Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship

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If it is plausible that ideology will in general serve as a mask for self-interest, then it is a natural presumption that intellectuals, in interpreting history or formulating policy, will tend to adopt an elitist position, condemning popular movements and mass participation in decision-making, and emphasizing rather the necessity for supervision by those who possess the knowledge and understanding that is required (so they claim) to manage society and control social change. This is hardly a novel thought. One major element in the anarchist critique of Marxism a century ago was the prediction that, as Bakunin formulated it:

> "According to the theory of Mr. Marx, the people not only must not destroy [the state] but must strengthen it and place it at the complete disposal of their benefactors, guardians, and teachers-the leaders of the Communist party, namely Mr. Marx and his friends, who will proceed to liberate humankind in their own Way. They will concentrate the reins of government in a strong hand, because the ignorant people require an exceedingly firm guardianship; they Will establish a single state bank, concentrating in its hands all commercial, industrial, agricultural and even scientific production, and then divide the masses into two armies-industrial and agricultural-under the direct command of the state engineers, who will constitute a new privileged scientific-political estate."[1]

[1] Cited in Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1967). pp. 93–94. A recent reformulation of this view is given by Anton Pannekoek, the Dutch scientist and spokesman for libertarian communism, in his *Workers Councils* (Melbourne, 1950), pp. 36–37:

> It is not for the first time that a ruling class tries to explain, and so to perpetuate, its rule as the consequences of an inborn difference between two kinds of people, one destined by nature to ride, the other to be ridden. The landowning aristocracy of former centuries defended their privileged position by boasting their extraction from a nobler race of conquerors that had subdued the lower race of common people. Big capitalists explain their dominating place by the assertion that they have brains and other people have none. In the same way now especially the intellectuals, considering themselves the rightful rulers of tomorrow, claim their spiritual superiority. They form the rapidly increasing class of university-trained officials and free professions, specialized in mental work, in study of books and of science, and they consider themselves as the people most gifted with intellect. Hence they are destined to be leaders of the production, whereas the ungifted mass shall execute the manual work, for which no brains are needed. They are no defenders of capitalism; not capital, but intellect should direct labor. The more so, since now society is such a complicated structure, based on abstract and difficult science, that only the highest intellectual acumen is capable of embracing, grasping and handling it. Should the working masses, from lack of insight, fail to acknowledge this need

One cannot fail to be struck by the parallel between this prediction and that of Daniel Bell — the prediction that in the new postindustrial society, not only the best talents, but eventually the entire complex of social prestige and social status, will be rooted in the intellectual and scientific communities Pursuing the parallel for a moment, it might be asked whether the left-wing critique of Leninist elitism can be applied, under very different conditions, to the liberal ideology of the intellectual elite that aspires to a dominant role in managing the Welfare state.[2]

Rosa Luxemburg, in 1918, argued that Bolshevik elitism would lead to state of society in which the bureaucracy alone would remain an active element in social life — though now it would be the "Red bureaucracy" of that state socialism that Bakunin had long before described as "the most vile and terrible lie that our century has created."[3] A true social revolution requires a "spiritual transformation in the masses degraded by centuries of bourgeois class rule";[4] "it is only by extirpating the habits of obedience and servility to the last root that the Working class can acquire the understanding of a new form of discipline, self-discipline arising from free consent."[5] Writing in 1904, she predicted that Lenin's organizational concepts would "enslave a young labor movement to an intellectual elite hungry for power … and turn it into an automaton manipulated by a Central Committee."[6] In the Bolshevik elitist doctrine of 1918, she saw a disparagement of the creative, spontaneous, self-correcting force of mass action, which alone, she argued, could solve the thousand problems of social reconstruction and produce the spiritual transformation that is the essence of a true social revolution. As Bolshevik practice hardened into dogma, the fear of popular initiative and spontaneous mass action, not under the direction and control of the properly designated hated vanguard, became a dominant element of so-called "Communist" ideology.

Antagonism to mass movements and to social change that escapes the control of privileged elites is also a prominent feature of contemporary liberal ideology.[7] I would like to investigate how, in one rather crucial case, this particular bias in American liberal ideology can be detected even in the interpretation of events of the past in which American involvement was rather slight, and in historical work of very high caliber.

In 1966, the American Historical Association gave its biennial award for the most outstanding work on European history to Gabriel Jackson, for his study of Spain in the 1930s.[8] There is no question that of the dozens of books on this period, Jackson's is among the best, and I do not doubt that the award was well deserved. The Spanish Civil War is one of the crucial events of modern history, and one of the most extensively studied as well. In it, we find the interplay of forces and ideas that have dominated European history since the industrial revolution. What is more, the

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of superior intellectual lead, should they stupidly try to take the direction into their own hands, chaos and ruin will be the inevitable consequence.

[2] Albert Parry has suggested that there are important similarities between the emergence of a scientific elite in the Soviet Union and the United States, in their growing role in decision-making, citing Bell's thesis in support. See the *New York Times*, March 27, 1966, reporting on the Midwest Slavic Conference.

[3] Letter to Herzen and Ogareff, 1866, cited in Daniel Gnerm, *Jeunesse du socialisme libertaire* (Paris: Librairie Marcel Riviere, 1959), p. 119.

[4] Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution*, trans. Bertram D. Wolfe (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 71.

[5] Luxemburg, cited by Guerin, *Jeunesse du socialisme libertaire*, pp. 106–7.

[6] *Leninism or Marxism*, in Luxemburg, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

[7] For a very enlightening study of this matter, emphasizing domestic issues, see Michael Paul Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy: The Radical Specter* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1967).

[8] *The Spanish Republic and the Civil War: 1931–1939* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965).

relationship of Spain to the great powers was in many respects like that of the countries of what is now called the Third World. In some ways, then, the events of the Spanish Civil War give a foretaste of what the future may hold, as Third World revolutions uproot traditional societies, threaten imperial dominance, exacerbate great-power rivalries, and bring the world perilously close to a war which, if not averted, will surely be the final catastrophe of modern history. My reason for wanting to investigate an outstanding liberal analysis of the Spanish Civil War is therefore twofold: first, because of the intrinsic interest of these events; and second, because of the insight that this analysis may provide with respect to the underlying elitist bias which I believe to be at the root of the phenomenon of counterrevolutionary subordination.

In his study of the Spanish Republic, Jackson makes no attempt to hide his own commitment in favor of liberal democracy, as represented by such figures as Azaña, Casares Quiroga, Martinez Barrio,[9] and the other "responsible national leaders." In taking this position, he speaks for much of liberal scholarship; it is fair to say that figures similar to those just mentioned would be supported by American liberals, were this possible, in Latin America, Asia, or Africa. Furthermore, Jackson makes little attempt to disguise his antipathy toward the forces of popular revolution in Spain, or their goals.

It is no criticism of Jackson's study that his point of view and sympathies are expressed with such clarity. On the contrary, the value of this work as an interpretation of historical events is enhanced by the fact that the author's commitments are made so clear and explicit. But I think it can be shown that Jackson's account of the popular revolution that took place in Spain is misleading and in part quite unfair, and that the failure of objectivity it reveals is highly significant in that it is characteristic of the attitude taken by liberal (and Communist) intellectuals toward revolutionary movements that are largely spontaneous and only loosely organized, while rooted in deeply felt needs and ideals of dispossessed masses. It is a convention of scholarship that the use of such terms as those of the preceding phrase demonstrates naiveté and muddle-headed sentimentality. The convention, however, is supported by ideological conviction rather than history or investigation of the phenomena of social life. This conviction is, I think, belied by such events as the revolution that swept over much of Spain in the summer of 1936.

The circumstances of Spain in the 1930s are not duplicated elsewhere in the underdeveloped world today, to be sure. Nevertheless, the limited information that we have about popular movements in Asia, specifically, suggests certain similar features that deserve much more serious and sympathetic study than they have so far received.[10] Inadequate information makes it hazardous

[9] Respectively, president of the Republic, prime minister from May until the Franco insurrection, and member of the conservative wing of the Popular Front selected by Azafia to try to set up a compromise government after the insurrection.

[10] It is interesting that Douglas Pike's very hostile account of the National Liberation Front, cited earlier, emphasizes the popular and voluntary element in its striking organizational successes. What he describes, whether accurately or not one cannot tell, is a structure of interlocking self-help organizations, loosely coordinated and developed through persuasion rather than force — in certain respects, of a character that would have appealed to anarchist thinkers, who speak so freely of the "authoritarian Vietcong" may be correct, but they have presented little evidence to support their judgment. Of course, it must be understood that Pike regards the element of voluntary mass participation in self-help associations as the most dangerous and insidious feature of the NLF organizational structure.

Also relevant is the history of collectivization in China, which, as compared with the Soviet Union, shows a much higher reliance on persuasion and mutual aid than on force and terror, and appears to have been more successful. See Thomas P. Bernstein, "Leadership and Mass Mobilisation in the Soviet and Chinese Collectivization Campaigns of 1929–30 and 1955–56: A Comparison," *China Quarterly*, no. 31 (July-September 1967), pp. 1–47, for some interesting and suggestive comments and analysis.

to try to develop any such parallel, but I think it is quite possible to note long-standing tendencies in the response of liberal as well as Communist intellectuals to such mass movements.

As I have already remarked, the Spanish Civil War is not only one of the critical events of modern history but one of the most intensively studied as well. Yet there are surprising gaps. During the months following the Franco insurrection in July 1936, a social revolution of unprecedented scope took place throughout much of Spain. It had no "revolutionary vanguard" and appears to have been largely spontaneous, involving masses of urban and rural laborers in a radical transformation of social and economic conditions that persisted, with remarkable success, until it was crushed by force. This predominantly anarchist revolution and the massive social transformation to which it gave rise are treated, in recent historical studies, as a kind of aberration, a nuisance that stood in the way of successful prosecution of the war to save the bourgeois regime from the Franco rebellion. Many historians would probably agree with Eric Hobsbawm[11] that the failure of social revolution in Spain "was due to the anarchists," that anarchism was "a disaster," a kind of "moral gymnastics" with no "concrete results," at best "a profoundly moving spectacle for the student of popular religion." The most extensive historical study of the anarchist revolution[12] is relatively inaccessible, and neither its author, now living in southern France, nor the many refugees who will never write memoirs but who might provide invaluable personal testimony have been consulted, apparently, by writers of the major historical works.[13] The one published

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The scale of the Chinese Revolution is so great and reports in depth are so fragmentary that it would no doubt be foolhardy to attempt a general evaluation. Still, all the reports I have been able to study suggest that insofar as real successes were achieved in the several stages of land reform, mutual aid, collectivization, and formation of communes, they were traceable in large part to the complex interaction of the Communist party cadres and the gradually evolving peasant associations, a relation which seems to stray far from the Leninist model of organization. This is particularly evident in William Hinton's magnificent study *Fanshen* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966), which is unparalleled, to my knowledge, as an analysis of a moment of profound revolutionary change. What seems to me particularly striking in his account of the early stages of revolution in one Chinese village is not only the extent to which party cadres submitted themselves to popular control, but also, and more significant, the ways in which exercise of control over steps of the revolutionary process was a factor in developing the consciousness and insight of those who took part in the revolution, not only from a political and social point of view, but also with respect to the human relationships that were created. It is interesting, in this connection, to note the strong populist element in early Chinese Marxism. For some very lluminating observations about this general matter, see Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967).

I am not suggesting that the anarchist revolution in Spain — with its background of more than thirty years of education and struggle — is being relived in Asia, but rather that the spontaneous and voluntary elements in popular mass movements have probably been seriously misunderstood because of the instinctive antipathy toward such phenomena among intellectuals, and more recently, because of the insistence on interpreting them in terms of Cold War mythology.

