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# VOLUNTEER FOR LIBERTY

2 Articles from the JOURNAL.....

## THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADERS

MILTON WOLFF

A year ago, today, the hills and valleys, the towns and cities of Northern Italy resounded with the victorious shouts of the Italian partisans. Milano had been reconquered and Mussolini hung high by his heels in the main square. Above the radio station, the fascist flag was hurled to the ground and the red-starred Italian flag of the partisans replaced it. People who remained indoors and those gathered in cafes and public squares cocked their ears. They were waiting for the first words of liberation to come from Station Milan. All Italy was electrified by those first few words, "Today Milano has been liberated --- tomorrow, MADRID!"

Luigi Gallo, commissar of the International Brigades, now known as Luigi Longo, top commander of all the partisan armies of Northern Italy, was speaking not only to the people of Italy but to the people of Spain, as well. And not only Gallo.

The songs of the IB, born and memorized on the battlefields of Spain were carried all around the world and were heard by men everywhere fighting against the Axis.

Yes, even in Burma. In a bamboo chabola outside of Mytkina a fever-ridden little man sang, "Freiheit" to a group of wounded Chinese soldiers. They understood him because he was singing in Chinese. Dr. Freudman, who eight years ago sang the same song in Spain as he healed our wounded comrades, had never stopped fighting fascism. With ten other doctors he had gone from Spain to China. These eleven doctors, Bear and Jungermann among them, had hoped to reach the Chinese Red Army then locked in battle with the Japanese and badly in need of medical help. For three years they were kept isolated in a small village in Central China, far away from the fighting fronts. It seemed that Chiang Kaichek disliked these fighting anti-fascists ... even then. But in that little village, as they bided their time, they did their work ... healing the bodies and the minds of the oppressed peasants. Later on some of them were able to join the Americans and Chinese in the fighting in Burma.

When Quisling sold his rotten soul and Norway to Hitler, a man who had fought in Spain made for the high mountains of his country. There he became one of the central figures of the resistance movement. The Nazis were never comfortable in Norway ... or safe. The partisans of Norway played a decisive role in the liberation of their country. The IB'er who played a leading role in the fight against the invaders is now a General in the Norwegian Army.



When the Japanese invaded the Phillipines, thousands of men who refused to surrender found refuge and a base for operations in the jungles west of Manila. Among them were certain South Americans who had fought in Spain and had lived in the Phillipines. In a very short space of time they had organized the farmers of the hill countries and some of the jungle tribes into an effective guerrilla movement. The Japanese were pinned down in Manila and a heavy toll was taken of them every time they dispatched a clean-up party into guerrilla country.

The same story can be told of every country where the plague of fascism struck. The men of Spain were always there and always fighting. Tito and dozens of others in Yugoslavia. Gallo and almost a full company in Italy. A battalion of men in France plus several regiments of Spanish Republicans who fought up and down North Africa, Southern France, to the heart of Paris ... and even participated in a commando raid on Norway, Greece, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. In Poland their story is legend. There they fought in the underground against terrific odds. Against German and fascist Pole alike. Four Generals and the Chief of Staff of the new Polish Army are men who fought in Spain.

Yes, and in Germany too, miraculously, 400 Germans who had fought in the Thaelmann Brigade managed to keep alive in spite of starvation and torture. And when the Allied Armies approached they struck.

Fighting with bare hands they killed or captured their storm trooper guards and liberated the prisoners of their concentration camps. When the Allies arrived they found these men - not waiting... they found them fighting. Now they are the leaders of a new Germany.

The men who fought in Spain kept right on fighting. Sometimes the fighting overtook them as in France ... sometimes they parachuted into the fight as in Yugoslavia and Italy ... and again they went by boat or submarine as in Norway and Greece. Usually they got there by sheer guts and the use of their feet.

Most times they became the hard core around which the resistance movements were built. This was so, not because they had learned the techniques of war in Spain, but because they had learned that the people have within them unlimited resources of strength. The people of Spain had taught the men of the world who came to fight there that they were capable of fighting against all odds when their rights, their liberty and their nationhood were endangered.

