference on a tried and true subject. Two of the scholars who have carried out in-depth research in the so-called Moscow Archives gave summaries of their research. Professor and political analyst Antonio Elorza was very clear in his rebuttals of recent works on the Brigades which are of dubious historical value, such as "Las Brigadas Internacionales" by Cesar Vidal. Elorza pointed out the existing opposition of interpretations between the Spanish public's view, which is of great love and respect for the International Brigades, and that of certain historians who systematically insist on destroying their legacy. French historian Remi Skoutelsky was of the same mind; his conclusions on the role of the Comintern in the I.B. unequivocally dismiss the conservative view that the Brigades were merely the military arm of the Communist International.

Elisabeth Rodriguez reviewed recent accomplishments of the Cultural Center "Pablo de la Torre Brau," which takes its name from that of a fallen volunteer in Spain, in its endeavors to record the experiences of Cuban veterans. Excerpts of their interviews were

read and are of special interest to friends of the Lincolns insofar as many Cubans volunteered from the United States or served with the American units.

Other speakers presented additional aspects of the IB experience, making this congress the most complete ever. Among the topics covered were the press and propaganda services, the military performance, the Brigades in film documentaries, and the medical detachments and hospital services in addition slides taken from photographs found in the Spanish National Library Civil War Collection were shown.

The combining of veterans and historians on the panels proved fortunate and appropriate. As one veteran stated, "We can tell of our experiences and of what it was like to fight in the war because we were there. The historians, on the other hand, have a broader view through research. They can tell us the whys and the hows as well as give us their objective interpretations of events." For Mihail Florescu, one of five surviving Romanian veterans, the most heartening conclusion to come out of the weekend was the quality of new

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Robert Coale is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish at Washington College in Chestertown Maryland.

First International Forum

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research. "Historians are finally able to do archival research and to correct common misconceptions concerning the International Brigades, many of which were started by the Nazi and Fascist propaganda machines during the war itself," he said.

In addition to academic considerations, the fact that the conference was held in Spain provided the opportunity for several emotional reunions. Former IB commissar Santiago Alvarez posed with other veterans for a group

student cafeteria where Michael O'Riordan shared cognac with several lucky members of the "Amigos" and fellow "brigadistas" to celebrate his 82nd birthday which coincided with the Forum. The conversations between sessions were often so enjoyable that it was quite a job for the organizers to convince everyone to head back into the auditorium for the formal talks.

Several members of the Spanish media also came to interview and photograph veterans, which led to coverage of the event on two Madrid television stations.

Over the past few years there has

names in the early 1980s, many towns and cities still have streets named in remembrance of rebel generals, but no street yet honors the men and women who defended the legally elected government of the Spanish Republic from 1936 to 1939.

Despite this somewhat less than perfect state of affairs, there are groups of Spaniards who accept the challenge of what the French so poetically refer to as the "devoir de mémoire" or the "duty to remember." The military outcome of the war cannot be changed; however, efforts can recover the history of the conflict and remind people that the present day constitution of Spain has much more to do with the overthrown Republic of 1931 than with the Franco regime. The driving force behind the activity of the "Amigos" is to preserve and to propagate the legacy of the IB volunteers as the most inspiring example of international solidarity ever. It was not easy for the "Amigos" to set the wheels in motion, find the official sponsors and then follow through with organizing an international conference. However, the difficulties surmounted make the success even greater and lay the groundwork for future projects.

The stage is now set for another conference of this type. In his closing remarks to the conference, the lieutenant mayor of Getafe promised his support to sponsor another such gathering in the near future and to host the

Elorza pointed out the existing opposition of interpretations between the Spanish public's view, which is of great love and respect for the International Brigades, and that of certain historians who systematically insist on destroying their legacy.

picture. Pedro Mateo Merino, former lieutenant colonel commander of the 35th Division, to which the Lincoln Battalion belonged, was overjoyed to meet his once subordinate Milt Wolff, as well as other former members of the Fifteenth Brigade. Julia Tello Landeta was also excited to rub elbows with the "brigadistas" again. This feisty grey haired lady attended the sessions with great interest and participated enthusiastically in coffee break chats.

Historian and long-time Lincoln friend Gabriel Jackson who inaugurated the conference with his talk on "The Brigades as Spearhead of the Antifascist Movement" later stated that this human element was what made the congress so unique. The auditorium was not, however, the only place where exchanges took place. Informal discussions during coffee breaks and meals were at least as instructive as the official papers. After speaking to several veterans, another young Spaniard wondered aloud what went through the minds of the townspeople across La Mancha upon seeing the handsome, tall and energetic young men from around the world, arriving out of nowhere in the pre-television age. It was also in the

been a steady stream of commemorations that originated with the "Amigos" organization. Nevertheless, the importance of this congress may not be easily grasped by the non-Spanish observer. Despite recent recognition of the IBs in Spain, including Spanish citizenship voted in Parliament, the 1996 "Homenaje," the placing of a three-pointed star monument in Morata de Tajuña and the Barcelona "Despedida" celebration in 1998, the main trend in Spain today is

Once openly pro-Franco members of the Spanish middle class now admit that they were misled by the dictator.

to let sleeping dogs lay. Although the one-sided interpretations of the Civil War which prevailed during the 40 years of Franco rule have been corrected, academic conferences held to discuss the conflict from the republican side have been few.

Once openly pro-Franco members of the Spanish middle class now admit that they were misled by the dictator. However, there are still two equestrian statues of the "Caudillo" standing in Spanish cities (Santander and Madrid). While the main thoroughfares of Madrid regained their pre-war

"Amigos" large educational exhibit on the history and the legacy of the International Brigades. Thus, this First Forum on the International Brigades held in Spain did not simply bring veterans and historians together to remember and to present their research. But rather it has also created the foundation for continuing "Amigos" initiatives which will serve to spark the interest of Spaniards to rediscover part of their past as well as to conserve an international legacy. ▀

Into the Heart of the Fire: Communism and the International Brigades

An Essay Review by Cary Nelson

James K. Hopkins, *Into the Heart of the Fire: The British in the Spanish Civil War* (Stanford University Press, 1998 474pp.)

The fall of the Soviet Union has had multiple and rather contradictory effects on our ability to reflect on both the Spanish Civil War in particular and the 1930s in general. On the one hand, the removal of a perceived political and military threat in the 1990s has enabled some observers to see 1930s communism as a more varied and differentiated, less monolithic, phenomenon. Some have thus been able to understand that the communism in the heads of international volunteers in Spain was not the same as the communism growing increasingly more repressive under Stalin in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the cultural and political right has redoubled its efforts to keep its necessary enemy alive and well.

The opening of the vast International Brigades and Communist Party archives in Moscow has given ammunition to all sides. Some have used the IB archives to show that there was genuine give-and-take between Albacete and the Comintern, that people on the ground in Spain resisted Comintern directives when they were unrealistic and counterproductive. Others, notably Harvey Klehr in a series of published and forthcoming Yale University Press volumes, have searched for the most incendiary documents, taken them out of context, and issued them for contemporary political effect. The archives, as James Hopkins notes, present substantial challenges to researchers. The execution order issued by one office may be countermanded by another document in an entirely different file. Publishing the first document without searching for the

second makes for a misleading and scandalizing form of historiography. Yet a series of such volumes are now on the horizon. We have a forecast of what to expect in Ronald Radosh's detailed interview about the Spanish Civil War in a 1999 issue of *Lingua Franca*.

Five years from now—when Radosh's predictably speculative and malicious Spanish Civil War treatise is in print and has received the wide coverage it is guaranteed in both the liberal and conservative press; when Cecil Eby has updated *The Bullet and the Lie* with uncorroborated "evidence" from the International Brigades Archives in Moscow; and when Harvey Klehr has put in print his selective dossier of damning IB documents—then James K. Hopkins' *Into the Fire: The British in the Spanish Civil War* may well seem the only thoughtful and partly sympathetic book among all the revisionist accounts of the last great cause. Certainly by then the mild apostasy sprinkled through Peter Carroll's thoughtful and well-researched *The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (Stanford, 1994), apostasy that nonetheless enraged some of the American vets, will be almost unrecognizable. By then



British volunteers head to the front

those in whom the memory of Spain survives will have to take their friends where they can find them.

Before that time comes we would be better off confronting the questions Hopkins raises in his beautifully written, consistently thoughtful, and sometimes anguished book. We should do so not only because Spain and all it stood for deserve our most penetrating self-critique but also because the Spanish Civil War is a unique locus for some of the fundamental questions of modern life: Does individual moral and political agency have any status amidst

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overwhelming historical forces? What constitutes malice or decency in the behavior of the modern nation state? Can individual action within a political movement achieve relatively independent status? Was communism a unitary phenomenon? What are the limits of any plausible authenticity in the modern democracies? Can we separate good from evil in the history of our century? Can we ever know the truth of history?