[11] "The Spanish Background," *New Left Review*, no. 40 (November-December 1966), pp. 85–90.

[12] Jose Peirats, *La C.N.T. en la revolution espanola*, 3 vols. (Toulouse: Ediciones C.N.T., 1951–52). Jackson makes one passing reference to it. Peirats has since published a general history of the period, *Los anarquistas en la crisis politica espanola* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Alfa-Argentina, 1964). This highly informative book should certainly be made available to an English-speaking audience.

[13] An exception to the rather general failure to deal with the anarchist revolution is Hugh Thomas' "Anarchist Agrarian Collectives in the Spanish Civil War," in Martin Gilbert, ed., *A Century of Conflict, 1850–1950: Essays for A. J. P. Taylor* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1967), pp. 245–63. See note 60 below for some discussion. There is also much useful information in what to my mind is the best general history of the Civil War, *La Revolution et la guerre d'Espagne*, by Pierre Broue and Emile Temime (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1961). A concise and informative recent account is contained in Daniel Guerin, *L'Anarchisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965). In his extensive study *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1961; paperback ed. 1963), Hugh Thomas barely refers to the popular revolution, and some of the major events are not mentioned at all — see, for example, note 51 below.

collection of documents dealing with collectivization[14] has been published only by an anarchist press and hence is barely accessible to the general reader, and has also rarely been consulted — it does not, for example, appear in Jack son's bibliography, though Jackson's account is intended to be a social and political, not merely a military, history. In fact, this astonishing social upheaval seems to have largely passed from memory. The drama and pathos of the Spanish Civil War have by no means faded; witness the impact a few years ago of the film To Die in Madrid. Yet in this film (as Daniel Guérin points out) one finds no reference to the popular revolution that had transformed much of Spanish society.

I will be concerned here with the events of 1936–37,[15] and with one particular aspect of the complex struggle involving Franco Nationalists, Republicans (including the Communist party), anarchists, and socialist workers' groups. The Franco insurrection in July 1936 came against a background of several months of strikes, expropriations, and battles between peasants and Civil Guards. The left-wing socialist leader Largo Caballero had demanded in June that the workers be armed, but was refused by Azaña. When the coup came, the Republican government was paralyzed. Workers armed themselves in Madrid and Barcelona, robbing government armories and even ships in the harbor, and put down the insurrection while the government vacillated, torn between the twin dangers of submitting to Franco and arming the working classes. In large areas of Spain, effective authority passed into the hands of the anarchist and socialist workers who had played a substantial, generally dominant role in putting down the insurrection.

The next few months have frequently been described as a period of "dual power." In Barcelona, industry and commerce were largely collectivized, and a wave of collectivization spread through rural areas, as well as towns and villages, in Aragon, Castile, and the Levante, and to a lesser but still significant extent in many parts of Catalonia, Asturias, Estremadura, and Andalusia. Military power was exercised by defense committees; social and economic organization took many forms, following in main outlines the program of the Saragossa Congress of the anarchist CNT (Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo) in May 1936. The revolution was "apolitical," in the sense that its organs of power and administration remained separate from the central Republican government and, even after several anarchist leaders entered the government in the autumn of 1936, continued to function fairly independently until the revolution was finally crushed between the fascist and Communist-led Republican forces. The success of collectivization of industry and commerce in Barcelona impressed even highly unsympathetic observers such as Franz Borkenau. The scale of rural collectivization is indicated by these data from anarchist sources: in Aragon, 450 collectives with 500,000 members; in the Levante, 900 collectives accounting for about half

[14] *Collectivisations: l'oeuvre constructive de la Revolution espagnole*, 2nd ed. (Toulouse: Editions C.N.T., 1965). The first edition was published in Barcelona (Editions C.N.T.-F.A.I., 1937). There is an excellent and sympathetic summary by the Marxist scholar Karl Korsch, "Collectivization in Spain," in *Living Marxism*, vol. 4 (April 1939), pp. 179–82. In the same issue (pp. 170–71), the liberal-Communist reaction to the Spanish Civil War is summarized succinctly, and I believe accurately, as follows: "With their empty chatter as to the wonders of Bolshevik discipline, the geniality of Caballero, and the passions of the Pasionaria, the 'modern liberals' merely covered up their real desire for the destruction of all revolutionary possibilities in the Civil War, and their preparation for the possible war over the Spanish issue in the interest of their diverse fatherlands … what was truly revolutionary in the Spanish Civil War resulted from the direct actions of the workers and pauperized peasants, and not because of a specific form of labor organization nor an especially gifted leadership." I think that the record bears out this analysis, and I also think that it is this fact that accounts for the distaste for the revolutionary phase of the Civil War and its neglect in historical scholarship.

[15] An illuminating eyewitness account of this period is that of Franz Borkenau, *The Spanish Cockpit* (1938; reprinted Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963).

the agricultural production and 70 percent of marketing in this, the richest agricultural region of Spain; in Castile, 300 collectives with about 100,000 members.[16] In Catalonia, the bourgeois government headed by Luis Companys retained nominal authority, but real power was in the hands of the anarchist-dominated committees.

The period of July through September may be characterized as one of spontaneous, widespread, but unconsummated social revolution.[17] A number of anarchist leaders joined the government; the reason, as stated by Federica Montseny on January 3, 1937, was this: "…. the anarchists have entered the government to prevent the Revolution from deviating and in order to carry it further beyond the war, and also to oppose any dictatorial tendency, from wherever it might come."[18] The central government fell increasingly under Communist control — in Catalonia, under the control of the Communist-dominated PSUC (Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya) — largely as a result of the valuable Russian military assistance. Communist success was greatest in the rich farming areas of the Levante (the government moved to Valencia, capital of one of the provinces), where prosperous farm owners flocked to the Peasant Federation that the party had organized to protect the wealthy farmers; this federation "served as a powerful instrument in checking the

[16] Figures from Guerin, *L'Anarchisme*, p. 154.

[17] A useful account of this period is given by Felix Morrow, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* (1938; reprinted London, New Park Publications, 1963).

[18] Cited by Camillo Berneri in his "Lettre ouverte a la camarade Frederica [sic] Montseny," *Guerre de classes en Espagne* (Paris: 1946), a collection of items translated from his journal *Guerra di Classe*. Berneri was the outstanding anarchist intellectual in Spain. He opposed the policy of joining the government and argued for an alternative, more typically anarchist strategy to which I will return below. His own view toward joining the government was stated succinctly by a Catalan worker whom he quotes, with reference to the Republic of 1931: "It is always the old dog with a new collar." Events were to prove the accuracy of this analysis.

Berneri had been a leading spokesman of Italian anarchism. He left Italy after Mussolini's rise to power, and came to Barcelona on July 19, 1936. He formed the first Italian units for the antifascist war, according to anarchist historian Rudolf Rocker (*The Tragedy of Spain* [New York: Freie Arbeiter Stimme, 1937], p. 44). He was murdered, along with his older comrade Barbieri, during the May Days of 1937. (Arrested on May 5 by the Communist-controlled police, he was shot during the following night.) Hugh Thomas, in *The Spanish Civil War*, p. 428, suggests that "the assassins may have been Italian Communists" rather than the police. Thomas' book, which is largely devoted to military history, mentions Berneri's murder but makes no other reference to his ideas or role.

Berneri's name does not appear in Jackson's history.

rural collectivization promoted by the agricultural workers of the province."[19] Elsewhere as well, counterrevolutionary successes reflected increasing Communist dominance of the Republic.

The first phase of the counterrevolution was the legalization and regulation of those accomplishments of the revolution that appeared irreversible. A decree of October 7 by the Communist minister of agriculture, Vicente Uribe, legalized certain expropriations-namely, of lands belonging to participants in the Franco revolt. Of course, these expropriations had already taken place, a fact that did not prevent the Communist press from describing the decree as ""the most profoundly revolutionary measure that has been taken since the military uprising.'[20] In fact, by exempting the estates of landowners who had not directly participated in the Franco rebellion, the decree represented a step backward, from the standpoint of the revolutionaries, and it was criticized not only by the CNT but also by the socialist Federation of Land Workers, affiliated with the UGT (Union General de Trabajadores). The demand for a much broader decree was unaccept-

[19] Burnett Bolloten, *The Grand Camouflage: The Communist Conspiracy in the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961), p. 86. This book, by a UP correspondent in Spain during the Civil War, contains a great deal of important documentary evidence bearing on the questions considered here. The attitude of the wealthy farmers of this area, most of them former supporters of the right-wing organizations that had now disappeared, is well described by the general secretary of the Peasant Federation, Julio Mateu: "Such is the sympathy for us [that is, the Communist party] in the Valencia countryside that hundreds and thousands of farmers would join our party if we were to let them. These farmers … love our party like a sacred thing … they [say] 'The Communist Party is our party.' Comrades, what emotion the peasants display when they utter these words" (cited in Bolloten, p. 86). There is some interesting speculation about the backgrounds for the writing of this very important book in H. R. Southworth, *Le my the de la croisade de Franco* (Paris: Ruedo Iberico, 1964; Spanish edition, same publisher, 1963).

The Communist headquarters in Valencia had on the wall two posters: "Respect the property of the small peasant" and "Respect the property of the small industrialist" (Borkenau, op cit., p. 117). Actually, it was the rich farmer as well who sought protection from the Communists, whom Borkenau describes as constituting the extreme right wing of the Republican forces. By early 1937, according to Borkenau, the Communist party was "to a large extent … the party of the military and administrative personnel, in the second place the party of the petty bourgeoisie and certain well-to-do peasant groups, in the third place the party of the employees, and only in the fourth place the party of the industrial workers" (p. 192). The party also attracted many police and army officers. The police chief in Madrid and the chief of intelligence, for example, were party members. In general, the party, which had been insignificant before the revolution, "gave the urban and rural middle classes a powerful access of life and vigour" as it defended them from the revolutionary forces (Bolloten, *op. cit*., p. 86). Gerald Brenan describes the situation as follows, in *The Spanish Labyrinth* (1943; reprinted Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 325:

Unable to draw to themselves the manual workers, who remained firmly fixed in their unions, the Communists found themselves the refuge for all those who had suffered from the excesses of the Revolution or who feared where it might lead them. Well-to-do Catholic orange-growers in Valencia, peasants in Catalonia, small shopkeepers and business men, Army officers and Government officials enrolled in their ranks… Thus [in Catalonia] one had a strange and novel situation: on the one side stood the huge compact proletariat of Barcelona with its long revolutionary tradition, and on the other the white-collar workers and *petite bourgeoisie* of the city, organized and armed by the Communist party against it.

Actually the situation that Brenan describes is not as strange a one as he suggests. It is, rather, a natural consequence of Bolshevik elitism that the "Red bureaucracy" should act as a counterrevolutionary force except under the conditions where its present or future representatives are attempting to seize power for themselves, in the name of the masses whom they pretend to represent.