Today these men of the IB's have won recognition in most of the countries of Europe. They are held in high esteem by the people and many of them fill important Governmental posts. They are working overtime purging their countries of the last remnants of fascism and at solving the problems created by the ruin of war. But they haven't forgotten Spain.

Since the liberation of Europe (with the exception of Spain) IB conventions have been held in Paris, London, Warsaw and Belgrade. These conventions have given rebirth to the slogan, "Make Madrid the tomb of Fascism". The recent storm of protest that swept Europe when Spanish patriots fell before the guns of Franco's firing squads, speaks eloquently of the work that these men are doing. The closing of the French border and the branding of Franco as a peace outlaw to be brought before the security council has been the result.

There can be no question of our IB'ers resting on their laurels while fascism still exists in Spain ... or elsewhere. They and we have shared in our V-E and V-J days ... now all together, we fight alongside the men and women of Spain for a V-Spain Day ... but soon. The next convention of the IB's must take place in MADRID!



# *The Fifteenth Anniversary of the Spanish Republic*

HAROLD SMITH

A People's Government is more, much more than an organized administration and a state apparatus. It is a belief in the hearts of its people - an idea which has imperishable strength. Of such a government it can be said that even if it is driven from its homeland by overwhelming force, it is a live and potent force. Such is the Spanish Republic which this April celebrates its 15th Anniversary. It is correct to use the word "celebrates" despite the fact that the Republic has no legal existence on the fascist-infested soil of Spain. The people of the Republic, in exile or in the underground, have kept the political concept of their Republic alive. They have done this not only by their maintenance of the formal existence of the Spanish Republican Government in Exile but even more so by their great deeds in the war against Hitler and Mussolini. To the Spanish Republicans there was no separation between the war that they fought against Franco on their own soil from 1936 to 1939 and the war that was fought against Franco's masters on the soil of North Africa and France. Their thinking was straight in an anti-fascist direction. When they fought Franco, they realized that they were fighting Hitler and Mussolini, even though "non-intervention" was the abacadabra word of fascism and its appeasers in those days. Similarly, when the men and women of the Republic fought against Hitler and Mussolini on other fronts, they realized that they were fighting against Franco, even though Franco had substituted the word "neutrality" for the word "non-intervention". Words of this type are the stock in trade of imperialists. Action for freedom and justice, even at the risk of one's own life, is the distinguishing mark of the true anti-fascist.

Put the record of the Spanish Republicans before the people of the world - let it be examined. It stands up to any test. They have proven their devotion to the ideals of democracy on the battlefield of Spain and the battlefields of lands strange to them as only a foreign land can be strange. They have endured with fortitude and faith in the concentration camps of Franco, Petain and Hitler. They have struck from the hills together with the French Maquis against the Nazi troops and kept Franco in constant fear with their undefeated guerrilla troops in Spain itself. Their loyalty to the Republic has been demonstrated. It is a loyalty which is based upon more than belief in their own Republic. It is a loyalty which draws its tremendous strength from profound, unshakeable belief in the principles upon which their Republic is founded.

These principles have world-wide application and therefore Spanish Republicans have fought for these principles all over the globe. These principles are held by the best representatives of the people of all countries. Therefore the Spanish Republicans have always allied their efforts with the people. By their actions the Spanish Republicans have proved that they understood the full implication of the phrase first put forward by Josef Stalin in 1937: "The cause of Spain is the cause of all progressive mankind." They fight for the re-establishment of their Republic not only for the sake of Spain but for the sake of all mankind.

On this 15th Anniversary of the Spanish Republic, we again pledge ourselves that the Spanish Republicans will not fight alone. A reborn Republic in a Spain cleansed of fascism is our task as much as theirs.

We salute the 15th Anniversary of the Spanish Republic-confident that the 16th Anniversary will be celebrated in Madrid.



# THE EASTERN SEABOARD CONFERENCE OF THE VALB

Conferring in an extraordinary parley, the Eastern wing of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, resolved to organize and spearhead a mass movement for the restoration of the Spanish Republic. Milt Wolff, whose address keynoted the one and a half day conference, Feb. 9-10, said that the time was never riper for "making Spain the tomb of European fascism."