There is no better furnace within which to burn among these questions than, say, the furnace of Brunete. Or you may ask such questions, as Hopkins sometimes does, as you contemplate climbing Hill 481 under fire in the summer of 1938. Because so many men and

book—the most thorough and persuasive account of 1930s working-class British life we have ever had. We learn what books members of the British working-class read and how they came to read them. We learn how street corner orators from Edinburgh to Manchester to London galvanized audiences and provided a political education for thousands of Britons. We learn how workers' educational institutions "enabled the unemployed, particularly, to rediscover their sense of self-worth and to regain a measure of moral and intellectual control of their lives." And we learn, finally, how organic intellectuals emerged from the working-class to lead it.

Woven into these accounts of cultural life in England, Scotland, and Wales is testimony from British volunteers about how all these forces helped shaped their lives and led them to join

Popular Front when they set about suppressing the POUM in the spring of 1937. For Hopkins, however, the more relevant crime is the importation of Stalinist culture into the International Brigades itself. For Hopkins believes an atmosphere of suspicion, paranoia, surveillance, and personal betrayal largely destroyed the alternative social life and political culture the British battalion was constructing in Spain.

His account of that culture is inspiring and a major addition to our understanding of the war. His account of international communism's role in its destruction, however, relies on an interpretation of the evidence that is very much open to debate. Hopkins weaves together the postwar testimony of disaffected volunteers with newly available documents from the IB archives. Two major sources of evidence are the brief wartime personal evaluations that accumulated in volunteer's IB personnel files and the more orderly and detailed evaluations made as the volunteers were about to leave Spain

My own work with these documents has focused on the American, rather than the British, volunteers. I have looked into the careers of volunteers who received negative comments during the war and interviewed some of the men who wrote the evaluations. Often enough these were hasty comments written in battlefield conditions. The language is often hyperbolic, the judgments frequently unsound. Often enough the accusations came to nothing. Hopkins also reads backward from the more detailed eve-of-departure evaluations to establish his claim for a repressive surveillance culture in the IB. But these tough—and in my view often sound—evaluations of volunteer strengths, weaknesses, and political reliability were written for stateside consumption. They were designed as indications of reliability for postwar assignments, assignments where loyalty to the party was a clear priority and mattered in a way it did not matter under fire in Spain. In fact the evaluations of American volunteers were gathered together in state groupings and delivered to party headquarters in

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The legacy of Spain is bound up with passions and deceptions that seem no less intense and convoluted than they were more than sixty years ago.

women broke with national policy to join the International Brigades or its medical services, Spain is a critical testing ground for thought about historical choice and political agency. Yet the legacy of Spain is bound up with passions and deceptions that seem no less intense and convoluted than they were more than sixty years ago.

Into the Heart of the Fire is constructed out of two passions, each deeply felt, each well researched: first, a respect for and understanding of the ordinary volunteer in Spain that surpasses affection to form something like the biographer's love for his subject; second, a studied and complex revulsion at the history of international communism. *Into the Heart of the Fire* is thus that most rare of books about Spain, an anticommunist book that honors the international volunteers and lovingly awards them their individuality. For Hopkins, communism made it possible for these men to go to Spain, first by giving them a way of articulating their warranted anger and their utopian hopes and second by creating the International Brigades; then communism betrayed them as it betrayed itself.

The first of Hopkins's passions drives him to give us—in the first half of his

the International Brigades. Their aim, Hopkins demonstrates, was not only to defend Spanish democracy and defeat fascism but also to help create a more egalitarian world. For the British volunteers in particular that new world came partly into existence in the early practices of their own battalion, for there class differences were bridged in several ways these men had never experienced before.

For the most part the British battalion was led by men of working-class backgrounds who were empowered by their dual understanding of injustice and its alternatives. They led with the gritty directness acquired in streets and workplaces back home, and they set a cultural and political standard to which middle-class volunteers had to adapt. Friendships were then formed across class lines, always more severe and powerfully symbolic in Britain than in the U.S., friendships like that between Clem Beckett and Christopher Caudwell, both killed when Moors overran their Jarama machine-gun post on February 12, 1937.

There is no doubt that the Soviet secret police (the NKVD) and the Spanish communist party together violated the political principles of the



By David Goodman

Over 2,100 men and women fought in the IB's British Battalion, of which 526 were killed. The British Battalion included English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, and Cypriot volunteers. The following remarks were presented at the Getafe conference by British veteran David Goodman who, at 84, lives in Staffordshire, England. An edited version follows.

I was born in 1915 of Jewish parents who came to England as refugees of Tsarism. That was around the turn of the century, the heyday of liberal England, and explains why their children were brought up as Liberals in Middlesbrough, Northeast England. Things began to change in the 1930s after Hitler came to power, threatening democracy and world peace, and with the Jews especially vulnerable. I was influenced by left-wing ideas and joined the Left Book Club. One of its choices, *Forward from Liberalism* by Stephen Spender, had a particular impact on me.

In 1937, as a committed socialist, I joined the Young Communist League, which was campaigning, as top priority, for "Aid to Spain." Within a year, together with another comrade, I volunteered to join the British Battalion. In January 1938, as part of a group, I left London for France en route to Spain, which we reached by a never-to-be-forgotten all night climb over the Pyrenees.

When I volunteered to fight in Spain the news was good, Teruel had fallen to the Republic. The good news was short lived. In January 1938, after a very short stay in Tarazona, where the British recruits trained, we were off to the front in a vain attempt to stop the Franco offensive, which had already retaken Teruel. The big retreat followed, which brought

Franco's forces to the coast, splitting the Republican territory in two. I was caught up in the ambush at Calaceite and taken prisoner, ending up as one

that virtually all of the British volunteers felt proud to have fought against fascism in Spain. One of them, Jason Gurney, told his story in a well known book, *Crusade in Spain*. He was a working sculptor at the outbreak of the war. An early volunteer, he went into action and was invalided home with a shattered right hand, his career as sculptor ended. He came home bitter and disillusioned and his book is oft quoted because it contains many critical comments. What is less often quoted is his conclusion: "Even at the moments of the greatest gloom and depression, I have never regretted that I took part in the Spanish Civil War - there was a clear choice for anyone who professed to be opposed to Fascism."

Then there is the strange case of Sir Alfred Sherman, a co-founder of a Conservative Party think-tank. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher rewarded him for his contribution to the cause

Remembering the British Battalion

of the 400 Internationals of many nationalities in San Pedro de Cardenas where I remained for 10 months. In February 1939 I returned home via a stay in San Sebastian prison as part of an exchange for German and Italian prisoners held by the Republic.

There are few surviving vets in Britain but the IB Association continues to be as active as possible. Its chairman, Dr. Len Crome, is 90, its secretary, Bill Alexander isn't far off. Fred Thomas is 88, and I'm a mere 84. We do have a splendid archive housed at the Marx Memorial Library. There are additional archives at the National Museum of Labour History in Manchester and the Working Class Movement Library in Salford. Additionally we have a Friends of the International Brigade Association which includes members of the families of vets. All of this means that the legacy of the British volunteers will live on after they have gone.

Diverse as they were before and after going to Spain, our experience is

of the Conservative Party with a knighthood. Alfred Sherman was a member of the British Battalion and I remember him as a fellow prisoner of Franco in San Pedro de Cardenas. Clearly, after his return to England there was a sharp change in his political direction. Yet he, too, is still proud to identify with the International Brigades. When we were appealing for funds for the London memorial erected in 1985, one of the vets, expecting a negative response, sent him a copy of the appeal and was very surprised to get back a contribution of £100. He has been known since then to turn up at our annual reunions.

The Independent Labour Party (ILP) sent a contingent of volunteers to Spain, but not to fight with the British Battalion. The ILP was the sister party in the UK of the POUM. Its leader was Fenner Brockway, later a Member of Parliament, still later a

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individual states.

Yet it is true that the political commissariat tracked morale in Spain with ferocious attentiveness. Censors were certainly asked to read correspondence with an eye to evaluating the mood of each battalion, and idle complaints were taken seriously when reported to political officers. There was of course some warrant for this. The volunteers were poorly fed and poorly armed; they frequently faced brutal and impossible odds. Casualty rates were sometimes overwhelming. These men could not do the things they were asked to do without both a deep love for their comrades and a passionate belief in the antifascist cause. Morale made a critical difference in Spain; the political commissars studied it carefully with good reason.

On the other hand the men also needed the freedom to complain and release tension. As in other armies, you had to learn which people you could talk to safely when complaining about the food or the leadership and which people you should avoid. Some volunteers routinely kept confidences; some ran to the political commissar to tell tales. Many volunteers have told me stories of this sort; yet I have met no one who recalls a culture of terror in the International Brigades. On the other hand, special care was necessary to avoid crossing André Marty at Albacete; his paranoia and dangerous irrationality was widely known. Yet Marty did not have free reign to pursue his paranoid agenda. The Spanish Republic's own army kept him partly in check.