[20] Bolloten, op. at., p. 189. The legalization of revolutionary actions already undertaken and completed recalls the behavior of the "revolutionary vanguard" in the Soviet Union in 1918. Cf. Arthur Rosenberg, *A History of Bolshevism* (1932; republished in translation from the original German, New York: Russell & Russell, Publishers, 1965), chap. 6. He describes how the expropriations, "accomplished as the result of spontaneous action on the part of workers and against the will of the Bolsheviks," were reluctantly legalized by Lenin months later and then placed under central party control. On the relation of the Bolsheviks to the anarchists in postrevolutionary Russia, interpreted from a proanarchist point of view, see Guerin, *L'Anarchisme*, pp. 96–125. See also Avrich, *op. cit*., pt. 2, pp. 123–254.

able to the Communist-led ministry, since the Communist party was "seeking support among the propertied classes in the anti-Franco coup" and hence "could not afford to repel the small and medium proprietors who had been hostile to the working class movement before the civil war."[21] These ""small proprietors," in fact, seem to have included owners of substantial estates. The decree compelled tenants to continue paying rent unless the landowners had supported Franco, and by guaranteeing former landholdings, it prevented distribution of land to the village poor. Ricardo Zabalaza, general secretary of the Federation of Land Workers, described the resulting situation as one of ""galling injustice"; "the sycophants of the former political bosses still enjoy a privileged position at the expense of those persons who were unable to rent even the smallest parcel of land, because they were revolutionaries."[22]

To complete the stage of legalization and restriction of what had al ready been achieved, a decree of October 24, 1936, promulgated by a CNT member who had become councilor for economy in the Catalonian Generalitat, gave legal sanction to the collectivization of industry in Catalonia. In this case, too, the step was regressive, from the revolutionary point of view. Collectivization was limited to enterprises employing more than a hundred workers, and a variety of conditions were established that removed control from the workers' committees to the state bureaucracy.[23]

The second stage of the counterrevolution, from October 1936 through May 1937, involved the destruction of the local committees, the replacement of the militia by a conventional army, and the reestablishment of the prerevolutionary social and economic system, wherever this was possible. Finally in May 1937 came a direct attack on the working class in Barcelona (the May Days).[24] Following the success of this attack, the process of liquidation of the revolution was completed. The collectivization decree of October 24 was rescinded and industries were "freed" from workers' control. Communist-led armies swept through Aragon, destroying many collectives and dismantling their organizations and, generally, bringing the area under the control of the central government. Throughout the Republican-held territories, the government, now under Communist domination, acted in accordance with the plan announced in Pravda on December 17, 1936: "So far as Catalonia is concerned, the cleaning up of Trotskyist and Anarcho-Syndicalist elements there has already begun, and it will be carried out there with the same energy as in the U.S.S.R."[25] -and, we may add, in much the same manner.

In brief, the period from the summer of 1936 to 1937 was one of revolution and counterrevolution: the revolution was largely spontaneous with mass participation of anarchist and socialist industrial and agricultural workers; the counterrevolution was under Communist direction, the Communist party increasingly coming to represent the right wing of the Republic. During this period and after the success of the counterrevolution, the Republic was waging a war against the Franco insurrection; this has been described in great detail in numerous publications, and I will say little about it here. The Communist-led counterrevolutionary struggle must, of course,

[21] Bolloten, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 194.

[23] For some details, see Vernon Richards, *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* (London: Freedom Press, 1953), pp. 83–88.

[24] For a moving eyewitness account, see George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (1938; reprinted New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1952, and Boston: Beacon Press, 1955; quotations in this book from Beacon Press edition). This brilliant book received little notice at the time of its first publication, no doubt because the picture Orwell drew was in sharp conflict with established liberal dogma. The attention that it has received as a Cold War document since its republication in 1952 would, I suspect, have been of little comfort to the author.

[25] Cited by Rocker, *The Tragedy of Spain*, p. 28.

be understood against the background of the ongoing antifascist war and the more general attempt of the Soviet Union to construct a broad antifascist alliance with the Western democracies. One reason for the vigorous counterrevolutionary policy of the Communists was their belief that England would never tolerate a revolutionary triumph in Spain, where England had substantial commercial interests, as did France and to a lesser extent the United States.[26] I will return to this matter below. However, I think it is important to bear in mind that there were undoubtedly other factors as well. Rudolf Rocker's comments are, I believe, quite to the point:

> "… the Spanish people have been engaged in a desperate struggle against a pitiless foe and have been exposed besides to the secret intrigues of the great imperialist powers of Europe. Despite this the Spanish revolutionaries have not grasped at the disastrous expedient of dictatorship, but have respected all honest convictions. Everyone who visited Barcelona after the July battles, whether friend or foe of the C.N.T., was surprised at the freedom of public life and the absence of any arrangements for suppressing the free expression of opinion.
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> For two decades the supporters of Bolshevism have been hammering it into the masses that dictatorship is a vital necessity for the defense of the so-called proletarian interests against the assaults of the counter-revolution and for paving the way for Socialism. They have not advanced the cause of Socialism by this propaganda, but have merely smoothed the way for Fascism in Italy, Germany and Austria by causing millions of people to forget that dictatorship, the most extreme form of tyranny, can never lead to social liberation. In Russia, the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat has not led to Socialism, but to the domination of a new bureaucracy over the proletariat and the whole people…
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> What the Russian autocrats and their supporters fear most is that the success of libertarian Socialism in Spain might prove to their blind followers that the much vaunted "necessity of a dictatorship" is nothing but one vast fraud which in Russia has led to the despotism of Stalin and is to serve today in Spain to help the counter-revolution to a victory over the revolution of the workers and peasants."[27]

After decades of anti-Communist indoctrination, it is difficult to achieve a perspective that makes possible a serious evaluation of the extent to which Bolshevism and Western liberalism have been united in their opposition to popular revolution. However, I do not think that one can comprehend the events in Spain without attaining this perspective.

With this brief sketch-partisan, but I think accurate-for background, I would like to turn to Jackson's account of this aspect of the Spanish Civil War (see note 8). Jackson presumes (p. 259) that Soviet support for the Republican cause in Spain was guided by two factors: first, concern for Soviet security; second, the hope that a Republican victory would advance "the cause of the world-wide 'people's revolution' with which Soviet leaders hoped to identify themselves." They did not press their revolutionary aims, he feels, because ""for the moment it was essential not to frighten the middle classes or the Western governments."

[26] See ibid, for a brief review. It was a great annoyance to Hitler that these interests were, to a large extent, protected by Franco.

[27] Ibid, p. 35.

As to the concern for Soviet security, Jackson is no doubt correct. It is clear that Soviet support of the Republic was one aspect of the attempt to make common cause with the Western democracies against the fascist threat. However, Jackson's conception of the Soviet Union as a revolutionary power-hopeful that a Republican victory would advance "the interrupted movement toward world revolution" and seeking to identify itself with "the cause of the world-wide "people's revolution"-seems to me entirely mistaken. Jackson presents no evidence to support this interpretation of Soviet policy, nor do I know of any. It is interesting to see how differently the events were interpreted at the time of the Spanish Civil War, not only by anarchists like Rocker but also by such commentators as Gerald Brenan and Franz Borkenau, who were intimately acquainted with the situation in Spain. Brenan observes that the counterrevolutionary policy of the Communists (which he thinks was "extremely sensible") was

> "the policy most suited to the Communists themselves. Russia is a totalitarian regime ruled by a bureaucracy: the frame of mind of its leaders, who have come through the most terrible upheaval in history, is cynical and opportunist: the whole fabric of the state is dogmatic and authoritarian. To expect such men to lead a social revolution in a country like Spain, where the wildest idealism is combined with great independence of character, was out of the question. The Russians could, it is true, command plenty of idealism among their foreign admirers, but they could only harness it to the creation of a cast-iron bureaucratic state, where everyone thinks alike and obeys the orders of the chief above him."[28]

He sees nothing in Russian conduct in Spain to indicate any interest in a "people's revolution." Rather, the Communist policy was to oppose even such rural and industrial collectives as had risen spontaneously and flood the country with police who, like the Russian OGPU, acted on the orders of their party rather than those of the Ministry of the Interior." The Communists were concerned to suppress altogether the impulses toward "spontaneity of speech or action," since "their whole nature and history made them distrust the local and spontaneous and put their faith in order, discipline and bureaucratic uniformity"-hence placed them in opposition to the revolutionary forces in Spain. As Brenan also notes, the Russians withdrew their support once it became clear that the British would not be swayed from the policy of appeasement, a fact which gives additional confirmation to the thesis that only considerations of Russian foreign policy led the Soviet Union to support the Republic.

Borkenau's analysis is similar. He approves of the Communist policy, because of its "efficiency," but he points out that the Communists "put an end to revolutionary social activity, and enforced their view that this ought not to be a revolution but simply the defence of a legal government… communist policy in Spain was mainly dictated not by the necessities of the Spanish fight but by the interests of the intervening foreign power, Russia," a country "with a revolutionary past, not a revolutionary present." The Communists acted "not with the aim of transforming chaotic enthusiasm into disciplined enthusiasm [which Borkenau feels to have been necessary], but with the aim of substituting disciplined military and administrative action for the action of the masses and getting rid of the latter entirely." This policy, he points out, went "directly against the interests and claims of the masses" and thus weakened popular support. The now apathetic masses would not commit themselves to the defense of a Communist-run dictatorship, which restored former

[28] *Op. cit.*, pp. 324.

authority and even "showed a definite preference for the police forces of the old regime, so hated by the masses." It seems to me that the record strongly supports this interpretation of Communist policy and its effects, though Borkenau's assumption that Communist "efficiency" was necessary to win the anti-Franco struggle is much more dubious-a question to which I return below.[29]

It is relevant to observe, at this point, that a number of the Spanish Communist leaders were reluctantly forced to similar conclusions. Burnett Bolloten cites several examples,[30] specifically, the military commander "El Campesino" and Jesus Hernandez, a minister in the Caballero government. The former, after his escape from the Soviet Union in 1949, stated that he had taken for granted the "revolutionary solidarity" of the Soviet Union during the Civil War-a most remarkable degree of innocence-and realized only later "that the Kremlin does not serve the interests of the peoples of the world, but makes them serve its own interests; that, with a treachery and hypocrisy without parallel, it makes use of the international working class as a mere pawn in its political intrigues." Hernandez, in a speech given shortly after the Civil War, admits that the Spanish Communist leaders "acted more like Soviet subjects than sons of the Spanish people." "It may seem absurd, incredible," he adds, "but our education under Soviet tutelage had deformed us to such an extent that we were completely denationalized; our national soul was torn out of us and replaced by a rabidly chauvinistic internationalism, which began and ended with the towers of the Kremlin."

Shortly after the Third World Congress of the Communist International in 1921, the Dutch "ultra-leftist" Hermann Gorter wrote that the congress "has decided the fate of the world revolution for the present. The trend of opinion that seriously desired world revolution … has been expelled from the Russian International. The Communist Parties in western Europe and throughout the world that retain their membership of the Russian International will become nothing more than a means to preserve the Russian Revolution and the Soviet Republic."[31] This forecast has proved quite accurate. Jackson's conception that the Soviet Union was a revolutionary power in the late 1930s, or even that the Soviet leaders truly regarded themselves as identified with world revolution, is without factual support. It is a misinterpretation that runs parallel to the American Cold War mythology that has invented an "international Communist conspiracy" directed from Moscow (now Peking) to justify its own interventionist policies.

Turning to events in revolutionary Spain, Jackson describes the first stages of collectivization as follows: the unions in Madrid, "as in Barcelona and Valencia, abused their sudden authority to place the sign incaulado [placed under workers' control] on all manner of buildings and vehicles" (p. 279). Why was this an abuse of authority? This Jackson does not explain. The choice of words indicates a reluctance on Jackson's part to recognize the reality of the revolutionary situation, despite his account of the breakdown of Republican authority. The statement that the workers "abused their sudden authority" by carrying out collectivization rests on a moral judgment that recalls that of Ithiel Pool, when he characterizes land reform in Vietnam as a matter of "despoiling

[29] Borkenau, *op. cit.*, pp. 289–92. It is because of the essential accuracy of Borkenau's account that I think Hobsbawm (*op. cit.*) is quite mistaken in believing that the Communist policy "was undoubtedly the only one which could have won the Civil War." In fact, the Communist policy was bound to fail, because it was predicated on the assumption that the Western democracies would join the antifascist effort if only Spain could be preserved as, in effect, a Western colony. Once the Communist leaders saw the futility of this hope, they abandoned the struggle, which was not in their eyes an effort to win the Civil War, but only to serve the interests of Russian foreign policy. I also disagree with Hobsbawm's analysis of the anarchist revolution, cited earlier, for reasons that are implicit in this entire discussion.