Frenchie Robinson, delivering his final report as Executive Secretary of the New York Post, paid tribute to the work of the late David McElvy White and the past services of Jack BJose, newly re-elected Executive Secretary. He reviewed the work of the post during the war years, and called attention to the stepped up activity since V-J Day with the return of many veterans.

Lively discussion developed around each report from the floor. More than 150 delegates from five states treked to Manhattan Center, N.Y.C., to attend the first postwar Eastern Seaboard Conference.

One of the invited and honored guests was Johannes Steel, progressive radio commentator, who ran for Congress on the ALP ticket in the recent by-election held in N.Y. He said Spain showed the character of world fascism and also indicated how it should be fought. He drew a parallel between Germany 1930-32 and America 1946, to point up the necessity for progressive action. He vilified the Woods-Rankin Committee for their attempt to intimidate the JAFRC and liberal groups.

Dr. Ed Barsky of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee told of the desperate need of the Spanish Refugees for food, clothing and medical supplies. UNRRA and other allied nations relief organs are not rendering these first victims of fascism any assistance.

Carmen Meana, Spanish trade unionist, warned against the diplomatic mumbo-jumbo designed to sell out the Spanish people. She said that world imperialism would save the Franco fascist regime if permitted. She termed the present moment the most crucial for Franco for he is frantically begging for six months' time to entrench his regime. She pointed out that it is now the sixth year since he took power.

Milt Wolff, pro-tem Director of the American Committee for Spanish Democracy, urged in his report that the VALB expand into a broader organization, something akin to the former "Friends" of the VALB for the purpose of accelerating Spain work. Without losing identity as a veterans organization, he illustrated how this can be accomplished by reviewing the work of a similar English organization called the IB association. He said that during the work this group had given real aid to "our IB comrades in Europe who suffered through bitter years of imprisonment."

He reviewed the work of many organizations at home and abroad to aid Spain, to aid the guerrillas inside Spain and the refugees, abandoned by UNRRA and other relief agencies. He called attention to the prestige of IB'ers in Yugoslavia, France, Poland and England. Invitations were received here to attend I.B. conventions in those four countries. Only by expanding our organization, he said, can we form Spain groups in cities and areas where our numbers are less concentrated than in N.Y.



Much detailed discussion developed from this point of Wolff's address. A decision was finally reached to empower the Executive Board to immediately organize a large mass movement with a four point program: 1. Restore the Spanish Republic; 2. Aid guerrillas; 3. Aid European I.B.'ers; 4. Inclusion of other national group, I.B. veterans in Spain work.

Six resolutions were passed including: 1. Break relations with Franco Spain and publish the correspondence between Franco, Mussolini and Hitler, in the possession of our State Department; 2. Expel from the VALB Alex Schwartzman and Charles Keith for their disruptive work hindering the anti-Franco campaign; 3. Urge UNRRA aid and give preferential treatment to I.B.'ers and Spanish Refugees; 4. Demand the termination of the Woods-Rankin Un-American Committee; 5. Support demands of Veterans of World War II; 6. Request that all G.I.s be withdrawn from countries excepting where needed for occupation and valid military necessity.

Following are the newly elected officers of the N.Y. Post. (Only local post members voted.) Commander, Milt Felsen; Adjutant, Bert Jackson; Secretary-Treasurer, Dick Fein; Recording Secretary, Ken Bridenthal; Executive Secretary, Jack BJose.

The following were elected to the new executive board: Felix Kusman, Danny Groden, Milton Wolff, Angela Guest, George Chaiken, Hal Smith, Nils Berg, Carl Geiser, Vaughn Love, Frenchie Robinson, L. Pena, Dino Neri, Nick Demos, Lenny Lamb, Jacky Shafron, Irv Goff, Moe Fishman, Bill McCarthy, Dr. Mark Strauss, Marty Friedman, Tony Paige, Larry Cane, Herman Lopez, Curley Mendelowitz and Phil Crane.