After long thought, Hopkins has come to the conclusion that the Communist Party put a halt to the evolving culture of the British battalion. That conclusion leads him to trust the testimony of the more thoroughly disaffected volunteers. Yet the fact is that almost all veterans are arguing a clear point of view and overstating the case when they take up the more controversial issues in Spanish Civil War history. The local truths are often more mixed. Take the example of letters home. As in the modern American army, soldiers' letters were read and approved by cen-

sors before being mailed. That is a military necessity. Yet it also seemed an intolerable invasion of privacy and an unacceptable form of surveillance in a volunteer army.

Some soldiers as a result wrote no letters at all or wrote brief formulaic letters. Hopkins himself quotes Caudwell's letters home with admiration. Written early in the war before the full bureaucratic apparatus was in place, these letters Hopkins takes to express Caudwell's genuine feelings. Actually, volunteers occasionally avoided the censors by handing letters to correspondents or visitors to mail from Paris. Those who did write from Spain knew that there were subjects to avoid. Yet the 15,000 pages of letters home I have read include many that are richly

selflessness remains unsullied. On that point Hopkins would agree. And he identifies elements of their legacy that survive as well: "British workers had become actors on a world stage in a manner unprecedented in their history. And despite everything, they found 'a career open to talents' for the first time in their lives."

Hopkins is less convinced that antifascism retains its clarity: "Spain was indeed a battleground of totalitarianism—of the left as well as the right—and that cynics and idealists found lodging on both sides of the conflict." "They Died for Democracy and Us." Well intentioned, in certain respects true, but misleading and oversimplified, as myth is." Part of what Hopkins and other recent scholars

British workers had become actors on a world stage in a manner unprecedented in their history.

detailed and apparently deeply felt. To read the selection I edited with Jefferson Hendricks, *Madrid 1937*, and conclude otherwise is to suffer from a tin ear formed by an unrelenting anticommunist tinsmith.

But what about the larger issues in the war? That places us back amidst the century's debates about the nature of communism in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. Some have suggested Stalin used Spain to test the possibility of an antifascist alliance with the western democracies. If so, he learned a depressing lesson. Some argue he sought a communist-dominated Spain. If so, he might well have provided more aid to the Republic than he did. Others say he never really cared about a Republican victory. Yet the Soviet advisors in Spain were clearly devoted to helping the Republic win the war. When a Soviet instructor taught American volunteer Len Levenson how to be a sniper in 1938, he trained Len to do his job well. So the role of Russian military advisors cannot be subsumed within Stalin's geopolitical aims. Nor can the contributions of the thousands of international volunteers be subsumed within the history of Soviet communism. Their dedication, courage, and

attempt to debunk as myth is the Popular Front claim that a titanic Manichean struggle between good and evil, democracy and fascism, was in process in the 1930s. This dichotomous world view, so Hopkins and others argue, misrepresents the complexities of the case.

I want to state as clearly as I can that I believe the Popular Front view was not only correct but understated. When Hitler and Mussolini made the Spanish struggle part of the larger story of European fascism, the opposing values and historical risks were no less severe than the volunteers claimed in their letters home. Had Germany won the ensuing World War that the volunteers repeatedly predicted, we would have lost everything of our humanity worth preserving. To qualify this stark prospect is to historicize with no moral compass.

It is certainly true that the principles of democracy and freedom were not reliably and unqualifiably embodied in any nation, not the western democracies and certainly not the Soviet Union. Even if the choice was between a great darkness and a lesser darkness, the dis-

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Bill Alexander, Secretary of the International Brigade Association, with Milton Wolff (right) at the Marx Memorial Library, London.

England Applauds Milton Wolff

On a brief tour of Cambridge and London, the celebrated “last commander of the Lincoln Brigade,” Milton Wolff, won the applause of journalists, students, and scholars as the embodiment of anti-fascist activism.

“Once you put your life on the line you’re committed,” Wolff told a reporter from the Guardian, in a widely read article. “In Spain it was sealed in blood... . When I signed up I had no idea that we would leave without having won: we were there to win, that’s what we went for. But I was an activist; I figured that we’d lost, but it was one battle.”

Wolff also spoke to students at Anglia Polytechnic University in Cambridge and participated in Paul Preston’s seminar on the Spanish Civil War at the London School of Economics.

“I think that’s something very important for people to see,” said Angela Jackson, a graduate student in Cambridge who is studying the role of British women in the war. “Even though they are in their 80s, they still think fighting fascism is a cause that’s worth working for.”

Wolff visited England after appearing at the International Forum in Getafe, Spain. ■

British Battalion

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member of the House of Lords. The small ILP contingent joined up with the POUM militia in Catalonia, and were later joined by George Orwell. They got involved, more by accident than design, in the “May Days” anti-government action in Barcelona. When that was defeated they left Spain in a hurry, having made no significant contribution to resisting the Franco aggression. Their story, in a glamourised version, is told in Ken Loach’s film, *Land and Freedom*, which elevates the sectarian anti-government forces in Catalonia above those of the Republic.

Interestingly, Fenner Brockway, in his autobiography published in 1977, writes, “Our allies in Catalonia, the POUM and the CNT, came under increasing denunciation from the Communist, Labour and Liberal supporters of the International Brigade who were defending Madrid. At the time I did not appreciate their case, but it had some strength. They were at the core of the military conflict, defending the capital, the headquarters of the coalition Government with its Social Democrat Prime Minister, Largo Caballero. They had no time for a social revolution, all effort was needed in the battle against great odds to defend democracy. Looking back it was tragic that cooperation was not reached. . . .”

Finally I would mention one special factor that motivated the British volunteers. It was a consciousness of the shameful role of the British government in denying the Republic government the help it was entitled to under international law and in promoting non-intervention. Like all the volunteers, we saw the fight to save the Spanish Republic as a fight to save world peace, but we felt a special responsibility to demonstrate that in its policy of appeasing the fascists our government did not speak for the British people. ■

Trying to Understand the Basque Imbroglia

Gabriel Jackson

Progressives all over the world have a special sympathy for the Basques. In July 1936 their civilian, Catholic, autonomous government took the side of the Republic in resistance to the military revolt of the generals. In April 1937 their historic capital Guernica became the first of many European cities to be destroyed from the air by Nazi aircraft. And in the later years of the Franco dictatorship their resistance movement, ETA (Basque Land and Liberty), became famous for its ambushes of Franquist police torturers and especially for the spectacular assassination of Admiral Carrero Blanco (Franco's principal collaborator and a known hardliner) in the center of Madrid.

But in the two decades since Franco's death, ETA has killed more than 800 persons, and the largest single political party, the PNV (Basque Nationalist Party), has increasingly insisted that Spain's parliamentary democracy, and the Basque Statute of Autonomy, cannot satisfy the needs of the Basque people. The actual situation is so complex, so ideologically and emotionally tense, that in a short article I cannot hope to give a narrative account. Rather I will try to define the major political forces and their longterm programs.

Taking the leading role in all the democratically elected autonomous governments since 1978 are the Nationalist parties PNV (Basque Nationalist Party) and EA (offshoot of the PNV), which together polled 55% of the vote in the autonomous elections of October 1998. Their theoretical program includes eventual independence, but they are ambiguous as to the timing for such independence. They are fully democratic in their internal procedures, they have participated in numerous coalitions with the

socialists in the autonomous government, and have in the all-Spanish Cortes supported the present PP (Popular Party) central government.

More radically nationalist is the coalition EH, which received 18% of the October 1998 vote. EH is the political wing of ETA. It demands independence now, and uses the threat of renewed ETA assassinations to pressure the moderate nationalist parties to intensify the demands for independence. EH also increases its "persuasive" power by its control of nationalist youth gangs which commit "low level" violence such as car burnings, window smashing, and verbal death threats against persons and institutions not sharing their dream of independence.

The Popular Party, with 20% of the recent vote, works democratically within the institutional framework of the Autonomy Statute, and is also fully in accord with the Aznar government and the PP at the all-Spanish level. Similarly, the PSE, Basque Socialist Party, with 18% of the vote, finds equally compatible its participation in the autonomous parliament and its programmatic unity with the Socialist party at the all-Spanish level. These two non-nationalist democratic parties together account for 38% of the total vote in the most recent election of deputies to the Basque autonomous parliament.

In September 1998, ETA announced a unilateral truce. At the same time, in secret negotiations with the democratic nationalist parties, it indicated that its truce was contingent upon the formation of an all-nationalist coalition which would work rapidly for the creation of a Basque state containing not only the Spanish Basque area but also the three southern French departments with large Basque populations, and the province

of Navarre. There is virtually no support within the French Basque departments for secession from France, and the majority parties in Navarrese politics are opposed to annexation.