[30] *op. cit.*, pp. 143–44.

[31] Cited by Rosenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 168–69.

one's neighbors," or of Franz Borkenau, when he speaks of expropriation in the Soviet Union as "robbery," demonstrating "a streak of moral indifference."

Within a few months,Jackson informs us, "the revolutionary tide began to ebb in Catalonia" after "accumulating food and supply problems, and the experience of administering villages, frontier posts, and public utilities, had rapidly shown the anarchists the unsuspected complexity of modern society" (pp. 313–14). In Barcelona, "the naive optimism of the revolutionary conquests of the previous August had given way to feelings of resentment and of somehow having been cheated," as the cost of living doubled, bread was in short supply, and police brutality reached the levels of the monarchy. "The POUM [Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista] and the anarchist press simultaneously extolled the collectivizations and explained the failures of production as due to Valencia policies of boycotting the Catalan economy and favoring the bourgeoisie. They explained the loss of Malaga as due in large measure to the low morale and the disorientation of the Andalusian proletariat, which saw the Valencia government evolving steadily toward the right" (p. 368). Jackson evidently believes that this left-wing interpretation of events was nonsensical, and that in fact it was anarchist incompetence or treachery that was responsible for the difficulties: "In Catalonia, the CNT factory committees dragged their heels on war production, claiming that the government deprived them of raw materials and was favoring the bourgeoisie" (p.365).

In fact, "the revolutionary tide began to ebb in Catalonia" under a middle-class attack led by the Communist party, not because of a recognition of the "complexity of modern society." And it was, moreover, quite true that the Communist-dominated central government attempted, with much success, to hamper collectivized industry and agriculture and to disrupt the collectivization of commerce. I have already referred to the early stages of counterrevolution. Further investigation of the sources to which Jackson refers and others shows that the anarchist charges were not baseless, as Jackson implies. Bolloten cites a good deal of evidence in support of his conclusion that

> "in the countryside the Communists undertook a spirited defence of the small and medium proprietor and tenant farmer against the collectivizing drive of the rural wage-workers, against the policy of the labour unions prohibiting the farmer from holding more land than he could cultivate with his own hands, and against the practices of revolutionary committees, which requisitioned harvests, inter fered with private trade, and collected rents from tenant farmers."[32]

The policy of the government was clearly enunciated by the Communist minister of agriculture: "We say that the property of the small farmer is sacred and that those who attack or attempt to attack this property must be regarded as enemies of the regime."[33] Gerald Brenan, no sympathizer with collectivization, explains the failure of collectivization as follows (p.321):

> "The Central Government, and especially the Communist and Socialist members of it, desired to bring [the collectives] under the direct control of the State: they therefore failed to provide them with the credit required for buying raw materials: as soon as the supply of raw cotton was exhausted the mills stopped working… even [the

[32] Bolloten, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 85. As noted earlier, the "small farmer" included the prosperous orange growers, etc. (see note 19).

> munitions industry in Catalonia] were harassed by the new bureaucratic organs of the Ministry of Supply."[34]

He quotes the bourgeois president of Catalonia, Companys, as saying that "workers in the arms factories in Barcelona had been working 56 ours and more each week and that no cases of sabotage or indiscipline had taken place," until the workers were demoralized by the bureaucrati zation-later, militarization-imposed by the central government and the Communist party.[35] His own conclusion is that "the Valencia Government was now using the P.S.U.C. against the C.N.T.- but not… because the Catalan workers were giving trouble, but because the Communists wished to weaken them before destroying them."

The cited correspondence from Companys to Indalecio Prieto, accord ing to Vernon Richards (p. 47), presents evidence showing the success of Catalonian war industry under collectivization and demonstrating how "much more could have been achieved had the means for expanding the industry not been denied them by the Central Government." Richards also cites testimony by a spokesman for the Subsecretariat of Munitions and Armament of the Valencia government admitting that "the war industry of Catalonia had produced ten times more than the rest of Spanish industry put together and [agreeing] … that this output could have been quadrupled as from beginning of September if Catalonia had had access to the necessary means for purchasing raw materials that were unobtain able in Spanish territory." It is important to recall that the central government had enormous gold reserves (soon to be transmitted to the Soviet Union), so that raw materials for Catalan industry could probably have been purchased, despite the hostility of the Western democracies to the Republic during the revolutionary period (see below). Furthermore, raw materials had repeatedly been requested. On September 24, 1936, Juan Fabregas, the CNT delegate to the Economic Council of Catalonia who was in part responsible for the collectivization decree cited earlier, reported that the financial difficulties of Catalonia were created by the refusal of the central government to "give any assistance in economic and financial questions, presumably because it has little sympathy with the work of a practical order which is being car-

[34] Brenan, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

[35] Correspondence from Companys to Prieto, 1939. While Companys, as a Catalonian with separatist impulses, would naturally be inclined to defend Catalonian achievements, he was surely not sympathetic to collectivization, despite his cooperative attitude during the period when the anarchists, with real power in their hands, permitted him to retain nominal authority. I know of no attempt to challenge the accuracy of his assessment. Morrow (*op. cit.*, p. 77) quotes the Catalonian premier, the entrepreneur Juan Tarradellas, as defending the administration of the collectivized war industries against a Communist (PSUC) attack, which he termed the "most arbitrary falsehoods." There are many other reports commenting on the functioning of the collectivized industries by nonanarchist firsthand observers, that tend to support Companys. For example, the Swiss socialist Andres Oltmares is quoted by Rocker (*op. cit.*, p. 24) as saying that after the revolution the Catalonian workers' syndicates "in seven weeks accomplished fully as much as France did in fourteen months after the outbreak of the World War." Continuing, he says:

> In the midst of the civil war the Anarchists have proved themselves to be political organizers of the first rank. They kindled in everyone the required sense of responsibility, and knew how by eloquent appeals to keep alive the spirit of sacrifice for the general welfare of the people.
>
> As a Social Democrat I speak here with inner joy and sincere admiration of my experience in Catalonia. The anti-capitalist transformation took place here without their having to resort to a dictatorship. The members of the syndicates are their own masters, and carry on production and the distribution of the products of labor under their own management with the advice of technical experts in whom they have confidence. The enthusiasm of the workers is so great that they scorn any personal advantage and are concerned only for the welfare of all.
>
> Even Borkenau concludes, rather grudgingly, that industry was functioning fairly well, as far as he could see. The matter deserves a serious study.

ried out in Catalonia"[36] — that is, collectivization. He "went on to recount that a Commission which went to Madrid to ask for credits to purchase war materials and raw materials, offering 1,000 million pesetas in securities lodged in the Bank of Spain, met with a blank refusal. It was sufficient that the new war industry in Catalonia was controlled by the workers of the C.N.T. for the Madrid Government to refuse any unconditional aid. Only in exchange for government control would they give financial assistance."[37]

Pierre Broue and Emile Temime take a rather similar position. Commenting on the charge of "incompetence" leveled against the collectivized industries, they point out that "one must not neglect the terrible burden of the war." Despite this burden, they observe, "new techniques of management and elimination of dividends had permitted a lowering of prices" and "mechanisation and rationalisation, introduced in numerous enterprises … had considerably augmented production. The workers accepted the enormous sacrifices with enthusiasm because, in most cases, they had the conviction that the factory belonged to them and that at last they were working for themselves and their class brothers. A truly new spirit had come over the economy of Spain with the concentration of scattered enterprises, the simplification of commercial patterns, a significant structure of social projects for aged workers, children, disabled, sick and the personnel in general" (pp. 150–51). The great weakness of the revolution, they argue, was the fact that it was not carried through to completion. In part this was because of the war; in part, a consequence of the policies of the central government. They too emphasize the refusal of the Madrid government, in the early stages of collectivization, to grant credits or supply funds to collectivized industry or agriculture-in the case of Catalonia, even when substantial guarantees were offered by the Catalonian government. Thus the collectivized enterprises were forced to exist on what assets had been seized at the time of the revolution. The control of gold and credit "permitted the government to restrict and prevent the function of collective enterprises at will" (p. 144).

According to Broue and Temime, it was the restriction of credit that finally destroyed collectivized industry. The Companys government in Catalonia refused to create a bank for industry

[36] Quoted in Richards, *op. cit.*, pp. 46–47.

[37] *ibid.* Richards suggests that the refusal of the central government to support the Aragon front may have been motivated in part by the general policy of counterrevolution. "This front, largely manned by members of the C.N.T.-F.A.L, was considered of great strategic importance by the anarchists, having as its ultimate objective the linking of Catalonia with the Basque country and Asturias, i.e., a linking of the industrial region [of Catalonia] with an important source of raw materials." Again, it would be interesting to undertake a detailed investigation of this topic.

That the Communists withheld arms from the Aragon front seems established beyond question, and it can hardly be doubted that the motivation was political. See, for example, D. T. Cattell, *Communism and the Spanish Civil War* (1955; reprinted New York: Russell and Russell, Publishers, 1965), p. 110. Cattell, who in general bends over backward to try to justify the behavior of the central government, concludes that in this case there is little doubt that the refusal of aid was politically motivated. Brenan takes the same view, claiming that the Communists "kept the Aragon front without arms to spite the Anarchists." The Communists resorted to some of the most grotesque slanders to explain the lack of arms on the Aragon front; for example, the *Daily Worker* attributed the arms shortage to the fact that "the Trotskyist General Kopp had been carting enormous supplies of arms and ammunition across no-man's land to the fascists" (cited by Morrow, *op. cit.*, p. 145). As Morrow points out, George Kopp is a particularly bad choice as a target for such accusations. His record is well known, for example, from the account given by Orwell, who served under his command (see Orwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 209ff.). Orwell was also able to refute, from firsthand observation, many of the other absurdities that were appearing in the liberal press about the Aragon front, for example, the statement by Ralph Bates in the *New Republic* that the POUM troops were "playing football with the Fascists in no man's land." At that moment, as Orwell observes, "the P.O.U.M. troops were suffering heavy casualties and a number of my personal friends were killed and wounded."

and credit, as demanded by the CNT and POUM, and the central government (relying, in this case, on control of the banks by the socialist UGT) was able to control the flow of capital and "to reserve credit for private enterprise." All attempts to obtain credit for collectivized industry were unsuccessful, they maintain, and "the movement of collectivization was restricted, then halted, the government remaining in control of industry through the medium of the banks … [and later] through its control of the choice of managers and directors," who often turned out to be the former owners and managers, under new titles. The situation was similar in the case of collectivized agriculture (pp. 204ff.).