It was decided to call a national convention between now and early summer. Other posts will be informed so that a definite date can be set and funds raised to send sizeable delegations to the proposed convention. The conference ended on a note of optimism and with definite perspectives for the tasks which confront the organization.

Puerto Rico, March 23, 1946

Dear Jack;

Just a note to advise you of the death of a member of the VALB -- Fernando Moll Gonzalea. He had been wounded at the Ebro -- a head wound.

He was operated on at Mt. Sinai a while ago and while the operation was considered successful, he was warned to take it easy. He didn't and joined the merchant marine. He was buried Friday and at the first Catholic Church his body was taken to the American priest -- a Padre Miguel -- refused entry to the casket because it was covered with a Spanish flag.

Sincerely,

Helen Simon

We deeply regret the loss of Comrade Moll whom we learned to love and respect in his short stay here. V.A.L.B.



# OPERATION ALBANY

The men of Albany don't sleep so well these nights. Any dream they may have had about the veterans of this war quietly accepting a postwar reconversion to homelessness, joblessness, and insecurity have already been knocked into a cocked hat by two recent delegations of fighting mad ex-G.I.'s.

On January 22nd, over 100 vets representing CIO, AFL, American Legion, community groups and other organizations, took over the Assembly Hall of the State Legislature in Albany and changed what had been a routine legislative gab-fest into a meeting that was suddenly made sharply aware that the veterans want an immediate and adequate solution to their desperate housing needs!

Less than three weeks later, on February 12th, a bi-partisan legislative committee invited veterans of the state to present their views on the proposed State-wide bonus. The committee's early intention to confine the discussion to the bonus question alone, was overwhelmingly brushed aside when veteran speakers, following the lead of CIO spokesmen heading a delegation of more than 250 union vets, made the hearings a forum for a full scale program designed to provide jobs, housing and security for all veterans regardless of race, color or creed.

The Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, it goes without saying, added its voice to the progressive demands of both delegations. The Veterans of this war are definitely on the move -- on the picket lines -- in the unions -- in Albany -- in Washington helping to shape the things to come. The VALB is welcomed in all these home front struggles of the vets -- (after all we've got seniority).

Dear Vet:

We have begun to step up our activities against Franco and against Fascism all over the country. From Los Angeles to New York we hear from our members as to the specific actions they are taking. In Milwaukee they chased one of Franco's henchmen out of his hotel and into hiding. In Los Angeles they sponsored a successful mass meeting and in Philadelphia they are aiding in the plans for a large fund-raising dinner. In Minnesota, Wisconsin, Detroit and Chicago, petition and clothing drives are being held. Slowly but surely the Vets are taking over the lead in the fight against Franco. Here in New York, we were responsible for a large part of a mass delegation which went to Washington in defense of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, subpoenaed by the Woods Anti-American Committee. This tool of the reactionary, pro-Franco, pro-Fascist forces in our country has taken upon itself the job of holding up the effective work which the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee has been doing for the Spanish people.

Our delegation met with great success and we are again assured that with plenty of mass pressure Spain's voice can be heard loud and clear and where it helps! The delegation of vets which went to the State Department was not surprised when it heard the double-talk given out by Mr. Culbertson and Mr. Horsey who are in charge of matters concerning Spain. On the one hand they said, "We still feel the same way about Franco and the Falange - they must be removed." On the other hand, they said, "We know and have approved the sale of surplus war materials to Franco, including planes. There have been two other sales before this." Once again the facts are clear - Franco is building up his strength with the help of the reactionaries in our country and the State Department. We must build our strength accordingly.

In closing, I am taking this opportunity to say goodbye to a job which was a pleasure. I'll be around, where I can be found, and will help in every way possible.

Salud! Frenchy Robinson



# "THE NEW STAGE IN THE WAGE STRUGGLES"

HARRY MENSCH

The Missouri Compromiser - elevated to the White House by accident and by party compromise with the forces of privilege - continues along the path of compromise and capitulation to Big Business.