The all-nationalist agreement to construct a new state consisting of the above named territories took the form of the Pact of Lizarra (Basque name for the town where it was drawn up) or Estella (Spanish name). ETA's political calculation was that by obliging the nationalist parties to form a nationalist front on ETA's terms, they would win by the truce what they had not won by their killings. The nationalist parties hoped that their voters would reward them for the truce, and that somehow the immense public relief all over Spain at the prospect of no more assassinations would lead the government to negotiate with the Nationalist parties along the lines of the Pact of Lizarra.

But the October 1998 elections for the autonomous legislature were a great disappointment to the Nationalists. Their combined vote referred to above actually represented a slight loss in comparison with the 1994 legislative elections, and their main enemy, PP, increased from 14% to 20%. The truce lasted fourteen months (September '98-November '99) during which time EH, with the threat of renewed killings behind its word, urged the PNV and EA to get on with the Lizarra program; and the Nationalist parties alternately denied that they were being pressured by ETA and multiplied the passionate but imprecise rhetoric about the Constitution and the Statute of Autonomy no longer being valid, and about the need for a new political framework in order to free the Basque country (plus southern France and

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Navarre?) from the “foreign” rule of Spain and France.

On November 28 ETA announced the end of the truce and blamed the Nationalist parties for not holding up their end of the Lizarra bargain. There is no doubt about their seriousness. In late December the police captured two vans on the road to Madrid, both loaded with explosives whose timing devices had already been set. Since the end of the truce both the Basque Nationalists and the Madrid PP government have been engaged in a shouting match which indicates, among other things, that the Nationalists have gone out on a limb from which they find no dignified way to retreat, and the Madrid government is making demagogic appeals to old-fashioned Spanish patriotism.

The entire electoral record since 1978 shows that the Basque country itself is almost evenly split between Basque Nationalist and all-Spanish loyalties. Anyone thinking in rational political terms knows that the Basque problem cannot be settled without the willing participation of that slightly more than half of the population which consistently votes for one or other of the Nationalist parties. Yet the Madrid government finds literally nothing to say to the nationalists except that they must condemn unambiguously all forms of violence. Fine as a general principle, but solutions can only come from good faith negotiations between the elected leaders of the Nationalist and non-Nationalist parties.

The reader may well ask why indeed the fourteen months of truce was not used to establish peace after three decades of suffering terrorism. One reason is that the Nationalists have never unambiguously rejected ETA. They condemn terrorism in general terms, but they have always used the threat of terrorism as a means to extract new concessions from the Madrid government. Another is that Basque nationalism has an inherent racist component. As if they had never heard of modern anthropology the Basque Nationalists talk about the blood type and the skull formation which distinguishes the Basque “race.” There are the true Basques,

and there are the others, the “immigrants” to use one of the more polite names. Naturally, if you are convinced that only racial Basques are true Basques you can conveniently stop thinking about the almost half of the population which consistently votes for non-Nationalist parties.

The blunderbuss rhetoric of the Madrid government, and of the PP in general, is no help. At Lizarra ETA won a great political victory by creating a “front” of all the Nationalist parties, democratic and violent. What the situation requires, on the contrary, is a “front” of all parties unambiguously committed to democratic

methods and to the acceptance of the results of free elections. In general verbal terms, the PNV has always affirmed such a commitment. But myths about Basque history and about the Basque race have always diluted that commitment in favor of a “comprehensive” attitude toward terrorists who are said to be seeking the right ends by the wrong means. Racism is a very stubborn illness. I have no idea how long it will be before the Basque Nationalists concede that the non-nationalist voters in the Basque country are legally and morally just as Basque as are the Nationalists. ■

Brigaders' Reunion

*These frail old men are young and strong today,
Bearing the banner upright as they stand
Steadied with sticks or helped by caring band
Protective as the stone arms round their dead.*

*Yet once these same legs climbed the Pyrenees
By smugglers' paths in sheltering of night,
With spirits high and blistered urban feet
They came to aid the Spanish peoples' fight
So long ago and yet so close at hand,
The weary blur of battle on strange ground,
The heat and cold, the hunger and the thirst,
Persistence when the odds were all against.*

*Now a new speaker tells the old brave tale,
Putting some sort of pattern to the whole,
The song that always follows sounds again
Ragged at first—'Jarama'—then the pain
And pride swell out to fill their shrinking world.
And we who were not there join in, aware*

*Their fading eyes show what we cannot hear,
The ageless guilt which all survivors feel
That they live on when friends and comrades fell.
For them—and us—and brothers not yet born,
They raise clenched fists and shout “No Pasaran!”*

*Poem written by Connie Fraser (1998), widow of Harry Fraser,
fighter with the British Battalion of the International Brigade.*



Emma Roca

Franko's historians made sure that the women who fought in the Spanish Civil War went down in the history books as nothing more than floozies or prostitutes who capriciously followed young men to the front in the early exciting days of the struggle. Since 1997 I have traveled in Spain and France collecting the oral testimonies of Spanish and Catalan militiawomen, or rearguard activists, "las milicianas." I began this work as an effort to contribute to the on-going historical resuscitation of their histories from the confines of the repressive, nationalistic version of the Civil War story. Particularly in the past four years the miliciana, increasingly romanticized and actively engaged by popular culture, has become a favorite subject in the more liberal Spanish media and in the US academic press.

There are few milicianas alive today. Some are now in their early 90s. I went to Spain ready to join in the

THE VOICES OF THE MILICIANAS

Text by Gina Herrmann

Photographs by Sofía Moro Valentín-Gamazo

apotheosis of the Spanish woman warrior—heroic, brave, valorous, gun-slinging, bomb-making, fascist-killing.

I was totally unprepared for what I found. It would be a journey in false expectations.

I expected to find few women. I found over forty who were willing to meet with me and have been able to interview only twenty-three over the course of three years.

I asked the women, to the degree

that it was possible for them, to use the pronoun "yo." I was seeking the individual, different voice characteristic of many male war autobiographies. They were puzzled by my request and used, for the most part, "nosotras." I should not have been surprised by the barrier to individual memory; both war and socialism are phenomena which function through community action.

I suggested that the most influential experience of their lives would have been their months as soldiers on the front lines, bending the rigid ranks of the Spanish military and proletariat cultures. I thought I was

collecting heroic accounts of women soldiers, but I ended up recording excruciatingly painful testimonies that emphasized the experiences of prison, exile and concentration camps in the lives of women who were brutally shattered by fascism all the way through the Second World War and even into the 1970s.

Particularly among the communist women, the testimonies recounted a repeating and typical life pattern: a girl was born into a struggling work-



María de las Alas

VANQUISHED

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ing class or agrarian family in which the father was usually implicated in socialist or communist activities. The girl was influenced by her father's political commitments, and through him or an older brother she learned to understand the world around her through the terms of the oppressor and the oppressed. As a teenager she worked or, if she was very lucky, she went to school. The coming of the Second Republic was celebrated ecstatically and seemed to her and her



Tomasa Cuevas



Trini Gallego

family to be the long awaited answer to social injustice. When Franco's military uprising threatened to take away the newly gained freedom and hope for reform, the teenage proletariat joined a militia group and set off for a rudimentary military training.

I was compelled to ask the women what it was that made them feel empowered enough to fight on the front lines or to take up dangerous positions in the supporting rearguard. The explanations offered in answer to these questions were amazingly similar and simple: these teenagers—inspired by the example of the Bolshevik revolution—belonged to socialist or communist youth organizations

which (at least theoretically) emphasized gender equality, their political commitments were supported by their families, and there were progressive ideals to be defended. It was very clear to them: the poor and the working classes had nothing and the land owning, military, and industrial classes had all the privilege, all the power and all the wealth. Under the Second Republic, the circumstances of daily survival were just beginning to improve for the underclasses, and it was clear to these teenagers that if Franco won, the working masses would suffer. To join a militia group was a natural part of their microculture. They were excited, perhaps naively so, but enthralled nonetheless.

The combat training was short

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Milicianas

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and inadequate. Their weapons were so antiquated that they often backfired. Some of the “milicianas” were so small-boned and weak that the force of the rifle shot literally knocked them to the ground. Nevertheless, despite their fear and boredom and physical frailty, they stated they lived in the trenches as equals, if only for a few short months, with their comrades. Only a tiny percentage saw any active combat. When women were forced to abandon their front line positions, most of these ex-combatants took jobs at factories that supported the war effort. In the long dark days after the last cities fell to Franco, many of these women were immediately



Antonia Villa

arrested and imprisoned, many fled into exile and an uncertain fate at the hands of foreign fascists, while others went underground to fight clandestinely. And it is at this moment, in the confusion of their tragic defeat, that many of the women became pregnant.

The testimonies reflect the extent to which these women’s lives became and in some sense continue to be incomprehensible to them as a result of the incompatibility between imprisonment, the resistance movement, and maternal caregiving. There wasn’t a woman I interviewed who did not feel that her

relationships with her children was severely damaged by the repercussions of her military and political investments. The taped testimonies not only form part of a collective experience of class struggle but insist on the impossibility, the pain, the messiness of war in such a way that they dismantle the war paradigm that cannot leave a space for a soldier, a prisoner, a revolutionary who is also a mother.