The situation was duly recognized in the West. The New York Times, in February 1938, observed: "The principle of State intervention and control of business and industry, as against workers' control of them in the guise of collectivization, is gradually being established in loyalist Spain by a series of decrees now appearing. Coincidentally there is to be established the principle of private ownership and the rights of corporations and companies to what is lawfully theirs under the Constitution."[38]

Morrow cites (pp. 64_65) a series of acts by the Catalonian government restricting collectivization, once power had shifted away from the new institutions set up by the workers' revolution of July 1936. On February 3, the collectivization of the dairy trade was declared illegal.[39] In April, "the Generalidad annulled workers' control over the customs by refusing to certify workers' ownership of material that had been exported and was being tied up in foreign courts by suits of former owners; henceforth the factories and agricultural collectives exporting goods were at the mercy of the government." In May, as has already been noted, the collectivization decree of October 24 was rescinded, with the argument that the decree "was dictated without competency by the Generalidad," because "there was not, nor is there yet, legislation of the [Spanish] state to apply" and "article 44 of the Constitution declares expropriation and socialization are functions of the State." A decree of August 28 "gave the government the right to intervene in or take over any mining or metallurgical plant." The anarchist newspaper Solidaridad Obrera reported in October a decision of the department of purchases of the Ministry of Defense that it would make contracts for purchases only with enterprises functioning "on the basis of their old owners" or "under the corresponding intervention controlled by the Ministry of Finance and Economy."[40]

Returning to Jackson's statement that "in Catalonia, the CNT factory committees dragged their heels on war production, claiming that the government deprived them of raw materials and was favoring the bourgeoisie," I believe one must conclude that this statement is more an expres sion of Jackson's bias in favor of capitalist democracy than a description of the historical facts. At the very least, we can say this much: Jackson presents no evidence to support his conclusion; there is a factual basis for questioning it. I have cited a number of sources that the liberal historian would regard, quite correctly, as biased in favor of the revolution. My point is that the failure

[38] Cited in *Living Marxism*, p. 172.

[39] Bolloten, *op. cit.*, p. 49, comments on the collectivization of the dairy trade in Barcelona as follows: "The Anarchosyndicalists eliminated as unhygienic over forty pasteurizing plants, pasteurized all the milk in the remaining nine, and proceeded to displace all dealers by establishing their own dairies. Many of the retailers entered the collective, but some refused to do so: 'They asked for a much higher wage than that paid to the workers … , claiming that they could not manage on the one allotted to them' [*Tierra y Libertad*, August 21, 1937 — the newspaper of the FAI, the anarchist activists]." His information is primarily from anarchist sources, which he uses much more extensively than any historian other than Peirats. He does not present any evaluation of these sources, which — like all others — must be used critically.

[40] Morrow, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

of objectivity, the deep-seated bias of liberal historians, is a matter much less normally taken for granted, and that there are good grounds for supposing that this failure of objectivity has seriously distorted the judgments that are rather brashly handed down about the nature of the Spanish revolution.

Continuing with the analysis of Jackson's judgments, unsupported by any cited evidence, consider his remark, quoted above, that in Barcelona "the naive optimism of the revolutionary conquests of the previous August had given way to feelings of resentment and of somehow having been cheated." It is a fact that by January 1937 there was great disaffection in Barcelona. But was this simply a consequence of "the unsuspected complexity of modern society"? Looking into the matter a bit more closely, we see a rather different picture. Under Russian pressure, the PSUC was given substantial control of the Catalonian government, "putting into the Food Ministry [in December 1936] the man most to the Right in present Catalan politics, Comorera"[41]-by virtue of his political views, the most willing collaborator with the general Communist party position. According to Jackson, Comorera "immediately took steps to end barter and requisitioning, and became a defender of the peasants against the revolution" (p. 314); he "ended requisition, restored money payments, and protected the Catalan peasants against further collectivization" (p. 361). This is all that Jackson has to say about Juan Comorera.

We learn more from other sources: for example, Borkenau, who was in Barcelona for the second time in January 1937-and is universally recognized as a highly knowledgeable and expert observer, with strong antianarchist sentiments. According to Borkenau, Comorera represented "a political attitude which can best be compared with that of the extreme right wing of the German social-democracy. He had always regarded the fight against anarchism as the chief aim of socialist policy in Spain… To his surprise, he found unexpected allies for his dislike [of anarchist policies] in the communists."[42] It was impossible to reverse collectivization of industry at that stage in the process of counterrevolution; Comorera did succeed, however, in abolishing the system by which the provisioning of Barcelona had been organized, namely, the village committees, mostly under CNT influence, which had cooperated (perhaps, Borkenau suggests, unwillingly) in delivering flour to the towns. Continuing, Borkenau describes the situation as follows:

> "… Comorera, starting from those principles of abstract liberalism which no administration has followed during the war, but of which rlght-wing socialists are the last and most religious admirers, did not substitute for the chaotic bread committees a centralized administration. He restored private commerce in bread, simply and completely. There was, in January, not even a system of rationing in Barcelona. Workers were simply left to get their bread, with wages which had hardly changed since May, at increased prices, as well as they could. In practice it meant that the women had to form queues from four o'clock in the morning onwards. The resentment in the working-class districts was naturally acute, the more so as the scarcity of bread rapidly increased after Comorera had taken office."[43]

[41] Borkenau, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 184. According to Borkenau, "it is doubtful whether Comorera is personally responsible for this scarcity; it might have arisen anyway, in pace with the consumption of the harvest." This speculation may or may not be correct. Like Borkenau, we can only speculate as to whether the village and workers' committees would have been able to continue to provision Barcelona, with or without central administration, had it not been for the policy of

In short, the workers of Barcelona were not merely giving way to "feelings of resentment and of somehow having been cheated" when they learned of "the unsuspected complexity of modern society." Rather, they had good reason to believe that they were being cheated, by the old dog with the new collar.

George Orwell's observations are also highly relevant:

> "Everyone who has made two visits, at intervals of months, to Barcelona during the war has remarked upon the extraordinary changes that took place in it. And curiously enough, whether they went there first in August and again in January, or, like myself, first in December and again in April, the thing they said was always the same: that the revolutionary atmosphere had vanished. No doubt to anyone who had been there in August, when the blood was scarcely dry in the streets and militia were quartered in the small hotels, Barcelona in December would have seemed bourgeois; to me, fresh from England, it was liker to a workers' city than anything I had conceived possible. Now [in April] the tide had rolled back. Once again it was an ordinary city, a little pinched and chipped by war, but with no outward sign of working-class predominance… Fat prosperous men, elegant women, and sleek cars were everywhere… The officers of the new Popular Army, a type that had scarcely existed when I left Barcelona, swarmed in surprising numbers … [wearing] an elegant khaki uniform with a tight waist, like a British Army officer's uniform, only a little more so. I do not suppose that more than one in twenty of them had yet been to the front, but all of them had automatic pistols strapped to their belts; we, at the front, could not get pistols for love or money… A deep change had come over the town. There were two facts that were the keynote of all else. One was that the people-the civil population-had lost much of their interest in the war; the other was that the normal division of society into rich and poor, upper class and lower class, was reasserting itself."[44]

"abstract liberalism," which was of a piece with the general Communist-directed attempts to destroy the revolutionary organizations and the structures developed in the revolutionary period.

[44] Orwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 109–11. Orwell's description of Barcelona in December (pp. 4–5), when he arrived for the first time, deserves more extensive quotation:

> It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and black flag of the Anarchists; every wall was scrawled with the hammer and sickle and with the initials of the revolutionary parties; almost every church had been gutted and its images burnt. Churches here and there were being systematically demolished by gangs of workmen. Every shop and cafe had an inscription saying that it had been collectivized; even the bootblacks had been collectivized and their boxes painted red and black. Waiters and shopwalkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. Servile and even ceremonial forms of speech had temporarily disappeared. Nobody said "Senor" or "Don" or even "Usted"; everyone called everyone else "Comrade" and "Thou," and said "Salud!" instead of "Buenos dias." Tipping had been forbidden by law since the time of Primo de Rivera; almost my first experience was receiving a lecture from an hotel manager for trying to tip a lift-boy. There were no private motor cars, they had all been commandeered, and all the trams and taxis and much of the other transport were painted red and black. The revolutionary posters were everywhere, flaming from the walls in clean reds and blues that made the few remaining advertisements look like daubs of mud. Down the Ramblas, the wide central artery of the town where crowds of people streamed constantly to and fro, the loud-speakers were bellowing revolutionary songs all day and far into the night. And it was the aspect of the crowds that was the queerest thing of all. In outward appearance it was a town in which the wealthy classes had practically ceased to exist. Except for a small number of women and foreigners there were no "well-dressed" people at all. Practically everyone wore rough working-class clothes, or blue overalls or some variant of the militia uniform. All this was queer and moving. There was much in it that I did not understand, in some

Whereas Jackson attributes the ebbing of the revolutionary tide to the discovery of the unsuspected complexity of modern society, Orwell's firsthand observations, like those of Borkenau, suggest a far simpler explanation. What calls for explanation is not the disaffection of the workers of Barcelona but the curious constructions of the historian.

Let me repeat, at this point, Jackson's comments regarding Juan Comorera: Comorera "immediately took steps to end barter and requisitioning, and became a defender of the peasants against the revolution"; he "ended requisitions, restored money payments, and protected the Catalan peasants against further collectivization." These comments imply that the peasantry of Catalonia was, as a body, opposed to the revolution and that Comorera put a stop to the collectivization that they feared. Jackson nowhere indicates any divisions among the peasantry on this issue and offers no support for the implied claim that collectivization was in process at the period of Comorera's access to power. In fact, it is questionable that Comorera's rise to power affected the course of collectivization in Catalonia. Evidence is difficult to come by, but it seems that collectivization of agriculture in Catalonia was not, in any event, extensive, and that it was not extending in December, when Comorera took office. We know from anarchist sources that there had been instances of forced collectivization in Catalonia,[45] but I can find no evidence that Comorera "protected the peasantry" from forced collectivization. Furthermore, it is misleading, at best, to imply that the peasantry as a whole was opposed to collectivization. A more accurate picture is presented by Bolloten (p. 56), who points out that "if the individual farmer viewed with dismay the swift and widespread development of collectivized agriculture, the farm workers of

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ways I did not even like it, but I recognized it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for. Also I believed that things were as they appeared, that this was really a workers' State and that the entire bourgeoisie had either fled, been killed, or voluntarily come over to the workers' side; I did not realize that great numbers of well-to-do bourgeois were simply lying low and disguising themselves as proletarians for the time being …

… waiting for that happy day when Communist power would reintroduce the old state of society and destroy popular involvement in the war.

In December 1936, however, the situation was still as described in the following remarks (p. 6):

Yet so far as one can judge the people were contented and hopeful. There was no unemployment, and the price of living was still extremely low; you saw very few conspicuously destitute people, and no beggars except the gipsies. Above all, there was a belief in the revolution and the future, a feeling of having suddenly emerged into an era of equality and freedom. Human beings were trying to behave as human beings and not as cogs in the capitalist machine. In the barbers' shops were Anarchist notices (the barbers were mostly Anarchists) solemnly explaining that barbers were no longer slaves. In the streets were coloured posters appealing to prostitutes to stop being prostitutes. To anyone from the hard-boiled, sneering civilization of the English-speaking races there was something rather pathetic in the literalness with which these idealistic Spaniards took the hackneyed phrases of revolution. At that time revolutionary ballads of the naivest kind, all about proletarian brotherhood and the wickedness of Mussolini, were being sold on the streets for a few centimes each. I have often seen an illiterate militiaman buy one of these ballads, laboriously spell out the words, and then, when he had got the hang of it, begin singing it to an appropriate tune.

Recall the dates. Orwell arrived in Barcelona in late December 1936. Comorera's decree abolishing the workers' supply committees and the bread committees was on January 7. Borkenau returned to Barcelona in mid-January; Orwell, in April.