The consequences (if not averted by an aroused people) of his latest and perhaps most dangerous compromise could be as disastrous to present day America as was the ill famed Missouri Compromise of an earlier period.

The Missouri Compromise did not settle the issue of chattel slavery. It gave strength and encouragement for the preparation of the slave-owners rebellion against the Union.

Truman's wage-price formula does not settle the issue of wages or prices. It does not settle the issue of industrial peace and security.

It lends itself to the aim of Big Business to limit wage advances to 33% above the January 1941 level. At the same time, if it does not actually open the door for further unchecked price increases, neither has it locked the door. Instead, on the price door it has hung out a sign marked "welcome", and the great corporations and their friends in Congress lift their hats and prepare to enter.

Industry is given an opportunity to get still higher prices despite the fact that the present wage demands of the workers are based on the increased cost of living resulting from price increases ALREADY given to the opponents of price control.

These price increases are ALREADY as much as 16% more than the fraudulent 33% cost of living yardstick which the Administration proposes as a ceiling on wages.

Even the Wall Street organ, Dun's Review, in its January 1946 issue, reports that food prices have risen at least 43% and clothing 46% above the January 1941 level.

And the Office of War Mobilization has issued a report which reveals that industry has already gotten enough "price relief" to enable it to double its prewar profits without further price increases, even in the face of a 25% general wage increase for the workers.

In 1940, in the first of 40 volumes exposing the increasing concentration of economic power in the United States, the Temporary Economic Committee, appointed by President Roosevelt, gave an example of the thinking and aims of the forces who now hope to use the President's wage-price formula to destroy all price control while they seek to put collective bargaining in irons marked "33%".

"If I were in a position to write the ticket for industry in this country, I should give each industry the right to name the prices at which its products should be sold, and I should enforce these price determinations through the due process of law."

This statement, made by a corporation economist, indeed exposes the Big Business conspiracy aimed at writing a ticket of high prices and high profits for industry, and low wages, unemployment and economic crisis for the American people.



This is the meaning of the grave danger inherent in the President's wage-price formula. The great corporations aim to use it to rob labor and the people of the fruits of the first successful postwar engagements in the battle against monopoly led by the CIO.

The labor movement will not accept the extension into peacetime of a government imposed limitation on purchasing power. Such limits upon collective bargaining, originally adopted in the fight to win the war against fascism, would rob America of President Roosevelt's Economic Bill of Rights which we fought the war to make secure. The imposition of such measures in peacetime can only be explained as an effort to subsidize abnormally high profits for Big Business at the expense of those who did the working and fighting to build a better life for our country.

The livelihood of more than 130 million Americans and the future peace and progress of the whole world is still in the balance.

President Truman claims that his concessions to Big Business has only created a "bulge" in the price line. But today, labor knows that it cannot depend on the Administration to stop the offensive of the big trusts. Only a vigorous and determined fight of the working citizens of our country can prevent the "bulge" from becoming a runaway breakthrough of inflation.

The next round in the battle against monopoly has already commenced, even before the first round is fully won on the picket lines.

In the new phase of the battle, labor will continue to press for its just economic wage demands. It will redouble the political battle against the inflation of prices and the deflation of democracy.

The magnates of money and vested privilege have not been stopped.

They are playing for big stakes; the complete conquest of economic and political power at home, and the earth with all of its inhabitants, as subjects, paying tribute to the Billionaire possessors of the ATOMIC DOLLAR.

## *German International Brigaders*

By HANS KAHLE

Former Commander of the 45th Division - Spanish Republican Army

German International Brigaders and Free German soldiers in the Allied Forces - the only Germans, (in the words of the great German writer Heinrich Mann) "who in thirty years of war fought on the side of freedom." - are now returning home from many parts of Europe. They are eager and determined to play their part in the complete eradication of Nazism and in the peaceful and democratic reconstruction of their country.

First to return to Germany were the exiles whom Franco and Laval handed over to the Gestapo. They had been abroad for many years, spent in the concentration camps of Franco, Daladier and Petain. They were liberated by the Red Army from Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. Among them were Franz Dahlem, who commanded the XI Brigade during the Teruel and Aragon battles, and Heinrich Rau, Karl Hess and Herman Streit.