I left Spain with the sensation that in some limited but meaningful way my intervention in their lives had served to bridge the personal and ideological gaps between the soldier and the mother for these long-ago “milicianas.” By seeking them out and recording their versions of their life experiences, I potentially let them know that they could create a new war story, a women’s war experience—one that casts its protagonist as a soldier and a mother, and one that precludes the possibility of ordering the chaos and the mad pain of war into anything other than pain and chaos.

But for all their losses and all the tears we shed as we talked, Eugenia, Trini, Toya, Rosario, Concha, Manolita, and the others filled me with hope and the belief that at least the stalwart Fascist historiography had been extirpated from the Spanish imagination. Once again, I was wrong. On the airplane on my way back to New York, I sat among a family of seventeen who were traveling to the US to attend a wedding. They shared their Salamanican hornacha with me. We got to chatting. When I described the work I had been doing in Spain, the mother of the family looked at me with real pity and said: “Oh, pero no sabes, mujer, que todas esas milicianas eran prostitutas. No te engañes.” (Oh, come on, girl, don’t you know that all those militia women were whores!) That was by far the saddest moment. But despite the shock and dismay that Salamanca matriarch produced in me, the comment gave an added sense of urgency and purpose to our war story project. To revive memories of pain and defeat is not always a welcome intrusion in the lives of those who lived a traumatic history. But to choose to allow those

histories to be buried along with their participants constitutes a collusion, on our part, with the forces that tried to make subservient a generation of Spanish and Catalan women who, for the first time in the history of their nation, took up an armed revolutionary struggle against the absolutist powers that sought to erase working class women from their page in the story of the Spanish Civil War. My deepest wish is that the future publication of these testimonies spoken by



Emma Roca

brave, committed, spirited Spanish and Catalan women will serve to teach young women in Spain and abroad about the real possibilities of acting against the postmodern manifestations of injustice, classism, sexism, and racism within a framework of coalition and solidarity. ■

Gina Herrmann is Assistant Professor of Spanish Literature and Culture at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. She is currently preparing for publication a collection of women’s Civil War testimonies to be accompanied by a compact disk of selections from the recorded interviews.

Sofía Moro Valentín-Gamazo is a prominent Spanish photojournalist. Her portraits of Spanish Civil War veterans received the “La caxia” Fotopress award for 1999.

Heart of Fire

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tance between them was so great as to make the lesser darkness the moral equivalent of light. In the conflict between democracy and fascism, true democracy was impossible to find. But pure and uncompromising fascism was readily apparent. It was apparent to the volunteers in Italy's invasion of Ethiopia, in Hitler's campaign against German Jews, and in Japan's invasion

most demonic incarnation of murderous prejudice. "In their grasp of social injustice and the menacing politics of their time," Hopkins writes about disillusioned 1930s intellectuals, "they were lonely voices in their respective cultures." The volunteers had much the same grasp of the history they were living, but they were not alone. They fought together: "The moment had come not only to find the blessed land but to save it from its ravaging enemies."

We do not destroy that legacy when we regret that the officers in the IB had

Western Europe after the allies landed in France. What sort of government would then have emerged in Spain is impossible to say, but Soviet influence would have been counterbalanced by American and British troops. The odds that something better than Franco's murderous tyranny might have emerged seem strong. In any case the sort of Soviet client state Radosh envisions would have been highly unlikely.

There is thus no substantive practical sense in which the volunteers would have proven to be tools of Soviet foreign policy. Yet for too long the veterans have tried to maintain their legacy by telling a too selective story of daily life in the battalions. To be sure they have had little choice. Any admission of human weakness or authoritarian practice in the IB is immediately taken as evidence of pervasive corruption by the IB's detractors.

"Which side are you on?" has remained the decisive question for more than half a century. There has been no cultural space in which a more nuanced conversation could take place.

The looming series of right wing books on Spain and the International Brigades suggests that space will not be opened up by fascism's heirs. Some of the surviving vets, however, have begun

British and American volunteers unfortunately held an emerging totalitarian Soviet state in high regard. But the communism they devoted themselves to in their hearts was not the communism of the gulag and the NKVD. They devoted themselves to what would prove an unrealizable goal of equality.

of Manchuria. It was apparent in the bombing of Guernica.

There is, however, one Popular Front myth worth debunking—that international communism was perfectly on the side of the angels. The communist master narrative was not just about Spain but also about communism and Spain, about communism as the only international political movement devoted to the widest good. We can readily understand why so many of the volunteers were deceived about the Soviet Union when they saw so much else so clearly. Hopkins quotes from Edward Upward's 1978 novel *In the Thirties*: "Communism was the only force in the world which was uncompromisingly on the side of the doomed and against those who wanted to keep them doomed." Communism was the abstract embodiment of principles shaped partly by their own native radical traditions; consequently British and American volunteers unfortunately held an emerging totalitarian Soviet state in high regard. But the communism they devoted themselves to in their hearts was not the communism of the gulag and the NKVD. They devoted themselves to what would prove an unrealizable goal of equality. In the process they fought against the century's

better rations than the other volunteers. Nor do we have reason to doubt that the Spanish Republic, however imperfect, was worth saving. It would have been more worthy still, to be sure, had the Western democracies come to its aid and Soviet influence been limited. But a morally befuddled revisionist history

"Communism was the only force in the world which was uncompromisingly on the side of the doomed and against those who wanted to keep them doomed."

must stop before concluding that Franco's fascism was not an evil. That is where Ronald Radosh intends to go, as he made clear in a 1999 interview with *Lingua Franca*. He argues that Franco's thirty-five year tyranny was no worse and perhaps better than anything Spain would have received from a communist-dominated Republic.

Radosh suffers from a failure of the political imagination. A victorious Republic would not have survived long. Hitler's invasion of France would have become an invasion of Spain as well. A puppet regime in Spain would then have been swept aside and the Spanish people liberated along with the rest of

to speak more honestly, among them Harry Fisher and Milt Wolff. We need to hear more from their comrades before their opportunity to testify is gone. Although Hopkins's book will make some in the community of veterans and their allies angry, I believe it helps make that essential conversation possible. I left it with more, not less, respect for the men and women who fought in Spain. And I have a much richer sense of their character, their individual strengths and weaknesses, and the legacy left to us by the example of their individual lives. ■

Belchite Restoration

Belchite, the Aragon town at which the Lincolns fought heroically during the summer of 1937 and which was severely damaged in the war, is going to be restored as a monument to remind future generations of the disasters of the war, according to an agreement reached last fall between Spain's Ministry of Education and Culture and various regional authorities.

The town fell to Franco's forces at the beginning of the civil war and became a focal point for Republican troops trying to break the fascist lines to reach Zaragoza. The bloodiest events occurred between August 20 and September 7, 1937, when Republicans surrounded the town, which Franco defended with 2,000 troops. Hesitancy by the Republican command allowed reinforcements to arrive, including Italian soldiers and the German Condor Legion. After twenty days, the Republicans regained Belchite—historians estimate the deaths between 2,000 and 10,000. The buildings of Belchite, situated near the Ebro River, disappeared under the rubble.

After the war, Franco built a new town, but the old town was never fully demolished and stood as a grim reminder of the effects of war on civilians. The ruins have long fascinated writers. Terry Gilliam, captivated by the story of a relative who had fought in the International Brigades, filmed *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* there. Over the years, Belchite has become the target of tourists seeking souvenirs amidst the rubble.

If the agreement is carried out, the plan to preserve the ruins will center on saving the most symbolic structures of the town and building a monument with the motto: "Belchite, symbol of peace."

This article, based on several Spanish news reports, was translated by Maria McCoy and edited by Elizabeth Wolf.

Photos by Jose Moreno







Herbert Southworth 1908-1999

Herbert Southworth, a legendary book collector and for many years the intellectual scourge of General Franco's dictatorship, has died in France aged 91. His book on the bombing of Guernica is one of the three or four most important of the many thousands of volumes written on the Spanish Civil War. His writings as a whole saw the Francoist Ministry of Information set up an entire department just to counter his demolition of regime propaganda.

His extraordinary passage from poverty in the American West to crusading left-wing journalist during the Spanish Civil War had elements of a Steinbeck novel. His later transformation into successful radio station magnate and then into a scholar of world-wide reputation was reminiscent of one of Theodore Dreiser's self-made heroes.

He was born in Canton, a tiny Oklahoma town, in 1908 and later lived in Texas where his father prospected for oil. His principal memory of that time was reading his father's collection of the Harvard Classics. The theft of one of the volumes when he was twelve affected him so deeply that it was perhaps the beginning of his own obsessional book collecting.