[45] See Bolloten, *op. cit.*, p. 74, citing the anarchist spokesman Juan Peiro, in September 1936. Like other anarchists and left-wing Socialists, Peiro sharply condemns the use of force to introduce collectivization, taking the position that was expressed by most anarchists, as well as by left-wing socialists such as Ricardo Zabalza, general secretary of the Federation of Land Workers, who stated on January 8, 1937: "I prefer a small, enthusiastic collective, formed by a group of active and honest workers, to a large collective set up by force and composed of peasants without enthusiasm, who would sabotage it until it failed. Voluntary collectivization may seem the longer course, but the example of the small, well-managed collective will attract the entire peasantry, who are profoundly realistic and practical, whereas forced collectivization would end by discrediting socialized agriculture" (cited by Bolloten *op. cit.*, p. 59). However, there seems no doubt that the precepts of the anarchist and left-socialist spokesmen were often violated in practice.

the Anarcho-syndicalist CNT and the Socialist UGT saw in it, on the contrary, the commencement of a new era." In short, there was a complex class struggle in the countryside, though one learns little about it from Jackson's oversimplified and misleading ac count. It would seem fair to suppose that this distortion again reflects Jackson's antipathy toward the revolution and its goals. I will return to this question directly, with reference to areas where agricultural collectivization was much more extensive than in Catalonia.

The complexities of modern society that baffled and confounded the unsuspecting anarchist workers of Barcelona, as Jackson enumerates them, were the following: the accumulating food and supply problems and the administration of frontier posts, villages, and public utilities. As just noted, the food and supply problems seem to have accumulated most rapidly under the brilliant leadership of Juan Comorera. So far as the frontier posts are concerned, the situation, as Jackson elsewhere describes it (p. 368), was basically as follows: "In Catalonia the anarchists had, ever since July 18, controlled the customs stations at the French border. On April 17, 1937, the reorganized carabineros, acting on orders of the Finance Minister, Juan Negrin, began to reoccupy the frontier. At least eight anarchists were killed in clashes with the carabineros." Apart from this difficulty, admittedly serious, there seems little reason to suppose that the problem of manning frontier posts contributed to the ebbing of the revolutionary tide. The available records do not indicate that the problems of administering villages or public utilities were either "unsuspected" or too complex for the Catalonian workers-a remarkable and unsuspected development, but one which nevertheless appears to be borne out by the evidence available to us. I want to emphasize again that Jackson presents no evidence to support his conclusions about the ebbing of the revolutionary tide and the reasons for the disaffection of the Catalonian workers. Once again, I think it fair to attribute his conclusions to the elitist bias of the liberal intellectual rather than to the historical record.

Consider next Jackson's comment that the anarchists "explained the loss of Malaga as due in large measure to the low morale and the disorientation of the Andalusian proletariat, which saw the Valencia government evolving steadily toward the right." Again, it seems that Jackson regards this as just another indication of the naivete and unreasonableness of the Spanish anarchists. However, here again there is more to the story. One of the primary sources that Jackson cites is Borkenau, quite naturally, since Borkenau spent several days in the area just prior to the fall of Malaga on February 8, 1937. But Borkenau's detailed observations tend to bear out the anarchist "explanation," at least in part. He believed that Malaga might have been saved, but only by a "fight of despair" with mass involvement, of a sort that "the anarchists might have led." But two factors prevented such a defense: First, the officer assigned to lead the defense, Lieutenant Colonel Villalba, "interpreted this task as a purely military one, whereas in reality he had no military means at his disposal but only the forces of a popular movement ; he was a professional officer, "who in the secrecy of his heart hated the spirit of the militia" and was incapable of comprehending the "political factor."[46] A second factor was the significant decline, by February, of political consciousness and mass involvement. The anarchist committees were no longer functioning, and the authority of the police and Civil Guards had been restored. "The nuisance of hundreds of independent village police bodies had disappeared, but with it the pas-

[46] Borkenau, *op. cit.*, pp. 219–20. Of this officer, Jackson says only that he was "a dependable professional officer." After the fall of Malaga, Lieutenant Colonel Villalba was tried for treason, for having deserted the headquarters and abandoned his troops. Broue and Temime remark that it is difficult to determine what justice there was in the charge.

sionate interest of the village in the civil war… The short interlude of the Spanish Soviet system was at an end" (p. 212). After reviewing the local situation in Malaga and the conflicts in the Valencia government (which failed to provide support or arms for the militia defending Malaga), Borkenau concludes (p. 228): "The Spanish republic paid with the fall of Malaga for the decision of the Right wing of its camp to make an end of social revolution and of its Left wing not to allow that." Jackson's discussion of the fall of Malaga refers to the terror and political rivalries within the town but makes no reference to the fact that Borkenau's description, and the accompanying interpretation, do support the belief that the defeat was due in large measure to low morale and to the incapacity, or unwillingness, of the Valencia government to fight a popular war. On the contrary, he concludes that Colonel Villalba's lack of means for "controlling the bitter political rivalries" was one factor that prevented him from carrying out the essential military tasks. Thus he seems to adopt the view that Borkenau condemns, that the task was a "purely military one." Borkenau's eyewitness account appears to me much more convincing.

In this case, too, Jackson has described the situation in a somewhat misleading fashion, perhaps again because of the elitist bias that domi ites the liberal-Communist interpretation of the Civil War. Like Lieunant Colonel Villalba, liberal historians often reveal a strong distaste for "the forces of a popular movement" and "the spirit of the militia." thd an argument can be given that they correspondingly fail to compre end the "political factor."

In the May Days of 1937, the revolution in Catalonia received the final blow. On May 3, the councilor for public order, PSUC member Roiguez Salas, appeared at the central telephone building with a detachment of police, without prior warning or consultation with the anarchist ministers in the government, to take over the telephone exchange. The change, formerly the property of IT&T, had been captured by Barcelona workers in July and had since functioned under the control of a CGT-CNT committee, with a governmental delegate, quite in accord th the collectivization decree of October 24, 1936. According to the London Daily Worker (May 11, 1937), "Salas sent the armed republican police to disarm the employees there, most of them members of the CNT actions." The motive, according to Juan Comorera, was "to put a stop to abnormal situation," namely, that no one could speak over the telephone "without the indiscreet ear of the controller knowing it."[47] Armed resistance in the telephone building prevented its occupation. Local defense committees erected barricades throughout Barcelona. Companys and the anarchist leaders pleaded with the workers to disarm. An uneasy truce continued until May 6, when the first detachments of Assault guards arrived, violating the promises of the government that the truce would be observed and military forces withdrawn. The troops were under the command of General Pozas, formerly commander of the hated Civil Guard and now a member of the Communist party. In the fighting that followed, there were some five hundred killed and over a thousand wounded. "The May Days in reality sounded the death-knell of the revolution, announcing political defeat for all and death for certain of the revolutionary leaders."[48]

These events-of enormous significance in the history of the Spanish solution-Jackson sketches in bare outline as a marginal incident. Obviously, the historian's account must be selective; from

[47] Jesus Hernandez and Juan Comorera, *Spain Organises for Victory: The Policy of the Communist Party of Spain Explained* (London: Communist Party of Great Britain, n.d.), cited by Richards, *op. cit.*, pp. 99–100. There was no accusation that the phone service was restricted, but only that the revolutionary workers could maintain "a close check on the conversations that took place between the politicians." As Richards further observes, "It is, of course, a quite different matter when the 'indiscreet ear' is that of the O.G.P.U."

[48] Broue and Temime, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

the left-liberal point of view that Jackson shares with Hugh Thomas and many others, liquidation of the revolution in Catalonia was a minor event, as the revolution itself was merely a kind of irrelevant nuisance, a minor irritant erting energy from the struggle to save the bourgeois government. The decision to crush the revolution by force is described as follows:

> "On May 5, Companys obtained a fragile truce, on the basis of which the PSUC councilors were to retire from the regional government, and the question of the Telephone Company was left to future negotiation. That very night, however, Antonio Sese, a UGT official who was about to enter the reorganized cabinet, was murdered. In any event, the Valencia authorities were in no mood to temporize further with the Catalan Left. On May 6 several thousand asaltos arrived in the city, and the Republican Navy demonstrated in the port."[49]

What is interesting about this description is what is left unsaid. For example, there is no comment on the fact that the dispatch of the asaltos violated the "fragile truce" that had been accepted by the Barcelona workers and the anarchist and the POUM troops nearby, and barely a mention of the bloody consequences or the political meaning of this unwillingness "to temporize further with the Catalan Left." There is no mention of the fact that along with Sese, Berneri and other anarchist leaders were murdered, not only during the May Days but in the weeks preceding.[50] Jackson does not refer to the fact that along with the Republican navy, British ships also "demonstrated" in the port.[51] Nor does he refer to Orwell's telling observations about the Assault Guards, as compared to the troops at the front, where he had spent the preceding months. The Assault Guards "were splendid troops, much the best I had seen in Spain… I was used to the ragged, scarcely-armed militia on the Aragon front, and I had not known that the Republic possessed

[49] Jackson, *op. cit.*, p. 370. Thomas suggests that Sese was probably killed accidentally (*The Spanish Civil War*, p. 428).

[50] The anarchist mayor of the border town of Puigcerda had been assassinated in April, after Negrin's carabineros had taken over the border posts. That same day a prominent UGT member, Roldan Cortada, was murdered in Barcelona, it is presumed by CNT militants. This presumption is disputed by Peirats (*Los Anarquistas*: see note 12), who argues, with some evidence, that the murder may have been a Stalinist provocation. In reprisal, a CNT man was killed. Orwell, whose eyewitness account of the May Days is unforgettable, points out that "one can gauge the attitude of the foreign capitalist Press towards the Communist-Anarchist feud by the fact that Roldan's murder was given wide publicity, while the answering murder was carefully unmentioned" (*op. cit.*, p. 119). Similarly one can gauge Jackson's attitude toward this struggle by his citation of Sese's murder as a critical event, while the murder of Berneri goes unmentioned (cf. notes 18 and 49). Orwell remarks elsewhere that "in the English press, in particular, you would have to search for a long time before finding any favourable reference, at any period of the war, to the Spanish Anarchists. They have been systematically denigrated, and, as I know by my own experience, it is almost impossible to get anyone to print anything in their defence" (p. 159). Little has changed since.

[51] According to Orwell (*op. cit.*, pp. 153–54), "A British cruiser and two British destroyers had closed in upon the harbour, and no doubt there were other warships not far away. The English newspapers gave it out that these ships were proceeding to Barcelona 'to protect British interests,' but in fact they made no move to do so; that is, they did not land any men or take off any refugees. There can be no certainty about this, but it was at least inherently likely that the British Government, which had not raised a finger to save the Spanish Government from Franco, would intervene quickly enough to save it from its own working class." This assumption may well have influenced the left-wing leadership to restrain the Barcelona workers from simply taking control of the whole city, as apparently they could easily have done in the initial stages of the May Days.

Hugh Thomas comments (*The Spanish Civil War*, p. 428) that there was "no reason" for Orwell's "apprehension" on this matter. In the light of the British record with regard to Spain, it seems to me that Thomas is simply unrealistic, as compared with Orwell, in this respect.

troops like these… The Civil Guards and Carabineros, who were not intended for the front at all, were better armed and far better clad than ourselves. I suspect it is the same in all wars-always the same contrast between the sleek police in the rear and the ragged soldiers in the line."[52]

The contrast reveals a good deal about the nature of the war, as it was understood by the Valencia government. Later, Orwell was to make this conclusion explicit: "A government which sends boys of fifteen to the front with rifles forty years old and keeps its biggest men and newest weapons in the rear is manifestly more afraid of the revolution than of the fascists. Hence the feeble war policy of the past six months, and hence the compromise with which the war will almost certainly end."[53] Jackson's account of these events, with its omissions and assumptions, suggests that he perhaps shares the view that the greatest danger in Spain would have been a victory of the revolution.