When these men returned to their homes they were entrusted with important posts in the new democratic administration and in the leadership of the Free Trade Unions and the anti-Fascist political parties. Heinrich Rau is director of the Agricultural Department of Brandenburg Province, in charge of carrying out the land reform decrees. His department has already earmarked nearly two million acres for distribution among the small farmers, agricultural workers and deportees from the east.

As early as the autumn of 1940 German opponents of Hitler of every political and religious persuasion - among them a number of International Brigaders - started underground work among the soldiers of the Wehrmacht in France. They fought Nazi ideology and conducted peace propaganda. In 1941 these small groups began to contact the Resistance Movements in France, Holland and Belgium, and formed "Section T.A." (Travail Allemand) - German work.

The Resistance Movement officially entrusted them with illegal propaganda inside the Wehrmacht, the Todt Organization, the German Railroad, etc. Out of this work grew the "Free Germany" Committee in the West and its affiliated organizations in Belgium and Holland.

The fought by the side of the Maquis in the regions of Toulon, Toulouse and Nice, and took part in a number of engagements with the police and Gestapo. Through their devotion to the French people's struggle against the Nazi invaders and their sacrifices at the side of the Maquis, the German anti-Fascists in France won the respect, confidence and full support of the French Resistance Movement, which recognized that these German democrats had begun by their deeds to atone for the crimes committed by Hitler's Germany.

S.I.M.

WE ARE HAPPY TO WELCOME HOME: Capt. Saul Birnbaum, Ed. Lending, Johnny Perrone, Neil Wesson and Arthur Silverstein.

APARTMENT WANTED. (Don't laugh). Tommy Lloyd tells us that if he can get an apartment he'll get married. So if you want to help the cause of true love, let us know if you hear of any. P.S. He just got the apartment, so he's getting married April 6!

NEW ADDITIONS to the sons and daughters of the VALB is Robbin George on January 17 to the George Cullinens. This is the second addition to the Cullinen family.

LINCOLN VETS returned from this war and now in leading positions are: Milton Felsen, publicity director for CIO Vets Committee, Johnny Gates and Saul Wellman, working in the National Vets Committee of the C.P., Milt Wolff, acting National Director of the American Committee for Spanish Freedom and campaign director of the new committee, The Action Committee to Free Spain Now, to mention only a few.

THE BRIGADE GOES TO TOWN: for the guys outside of New York, who may not have heard about it, the Lincolns, together with the American Committee for Spanish Freedom, have given birth to a new baby -- the Action Committee to Free Spain Now -- which will (we hope) initiate a new committee for speeding up the job on Franco at a city wide conference March 30 at Carnegie Hall, in connection with this Conference we have already held two mass picket lines in front of the Spanish Consulate, involving 3,000 people, participated in two picket lines against Churchill, together with the CIO and the AYD, held a demonstration Friday, March 22, on Times Square and will



hold another at Madison Square Park on April 13, will sponsor community rallies the week of April 1 to 7th, hold Tag Days May 2, 3 and 4 and wind up the campaign with a dinner at the Hotel Roosevelt on May 8.

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER of the American Veterans Committee, I was informed the other day, recently voted to call itself the Herman Bottcher chapter of the A.V.C.

ALEC BURLEIGH has decided to don bell bottom trousers and follow in the footsteps of his Liverpool brothers.

NEW MEMBERS - Grace and John Day from St. Louis, Missouri, both Vets, have gotten in touch with us for the first time -- Welcome Home!

SPRING DANCE - This year the Vets are resuming their annual Spring Dance, which is being held Saturday, April 13, at usual stamping ground - Manhattan Center.

WE HOPE you like the articles we reprint elsewhere in this issue from the Journal that is going to be issued in connection with the Spring Dance.

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# Spring Dance

SAT. APRIL, 13<sup>th</sup>

Manhattan Center

NORWOOD FENNER ORCHESTRA

Don't Miss It!

VOPWA  
16-59