When the Spanish Civil War broke out, he began to review books on the conflict for the Washington Post. Already emotionally affected by the struggle between fascism and anti-fascism, he always said that the events in Spain gave direction to his life. His articles brought him to the notice of the Republic's Ambassador, Fernando de los Ríos, who asked him to work for the Spanish Information Bureau. He moved to New York and worked with passion writing regular press articles and pamphlets, including *Franco's Mein Kampf*.

After the defeat of the Spanish

Republic, he worked for the exiled Juan Negrín and wrote a book about the Spanish fascist party, the Falange, which was rejected by publishers on the grounds that it was too scholarly. After Pearl Harbor, he served in the Office of War Information, eventually directing Spanish-language broadcasts to Franco's Spain. After the war, he remained in Tangier, traveling regularly to Spain in search of material for what would become the largest ever collection of books and pamphlets on the Spanish Civil War (which now resides at the University of California in San Diego).

After establishing residence in France in the 1960s, he wrote a series of books which obliged the Franco regime to change its falsified version of its own past. The most celebrated was *The Myth of Franco's Crusade*, a devastating exposé of right-wing propaganda about the Spanish Civil War. Smuggled into Spain and sold clandestinely, its impact obliged the then Minister of Information, Manuel Fraga, to set up a department solely dedicated to the modernization of regime historiography. Its director, Ricardo de la Cierva, in a losing battle with Southworth, went on to write 80 books in defence of the Franco regime.

In 1965, Southworth wrote a second book, *Antifalange*, a massively erudite commentary on the process whereby Franco converted the Falange into the single party of his regime. Another book based on a staggering array of sources, *Guernica! Guernica! A Study of Journalism, Diplomacy, Propaganda and History* (1977), is an astonishing reconstruction of the effort by Franco's propagandists to wipe out the atrocity at Guernica.

Herbert was never fully welcome in the U.S. academic community because of his inveterate subversiveness and his mischievous humour. He made no secret of his contempt for Washington's policies in Latin America, which evoked for him the betrayal of the Spanish Republic.

Every day, as an avid observer of what he considered to be the hypocrisy of political theatre, he devoured a stack of French and American newspapers. Along with his political passion, he had a wonderful sense of the absurd and an irresistibly infectious laugh.

I remember on one occasion at a conference in Germany, the assembled participants were led by the director of the host foundation to see a sumptuous carpet which we were proudly told had once belonged to Adolph Hitler. Herbert dropped to his knees and began shuffling around, peering closely at the pile. Herr Direktor asked with concern what was the matter and was completely nonplussed when Herbert replied in his slow Texan drawl, "I'm looking for the teeth marks!"

His demolition of the fake scholarship of others was often extremely amusing, most notably in his chapter entitled 'Spanica Zwischen Todnu Gabriet,' in which he traced minutely how Francoist author after Francoist author cited a book which they had never read (Peter Merin's *Spanien zwischen Tod und Geburt* (*Spain between Life and Death*), but merely miscopied its title. Despite his austere inquisitorial style, he was a rotund and jolly trencherman.

After the death of Franco, Herbert was regularly invited to give lectures at Spanish universities, where he was a major cult figure. His influence is seen in the work of a new generation of British and Spanish scholars. Southworth's remorselessly forensic writings imposed new standards of seriousness on writing about the war. A pugnacious polemicist, he regularly took part in literary arguments, most notably with Burnett Bolloten and Hugh Thomas. However, he ceased writing for a time. In 1970, he saw that his outgoings on books dramatically exceeded income and he decided that he must sell the collection. It was sold to the University of California at San Diego as "The Southworth Collection" and remains the world's

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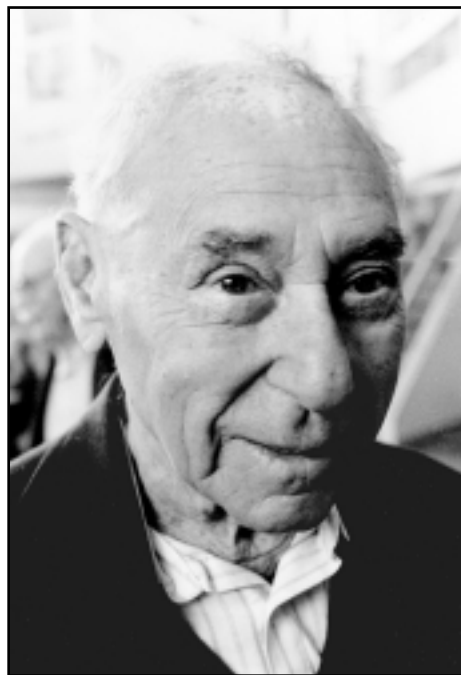
Added to Memory's Roster



We mourn the loss of these Lincoln Brigade comrades who died in 1999

Vacil Blair
Sid Levine
Mary Rolfe
George Brodsky
Clement Markert
Jack Shulman
Ruth Davidow
John L. Simon
Tony De Maio
Ben Minor

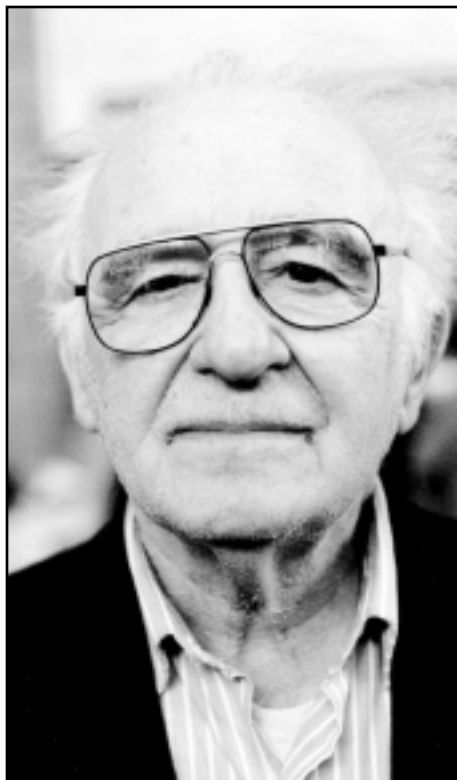
Harry Wallach
Helen Feinberg
Sol Newman
Jesse Wallach
Emile Jacobs
Si Podolin
Sam Walters
Manny Lanser
Irving Portnow



Manny Lanser



Jack Shulman



Sam Walters

PHOTOS RICHARD BERMACK

single most important library on the Spanish Civil War.

Only three days before his death in the hospital at Le Blanc, Herbert Southworth delivered a more fitting epitaph than that quoted above, in the form of the manuscript of *Conspiracy*

and the Spanish Civil War: *The Brainwashing of Francisco Franco*, which will be published in Spain by Editorial Crítica and in England by Routledge next year.

—Paul Preston

George Brodsky 1901-1999

George Brodsky served as commissar for the Lincoln Battalion during the battle of Jarama. He always remembered his experience in Spain with great pride, and also with pain. The pride came from being associated with and contributing to the heroic struggle against fascism as part of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion in the International Brigades. The pain came from the defeat of the Spanish people at the hands of fascism. It also came from the horrors of that war. And it came from his own all-too-human limitations as he and his comrades faced an incredibly difficult situation in the earliest days of the Lincoln Battalion's experience.

George had to be brought back to the U.S. long before the International Brigades were withdrawn from Spain, physically but not emotionally intact. Despite this, his efforts with the Lincoln Battalion to help defend Spanish democracy from fascism remained, for him, one of the most meaningful and valued aspects of his life.

—Paul Le Blanc

ALBA Exhibits on the Road

ALBA's two traveling exhibitions—*Shouts From the Wall* and *Aura of the Cause*—continue to draw large audiences as the poster and photography shows cross around the country. Since its opening at the Puffin Gallery in New York City in April 1996, *Shouts* has appeared at 20 sites. *Aura*, launched in Toronto in 1997, has shown in a dozen locations. At each stop, the two exhibitions have sparked an array of collateral programs, including film screenings, panel discussions, and public lectures.

After drawing 8,000 spectators to the Harold Washington Center at the Chicago Public Library last summer, *Shouts* moved to the DeGoyer Library on the tree-lined campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas. To mark the opening in November, the SMU history department linked the show to its annual Symposium in History, which focused on "American Radicalism in the Twentieth Century." Featured speakers included ALBA Chair Peter Carroll, who presented a detailed tour of the show.

Another participant in the three-day program was historian Sterling Stuckey, currently writing a biography of Paul Robeson, who spoke about the great African American's influence on Caribbean music. He followed his formal talk with a discussion of Robeson's career during the blacklist era. Stuckey has also been instrumental in bringing *Shouts* to his home campus at the University of California in Riverside, where it will appear during the spring of 2001.

As part of the SMU symposium, radical historian Paul Buhle presented a slideshow-lecture dealing with political images of the American Left. Sara Evans, civil rights veteran and historian of modern feminism from the University of Minnesota, discussed the emergence of radical commitments among women of the 1960s.