Jackson apparently discounts Orwell's testimony, to some extent, commenting that "the readers should bear in mind Orwell's own honest statement that he knew very little about the political complexities of the struggle." This is a strange comment. For one thing, Orwell's analysis of the "political complexities of the struggle" bears up rather well after thirty years; if it is defective, it is probably in his tendency to give too much prominence to the POUM in comparison with the anarchists-not surprising, in view of the fact that he was with the POUM militia. His exposure of the fatuous nonsense that was appearing at the time in the Stalinist and liberal presses appears quite accurate, and later discoveries have given little reason to challenge the basic facts that he reported or the interpretation that he proposed in the heat of the conflict. Orwell does, in fact, refer to his own "political ignorance." Commenting on the final defeat of the revolution in May, he states: "I realized-though owing to my political ignorance, not so clearly as I ought to have done-that when the Government felt more sure of itself there would be reprisals." But this form of "political ignorance" has simply been compounded in more recent historical work.

Shortly after the May Days, the Caballero government fell and Juan Negrin became premier of Republican Spain. Negrin is described as Follows by Broue and Temime: "… he is an unconditional defender of capitalist property and resolute adversary of collectivization, whom the CNT ministers find blocking all of their proposals. He is the one who solidly reorganized the carabineros and presided over the transfer of the gold reserves of the Republic to the USSR. He enjoyed the confidence of the moderates … [and] was on excellent terms with the Communists."

The first major act of the Negrin government was the suppression of the POUM and the consolidation of central control over Catalonia. The government next turned to Aragon, which had been under largely anarchist control since the first days of the revolution, and where agricultural collectivization was quite extensive and Communist elements very weak. The municipal councils of Aragon were coordinated by the Council of Aragon, headed by Joaquin Ascaso, a well-known

[52] Orwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 143–44.

[53] *Controversy*, August 1937, cited by Morrow, p. 173. The prediction was incorrect, though not unreasonable. Had the Western powers and the Soviet Union wished, compromise would have been possible, it appears, and Spain might have been saved the terrible consequences of a Franco victory. See Brenan, *op. cit.*, p. 331. He attributes the British failure to support an armistice and possible reconciliation to the fact that Chamberlain "saw nothing disturbing in the prospect of an Italian and German victory." It would be interesting to explore more fully the attitude of Winston Churchill. In April 1937 he stated that a Franco victory would not harm British interests. Rather, the danger was a "success of the trotskyists and anarchists" (cited by Broue and Temime, *op. cit.*, p. 172). Of some interest, in this connection, is the recent discovery of an unpublished Churchill essay written in March 1939 — six months after Munich — in which he said that England "would welcome and aid a genuine Hitler of peace and toleration" (see *New York Times*, December 12 1965).

CNT militant, one of whose brothers had been killed during the May Days. Under the Cabalero government, the anarchists had agreed to give representation to other antifascist parties, including the Communists, but the majority remained anarchist. In August, the Negrin government announced the dissolution of the Council of Aragon and dispatched a division of the Spanish army, commanded by the Communist officer Enrique Lister, to Enforce the dissolution of the local committees, dismantle the collectives, and establish central government control. Ascaso was arrested on the charge of having been responsible for the robbery of jewelry-namely, the jewelry "robbed" by the Council for its own use in the fall of 1936. The local anarchist press was suppressed in favor of a Communist journal, and, in general, local anarchist centers were forcefully occupied and closed. The last anarchist stronghold was captured, with tanks and artillery, on September 21. Because of government-imposed censorship, there is very little of a direct record of these events, and the major histories pass over them quickly.[54] According to Felix Morrow, "the official CNT press ... compared the assault on Aragon with the subjection of Asturias by Lopez Ochoa in October 1934" — the latter, one of the bloodiest acts of repression in modern Spanish history. Although this is an exaggeration, it is a fact that the popular organs of administration were wiped out by Lister's legions, and the revolution was now over, so far as Aragon was concerned.

About these events, Jackson has the following comments:

> "On August 1 1 the government announced the dissolution of the Consejo de Aragon, the anarchist-dominated admninistration which had been recognized by Largo Caballero in December, 1936. The peasants were known to hate the Consejo, the anarchists had deserted the front during the Barcelona fighting, and the very existence of the Consejo was a standing challenge to the authority of the central government. For all these reasons Negrin did not hesitate to send in troops, and to arrest the anarchist officials. Once their authority had been broken, however, they were released."[55]

These remarks are most interesting. Consider first the charge that the anarchists had deserted the front during the May Days. It is true that elements of certain anarchist and POUM divisions were prepared to march on Barcelona, but after the "fragile truce" was established on May 5, they did not do so; no anarchist forces even approached Barcelona to defend the Barcelona proletariat and its institutions from attack. However, a motorized column of 5,ooo Assault Guards was sent from the front by the government to break the "fragile truce."[56] Hence the only forces to "desert

[54] I find no mention at all in Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*. The account here is largely taken from Broue and Temime, pp. 279–80.

[55] *Op cit*., p. 405. A footnote comments on the "leniency" of the government to those arrested. Jackson has nothing to say about the charges against Ascaso and others, or the manner in which the old order was restored in Aragon.

To appreciate these events more fully, one should consider, by comparison, the concern for civil liberties shown by Negrin on the second, antifascist front. In an interview after the war, he explained to John Whitaker (*We Cannot Escape History* [New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1943], pp. 116–18) why his government had been so ineffective in coping with the fifth column, even in the case of known fascist agents. Negrin explained that "we couldn't arrest a man on suspicion; we couldn't break with the rules of evidence. You can't risk arresting an innocent man because you are positive in your own mind that he is guilty. You prosecute a war, yes; but you also live with your conscience." Evidently, these scruples did not pertain when it was the rights of anarchist and socialist workers, rather than fascist agents, that were at stake.

[56] Cf. Broue and Temime, *op. cit*., p. 262. Ironically, the government forces included some anarchist troops, the only ones to enter Barcelona.

the front" during the Barcelona fighting were those dispatched by the government to complete the job of dismantling the revolution, by force. Recall Orwell's observations quoted above, page 103.

What about Jackson's statement that "the peasants were known to hate the Consejo"? As in the other cases I have cited, Jackson gives no indication of any evidence on which such a judgment might be based. The most detailed investigation of the collectives is from anarchist sources, and they indicate that Aragon was one of the areas where collectivization was most widespread and successful.[57] Both the CNT and the UGT Federation of Land Workers were vigorous in their support for collectivization, and there is no doubt that both were mass organizations. A number of nonanarchists, observing collectivization in Aragon firsthand, gave very favorable reports and stressed the voluntary character of collectivization.[58] According to Gaston Leval, an anarchist observer who carried out detailed investigation of rural collectivization, "In Aragon 75 percent of small proprietors have voluntarily adhered to the new order of things," and others were not forced to involve themselves in collectives.[59] Other anarchist observers-Augustin Souchy in particular-gave detailed observations of the functioning of the Aragon collectives. Unless one is willing to assume a fantastic degree of falsification, it is impossible to reconcile their descriptions with the claim that "the peasants were known to hate the Consejo"-unless, of course, one restricts the term "peasant" to "individual farm owner," in which case it might very well be true, but would justify disbanding the council only on the assumption that the rights of the individual farm owner must predominate, not those of the landless worker. There is little doubt that the collectives were economically successful,[60] hardly likely if collectivization were forced and hated by the peasantry.

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[57] See Bolloten, *op. cit.*, p. 55, n. 1, for an extensive list of sources.

[58] Broue and Temime cite the socialists Alardo Prats, Fenner Brockway, and Carlo Rosselli. Borkenau, on the other hand, suspected that the role of terror was great in collectivization. He cites very little to substantiate his feeling, though some evidence is available from anarchist sources. See note 45 above.

Some general remarks on collectivization by Rosselli and Brockway are cited by Rudolf Rocker in his essay "Anarchism and Anarchosyndicalism," n. 1, in Paul Eltzbacher, ed., *Anarchism* (London, Freedom Press, i960), p. 266:

Rosselli: In three months Catalonia has been able to set up a new social order on the ruins of an ancient system. This is chiefly due to the Anarchists, who have revealed a quite remarkable sense of proportion, realistic understanding, and organizing ability… All the revolutionary forces of Catalonia have united in a program of Syndicalist-Socialist character … Anarcho-Syndicalism, hitherto so despised, has revealed itself as a great constructive force. I am no Anarchist, but I regard it as my duty to express here my opinion of the Anarchists of Catalonia, who have all too often been represented as a destructive if not a criminal element.

Brockway: I was impressed by the strength of the C.N.T. It was unnecessary to tell me that it is the largest and most vital of the working class organizations in Spain. That was evident on all sides. The large industries were clearly in the main in the hands of the C.N.T. — railways, road transport, shipping, engineering, textiles, electricity, building, agriculture… I was immensely impressed by the constructive revolutionary work which is being done by the C.N.T. Their achievements of workers' control in industry is an inspiration… There are still some Britishers and Americans who regard the Anarchists of Spain as impossible, undisciplined uncontrollables. This is poles away from the truth. The Anarchists of Spain, through the C.N.T., are doing one of the biggest constructive jobs ever done by the working class. At the front they are fighting Fascism. Behind the front they are actually constructing the new workers' society. They see that the war against Fascism and the carrying through of the social revolution are inseparable. Those who have seen them and understood what they are doing must honor them and be grateful to them… That is surely the biggest thing which has hitherto been done by the workers in any part of the world.

[59] Cited by Richards, *op. cit.*, pp. 76–81, where long descriptive quotations are given.

[60] See Hugh Thomas, "Anarchist Agrarian Collectives in the Spanish Civil War" (note 13). He cites figures showing that agricultural production went up in Aragon and Castile, where collectivization was extensive, and down in Catalonia and the Levante, where peasant proprietors were the dominant element.

I have already cited Bolloten's general conclusion, based on very extensive documentary evidence, that while the individual farmer may have viewed the development of collectivized agriculture with dismay, "the farm workers of the Anarchosyndicalist CNT and the Socialist UGT saw in it, on the contrary, the commencement of a new era." This conclusion seems quite reasonable, on the basis of the materials that are available. With respect to Aragon, specifically, he remarks that the "debt-ridden peasants were strongly affected by the ideas of the CNT and FAI [Federa cion Anarquista Iberica], a factor that gave a powerful spontaneous impulse to collective farming," though difficulties are cited by anarchist sources, which in general appear to be quite honest about failures. Bolloten cites two Communist sources, among others, to the effect that about 70 percent of the population in rural areas of Aragon lived in collectives (p. 71); he adds that "many of the region's 450 collectives were largely voluntary," although "the presence of militiamen from the neighbouring region of Catalonia, the immense majority of whom were members of the CNT and FAI" was "in some measure" responsible for the extensive collectivization. He also points out that in many instances peasant proprietors who were not compelled to adhere to the collective system did so for other reasons: "… not only were they prevented fromn employing hired labour and disposing freely of their crops … but they were often denied all benefits enjoyed by members" (p. 72). Bolloten cites the attempt of the Communists in April 1937 to cause dissension in "areas

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Thomas' is, to my knowledge, the only attempt by a professional historian to assess the data on agricultural collectivization in Spain in a systematic way. He concludes that the collectives were probably "a considerable social success" and must have had strong popular support, but he is more doubtful about their economic viability. His suggestion that "Communist pressure on the collectives may have given them the necessary urge to survive" seems quite unwarranted, as does his suggestion that "the very existence of the war … may have been responsible for some of the success the collectives had." On the contrary, their success and spontaneous creation throughout Republican Spain suggest that they answered to deeply felt popular sentiments, and both the war and Communist pressure appear to have been highly disruptive factors — ultimately, of course, destructive factors.