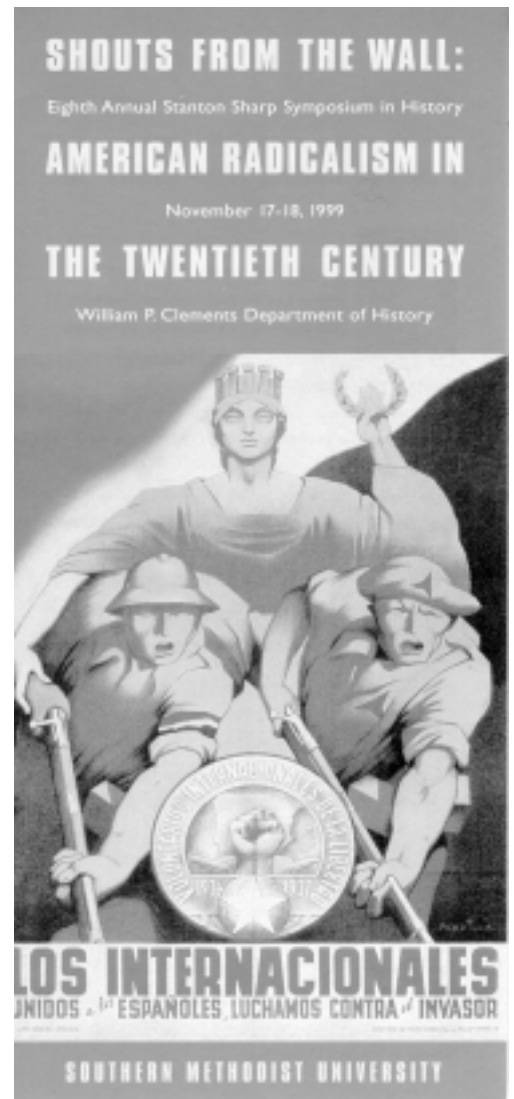
From SMU, *Shouts* will travel to Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, where it will appear in

conjunction with the state History Fair in March and April. While several professors offer courses related to the Spanish Civil War, high school students will focus their term projects on that subject. In the fall, Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, will host both ALBA exhibitions simultaneously.

ALBA's photography show, *Aura of the Cause*, had successful runs this fall at the University of Massachusetts in Boston and at the University of Oregon in Eugene. At the latter site, ALBA Board members Cary Nelson and Tony Geist presented public lectures, part of a month-long series of Spanish Civil War programs.

The University of Judaism in Bel Air, California launched the *Aura* exhibit on January 9 with a public program that featured Milton Wolff and Peter Carroll as speakers. That exhibit will move to Wayne State University in Detroit from April-May 2000.

ALBA is still looking for new sites for both exhibitions beginning in 2001. For more information, check our website, or write to our New York office, 799 Broadway, New York, 10003. ■



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Spain's Cause Was Mine

A Memoir of an American Medic in the Spanish Civil War

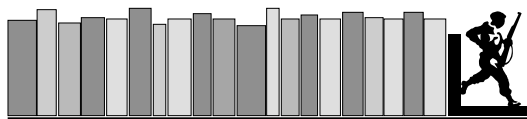
by Hank Rubin

Foreword by Peter Carroll

In 1937, Hank Rubin, a twenty-year-old Jewish pre-med student at UCLA, volunteered for service in the International Brigades combatting fascists in the Spanish Civil War.

"[Rubin] tells the gripping story of the seventeen months that he served in the International Brigades, sometimes as a soldier, mostly as a medical officer who gave blood transfusions to the wounded and who helped develop the triage system that's used in hospitals today."

The Santa Rosa Press Democrat



ALBA BOOKS, VIDEOS AND POSTERS

BOOKS ABOUT THE LINCOLN BRIGADE

Madrid 1937 —

Letters from the Spanish Civil War

ed. by Nelson & Hendricks (cloth) \$35

Another Hill

by Milton Wolff (cloth) \$25

Our Fight—

Writings by Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade: Spain 1936-1939

ed. by Alvah Bessie & Albert Prago (pbk) \$15

The Anti-Warrior

by Milton Felsen (pbk) \$15

Trees Become Torches, Selected Poems

by Edwin Rolfe (pbk) \$10

Collected Poems of Edwin Rolfe (pbk) \$21

From Mississippi to Madrid

by James Yates (pbk) \$15

Spain, the Unfinished Revolution

by Arthur Landis (cloth) \$25

Prisoners of the Good Fight

by Carl Geiser (pbk) \$15

Spain's Cause Was Mine

by Hank Rubin (cloth) \$29
(pbk) \$15

Comrades

by Harry Fisher (cloth) \$25
(pbk) \$12

Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

by Peter Carroll (pbk) \$15

Remembering Spain:

Hemingway's VALB Eulogy

by Ernest Hemingway, Cary Nelson
and Milton Wolff (audio tape & pamphlet) \$15

Prison of Women

by Tomasa Cuevas \$15

EXHIBIT CATALOGS

Shouts from the Wall, a poster album

ed. by Cary Nelson (pbk) \$16

The Aura of the Cause, a photo album

ed. by Cary Nelson (pbk) \$25

VIDEOS

The Good Fight

a film by Sills/Dore/Bruckner (VCR) \$35

Forever Activists

a film by Judith Montell (VCR) \$35

You Are History, You Are Legend

a film by Judith Montell (VCR) \$25

POSTERS

Two Spanish Civil War posters (*Madrid Lion* and *Victoria*) are available at \$10 plus postage, and thanks to Eva and Mark Fasanella, copies of five of Ralph Fasanella's posters are available (\$20 each, plus postage). They are: *Subway Riders* (1960); *Family Supper* (1972); *The Great Strike, Lawrence, 1912* (1978); *The Daily News Strike* (1993); *South Bronx Rebirth* (1995).

These books and tapes are available at the indicated prices from:

Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

799 Broadway, R. 227

New York, NY 10003-5552

Tel: (212) 674-5552

Shipping cost: \$2 per copy of book, album or tape.
Make checks payable to ALBA.

An invitation for posterity

The Volunteer invites our readers to consider making a bequest to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives.

ALBA is a non-profit tax-exempt organization. Contributions and bequests provide donors with significant advantages in planning their estates and donations.

For more information, contact

Diane Fraher

executive secretary

VALB/ALBA

799 Broadway, Rm. 277

New York, NY 10003

Telephone:

212-598-0968

E-mail:

amerinda@spacelab.net

Letters

Continued from page 2

Dear Editor,

I have received your Fall issue of *The Volunteer*. For which I thank you! On Page 10 in the article "German Vets gather in Berlin" there is a mistake. The Secretary of the International Brigade Association is Bill Alexander (myself!). Dolly West is not a member of the International Brigade Association.

Salud!

Bill Alexander
Honorable Secretary
International Brigade Association

Dear Volunteers,

My father, Ted Allan, who died four years ago, was a member of the Mac-Paps and wrote articles for *The Clarion*, a local Socialist newspaper in Montreal. In 1939, when he was twenty-one, his first novel, *This Time a Better Earth*, was published. I have a Xerox copy of it, but am looking everywhere for a hard copy. Do you think any of your members might have known my father, and may have a copy of this book? He also wrote a book about Dr. Norman Bethune, called *The Scalpel, The Sword*.

Best regards,
Julie Allan
571 Jarvis ST
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y2J1

Info Request:

I am interested in any info that might be found on my half-uncle, Dan Haskell, who died in the battle of Jarama. Though he died over 60 years ago, he is remembered fondly, if somewhat hazily, by my mother. His given name was Isidore, but he apparently hated this name, preferring Irving (like his cousins, who shared his Hebrew name of Israel) and later Dan. The family surname was changed from "Yaskolka" to "Haskell" in 1927, when he was about 12 years old. I know Dan was a union organizer, and a member of the YCL; I know he had some trouble with the police in connection with a strike of Western Union; I know he spent some time in Nevada working for the CCC. I would be very grateful for any information or pointers anyone can give me.

Ted Alper
alper@turing.stanford.edu

ALBA'S TRAVELING EXHIBITIONS

SHOUTS FROM THE WALL

Dallas

Nov. 8, 1999—Feb. 21, 2000
DeGolyar Library
Southern Methodist University
6404 Hilltop Lane
Dallas, TX

Carbondale

March 15-May 15, 2000
The University Museum
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL

Medford

October 12-Dec 10, 2000
Tufts University Gallery
Aidekman Art Center
40 R Talbot Ave
Medford, MA 02155
617 627-3505

THE AURA OF THE CAUSE

ALBA's photographic exhibit, *The Aura of the Cause*, has been shown at the Puffin Room in New York City, the University of California-San Diego, the Salvador Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, FL, the Fonda Del Sol Visual Center in Washington, DC, and the University of Illinois. This exhibit, curated by Professor Cary Nelson of the University of Illinois, consists of hundreds of photographs of the Lincoln Brigaders, other international volunteers and their Spanish comrades in training and at rest, among the Spanish villages, and in battle.

Detroit

April 1-May 31, 2000
David Adamany Library
Wayne State University
Anthony Wayne Drive
Detroit, MI 48202
313 577-6138

Medford

October 12-Dec 10, 2000
Tufts University Gallery
Aidekman Art Center
40 R Talbot Ave
Medford, MA 02155
617 627-3505

For further information about *The Aura of the Cause* exhibit, and its companion exhibit *Shouts From The Wall*, posters from the Spanish Civil War, contact ALBA's executive secretary, Diane Fraher, 212-598-0968. Both exhibits are available for museum and art gallery showings.

BRING THESE EXHIBITS TO YOUR LOCALITY

Contact Diane Fraher, ALBA executive secretary: 212-598-0968; Fax: 212-529-4603



Contributions



■ Teresa and Adam Adamietz, \$25 ■ Anita Eliot and Harvey Epstein, in memory of Abe Shtob, \$30 ■ Miriam Gittleson, \$25, ■ Rhoda and Sheldon Glickman in memory of Helen Feinberg, \$25 ■ Blanch Gibbons, in memory of Sam Gibbons, \$ 50 ■ Joseph Harris, in memory of Sidney Harris, \$25 ■ Norma Hart, in memory of Manny Lanser, \$25 ■ Martin Jacobs, \$30 ■ The Jewish Community Fund, in honor of the decency and courage of George Siegel, \$250 ■ Eugene and Breena Kaplan, in memory of George Watt, \$50 ■ Jack Karan, in honor of Saul Wellman and Abe Shtob, \$500 ■ Judith Kotler, in honor of Ida and Ben Kotler, \$1,000 ■ Jane Larson (Barcelona), in memory of IB veteran Pronslav "Pedro" Mihailovic, \$50 ■ Eva Lederman, in honor of Abe and Abigail Lederman, \$100 ■ The Marzani family, in memory of Arl Marzani, \$50 ■ Sam Mesher, \$25 ■ Jack Oswald, in honor of the Balkan IB veterans, \$30 ■ Ann and Vittorio Ottanelli, in memory of Steve Nelson, \$100 ■ Alicia and Dr. Snell Putney, \$25 ■ Gus Ricca, \$10 ■ Dr. Paul Romanello, in memory of Abe Shtob, \$250 ■ Paul Rosenblum, in memory of Frieda and Irving Weisman, \$50 ■ David and Peggy Smorodin, \$100 ■ Antonio Vilella Valles (Barcelona), in honor of the Lincolns who died in the Battle of the Ebro, \$50 ■ Sam and Claudia Zaslavsky, in memory of Sophie Smith and Ed and Marian Bender, \$250

Join us in a cause that will never die

Over two decades ago four veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade—Bill Susman, Leonard Lamb, Oscar Hunter and Morris Brier — created a new organization: ALBA, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, bringing in a group of scholars interested in the Spanish Civil War and the International Brigades.

From the outset, one of ALBA's main tasks was to help manage and expand the Spanish Civil War archive housed at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Explicit in this undertaking were the educational goals of preserving, disseminating and transmitting to future generations the history and lessons of the Spanish Civil War and of the International Brigades.

To carry out these goals ALBA, in collaboration with VALB, publishes *The Volunteer*. ALBA also collaborates on the production of books, films and videos, maintains a website at www.alba-valb.org, helps send exhibitions of photographs, documents and artwork throughout the United States and Canada, and organizes conferences and seminars on the Spanish Civil War and on the role of the International Brigades in that conflict, and

afterward. ALBA has established the George Watt Memorial prizes for the best college and graduate school essays on these subjects, and has designed a widely-used Spanish Civil War high school and college curriculum.

In the coming months and years ALBA will greatly expand its activity. To do so effectively ALBA must have your support. Please fill out the coupon below,

enclose a \$25 check (or larger amount) made out to ALBA and send it to us. It will insure that those of you who are not veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, or family members of a veteran, will continue to receive *The Volunteer*, and will enjoy other benefits of Associate status.

Fill out this coupon and send it to the address indicated below.

- ☐ **Yes, I wish to become an ALBA Associate, and I enclose a check for \$25 made out to ALBA. Please send me *The Volunteer*.**
- ☐ **I would also like to receive a list of books, pamphlets and videos available at discount.**
- ☐ **I would like to have ALBA's poster exhibit, *Shouts from the Wall*, in my locality. Please send information.**
- ☐ **I would like to have ALBA's photo exhibit, *The Aura of the Cause*, in my locality. Please send information.**

Name _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I enclose an additional donation of _____. I wish ☐ do not wish ☐
to have this donation acknowledged in *The Volunteer*.

Please mail to: ALBA, 799 Broadway, Room 227, New York, NY 10003

website: WWW.ALBA-VALB.org

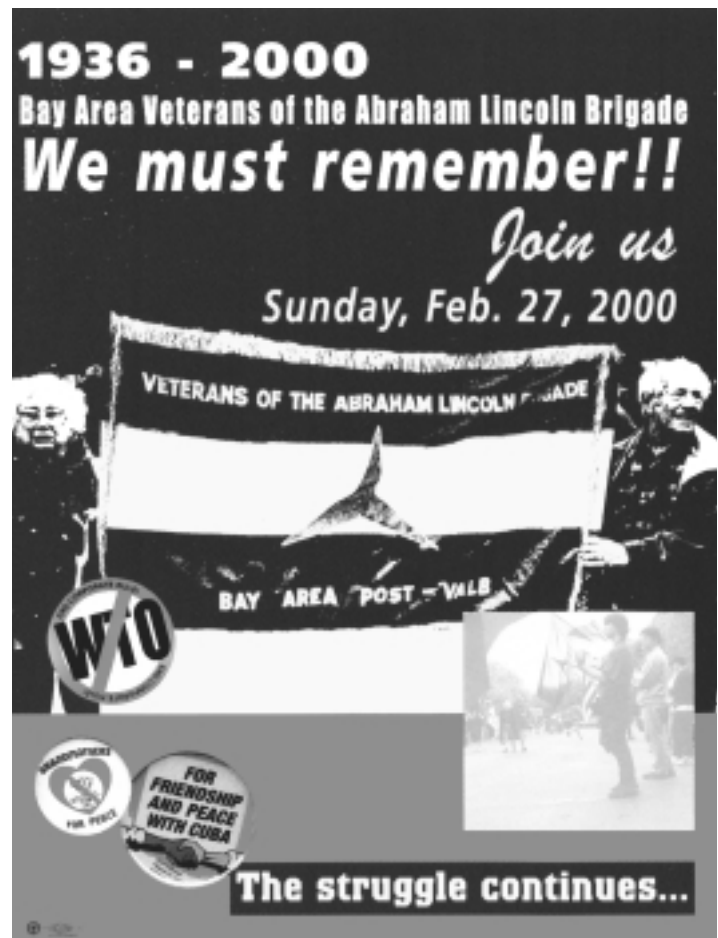
Bay Area Honors Vets February 27; New York Reunion April 30

As the torch of activism passes from the Veterans of the Lincoln Brigade to a new generation of activists, the Bay Area Post is presenting an original theatrical performance on Sunday, February 27, that celebrates the living tradition of political commitment. Titled "We Must Remember," the show is scripted by director Peter Glazer (whose credits include "Woody Guthrie's American Song" and "Heart of Spain"), with musical direction by Bruce Barthol, and features performers from the dynamic San Francisco Mime Troupe. The show will also be the highlight of the Veterans' annual reunion program in New York City on Sunday, April 30 at the Borough of Manhattan Community College.

For information and tickets for the Bay Area event, call 510-582-7699. [Note: The last issue of The Volunteer printed the West Coast date incorrectly.] For the New York affair, contact the VALB office at 212-674-5552.

The title of this year's program is taken from the first line of Edwin Rolfe's stirring poem "Postscript to a War:" "We must remember clearly why we fought/clearly why we left these inadequate shores/and turned our eyes, hearts, Spainward." Rolfe, a veteran of the Lincoln Brigade, wrote the first history of the U.S. volunteers in 1939.

"In that spirit," said Glazer, "this commemoration will address the importance of memory. As the ideals and passions of the 30s seem to slip even further into the past, recalling the actions of those who risked their lives to defend democracy becomes all the more



important. In addition, the kind of engaged activism that the Lincoln Brigade has exemplified for decades must be acknowledged as a model for new generations of activists."

"'We Must Remember'" will not only look to the past," Glazer explained, "but purposefully cast its gaze at the present and the future. We are already planning to attract an audience of young activists to this year's affair, people who may seek inspiration and energy in the legacy of the Lincoln Brigade."

The Volunteer

c/o Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade
799 Broadway, Rm. 227
New York, NY 10003

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