Other dubious conclusions are that "in respect of redistribution of wealth, anarchist collectives were hardly much improvement over capitalism" since "no effective way of limiting consumption in richer collectives was devised to help poorer ones," and that there was no possibility of developing large-scale planning. On the contrary, Bolloten (*op. cit.*, pp. 176–79) points out that "in order to remedy the defects of collectivization, as well as to iron out discrepancies in the living standards of the workers in flourishing and impoverished enterprises, the Anarchosyndicalists, although rootedly opposed to nationalization, advocated the centralization — or, socialization, as they called it — under trade union control, of entire branches of production." He mentions a number of examples of partial socialization that had some success, citing as the major difficulty that prevented still greater progress the insistence of the Communist party and the UGT leadership — though apparently not all of the rank-and-file members of the UGT — on government ownership and control. According to Richards (*op. cit.*, p. 82): "In June, 1937 … a National Plenum of Regional Federations of Peasants was held in Valencia to discuss the formation of a National Federation of Peasants for the co-ordination and extension of the collectivist movement and also to ensure an equitable distribution of the produce of the land, not only between the collectives but for the whole country. Again in Castille in October 1937, a merging of the 100,000 members of the Regional Federation of Peasants and the 13,000 members in the food distributive trades took place. It represented a logical step in ensuring better co-ordination, and was accepted for the whole of Spain at the National Congress of Collectives held in Valencia in November 1937." Still other plans were under consideration for regional and national coordination — see, for example, D. A. de Santillan, *After the Revolution* (New York: Greenberg Publisher, 1937), for some ideas.

Thomas feels that collectives could not have survived more than "a few years while primitive misery was being overcome." I see nothing in his data to support this conclusion. The Palestinian-Israeli experience has shown that collectives can remain both a social and an economic success over a long period. The success of Spanish collectivization, under war conditions, seems amazing. One can obviously not be certain whether these successes could have been secured and extended had it not been for the combined fascist, Communist, and liberal attack, but I can find no objective basis for the almost universal skepticism. Again, this seems to me merely a matter of irrational prejudice.

where the CNT and UGT had established collective farms by mutual agreement" (p. 195), leading in some cases to pitched battles and dozens of assassinations, according to CNT sources.[61]

Bolloten's detailed analysis of the events of the summer of 1937 sheds considerable light on the question of peasant attitudes toward collectivization:

> "It was inevitable that the attacks on the collectives should have had an unfavorable effect upon rural economy and upon morale, for while it is true that in some areas collectivization was anathema to the majority of peasants, it is no less true that in others collective farms were organized spontaneously by the bulk of the peasant population. In Toledo province for example, where even before the war rural collectives existed, 83 per cent of the peasants, accord ing to a source friendly to the Communists, decided in favour of the collective cultivation of the soil. As the campaign against the collective farms reached its height just before the summer harvest [1937] ... a pall of dismay and apprehension descended upon the agricultural labourers. Work in the fields was abandoned in many places or only carried on apathetically, and there was danger that a sub stantial portion of the harvest, vital for the war effort, would be left to rot." [P. 196]

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[61] The following is a brief description by the anarchist writer Gaston Leval, *Ne Franco, Ne Stalin, le collettivita anarchiche spagnole nella lotta contro Franco e la reazione slaliniana* (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1952), pp. 303ff.; sections reprinted in *Collectivites anarchistes en Espagne revolutionnaire, Noir et Rouge*, undated.

In the middle of the month of June, the attack began in Aragon on a grand scale and with hitherto unknown methods. The harvest was approaching. Rifles in hand, treasury guards under Communist orders stopped trucks loaded with provisions on the highways and brought them to their offices. A little later, the same guards poured into the collectives and confiscated great quantities of wheat under the authority of the general staff with headquarters in Barbastro... Later open attacks began, under the command of Lister with troops withdrawn from the front at Belchite more than 50 kilometers away, in the month of August... The final result was that 30 percent of the collectives were completely destroyed. In Alcolea, the municipal council that governed the collective was arrested; the people who lived in the Home for the Aged ... were thrown out on the street. In Mas de las Matas, in Monzon, in Barbastro, on all sides, there were arrests. Plundering took place everywhere. The stores of the cooperatives and their grain supplies were rifled; furnishings were destroyed. The governor of Aragon, who was appointed by the central government after the dissolution of the Council of Aragon — which appears to have been the signal for the armed attack against the collectives — protested. He was told to go to the devil.

On October 22, at the National Congress of Peasants, the delegation of the Regional Committee of Aragon presented a report of which the following is the summary:

"More than 600 organizers of collectives have been arrested. The government has appointed management committees that seized the warehouses and distributed their contents at random. Land, draught animals, and tools were given to individual families or to the fascists who had been spared by the revolution. The harvest was distributed in the same way. The animals raised by the collectives suffered the same fate. A great number of collectivized pig farms, stables, and dairies were destroyed. In certain communes, such as Bordon and Calaceite, even seed was confiscated and the peasants are now unable to work the land."

The estimate that 30 percent of the collectives were destroyed is consistent with figures reported by Peirats (*Los anarquistas en la crisis politico espanola*, p. 300). He points out that only two hundred delegates attended the congress of collectives of Aragon in September 1937 ("held under the shadow of the bayonets of the Eleventh Division" of Lister) as compared with five hundred delegates at the congress of the preceding February. Peirats states that an army division of Catalan separatists and another division of the PSUC also occupied parts of Aragon during this operation, while three anarchist divisions remained at the front, under orders from the CNT-FAI leadership. Compare Jackson's explanation of the occupation of Aragon: "The peasants were known to hate the Consejo, *the anarchists had deserted the front during the Barcelona fighting*, and the very existence of the Consejo was a standing challenge to the authority of the central government" (my italics).

It was under these circumstances, he points out, that the Communists were forced to change their policy and-temporarily-to tolerate the collectives. A decree was passed legalizing collectives "during the current agricultural year" (his italics) and offering them some aid. This "produced a sense of relief in the countryside during the vital period of the harvest." Immediately after the crops had been gathered, the policy changed again to one of harsh repression. Bolloten cites Communist sources to the effect that "a short though fierce campaign at the beginning of August" prepared the way for the dissolution of the Council of Aragon. Following the dissolution decree, "the newly appointed Governor General, Jose Ignacio Mantecon, a member of the Left Republican Party, but a secret Communist synthpathizer [who joined the party in exile, after the war], ... ordered the break-up of the collective farms." The means: Lister's division, which restored the old order by force and terror. Bolloten cites Communist sources conceding the excessive harshness of Lister's methods. He quotes the Communist general secretary of the Institute of Agrarian Reform, who admits that the measures taken to dissolve the collectives were "a very grave mistake, and produced tremendous disorganization in the countryside," as "those persons who were discontented wmth the collectives ... took them by assault, carrying away and dividing up the harvest and farm implements without respecting the collectives that had been formed without violence or pressure, that were prosperous, and that were a model of organization... As a result, labour in the fields was suspended almost entirely, and a quarter of the land had not been prepared at the time for sowing" (p. 200). Once again, it was necessary to ameliorate the harsh repression of the collectives, to prevent disaster. Summarizing these events, Bolloten describes the resulting situation as follows:

> "But although the situation in Aragon improved in some degree, the hatreds and resentments generated by the break-up of the collectives and by the repression that followed were never wholly dispelled. Nor was the resultant disillusionment that sapped the spirit of the Anarchosyndicalist forces on the Aragon front ever entirely removed, a disillusionment that no doubt contributed to the col lapse of that front a few months later... after the destruction of the collective farms in Aragon, the Communist Party was compelled to modify its policy, and support collectives also in other regions against former owners who sought the return of confiscated land..." [Pp. 200–201]

Returning to Jackson's remarks, I think we must conclude that they seriously misrepresent the situation.[62] The dissolution of the Council of Aragon and the large-scale destruction of the collectives by military force was simply another stage in the eradication of the popular revolution and the restoration of the old order. Let me emphasize that I am not criticizing Jackson for his negative attitude toward the social revolution, but rather for the failure of objectivity when he deals with the revolution and the ensuing repression.

Among historians of the Spanish Civil War, the dominant view is that the Communist policy was in essentials the correct one-that in order to consolidate domestic and international support for the Republic it was necessary to block and then reverse the social revolution. Jackson, for example, states that Caballero "realized that it was absolutely necessary to rebuild the authority

[62] Regarding Bolloten's work, Jackson has this to say: "Throughout the present chapter, I have drawn heavily on this carefully documented study of the Communist Party in 1936–37. It is unrivaled in its coverage of the wartime press, of which Bolloten, himself a UP correspondent in Spain, made a large collection" (p. 363 n.).

of the Republican state and to work in close cooperation with the middle-class liberals." The anarchist leaders who entered the government shared this view, putting their trust in the good faith of liberals such as Companys and believing-naively, as events were to show-that the Western democracies would come to their aid.

A policy diametrically opposed to this was advocated by Camillo Berneri. In his open letter to the anarchist minister Federica Montseny,[63] he summarizes his views in the following way: "The dilemma, war or revolution, no longer has meaning. The only dilemma is this. Either victory over Franco through revolutionary war, or defeat" (his italics). He argued that Morocco should be granted independence and that an attempt should be made to stir up rebellion throughout North Africa. Thus a revolutionary struggle should be undertaken against Western capitalism in North Africa and, simultaneously, against the bourgeois regime in Spain, which was gradually dismantling the accomplishments of the July revolution. The primary front should be political. Franco relied heavily on Moorish contingents, including a substantial number from French Morocco. The Republic might exploit this fact, demoralizing the Nationalist forces and perhaps even winning them to the revolutionary cause by political agitation based on the concrete alternative of pan-Islamic-specifically, Moroccan-revolution. Writing in April 1937, Berneri urged that the army of the Repub lic be reorganized for the defense of the revolution, so that it might recover the spirit of popular participation of the early days of the revolution. He quotes the words of his compatriot Louis Bertoni, writing from the Huesca front:

> "The Spanish war, deprived of all new faith, of any idea of a social transformation, of all revolutionary grandeur, of any universal meaning, is now merely a national war of independence that must be carried on to avoid the extermination that the international plutocracy demands. There remains a terrible question of life or death, but no longer a war to build a new society and a new humanity."

In such a war, the human element that might bring victory over fascism is lost. In retrospect, Berneri's ideas seem quite reasonable. Delegations of Moroccan nationalists did in fact approach the Valencia government asking for arms and materiel, but were refused by Caballero, who actually proposed territorial concessions in North Africa to France and England to try to win their support. Commenting on these facts, Broue and Temime observe that these policies deprived the Republic of "the instrument of revolutionary defeatism in the enemy army," and even of a possible weapon against Italian intervention. Jackson, on the other hand, dismisses Berneri's suggestion with the remark that independence for Morocco (as for that matter, even aid to the Moroccan nationalists) was "a gesture that would have been highly appreciated in Paris and London." Of course, it is correct that France and Britain would hardly have appreciated this development. As Berneri points out, "it goes without saying that one cannot simultaneously guarantee French and British interests in Morocco and carry out an insurrection." But Jackson's comment does not touch on the central issue, namely, whether the Spanish revolution could have been preserved, both from the fascists at the front and from the bourgeois-Communist coalition within the Republic, by a revolutionary war of the sort that the left proposed-or, for that matter, whether the Republic might not have been saved by a political struggle that involved Franco's invading Moorish troops, or at least eroded their morale. It is easy to see why Caballero was not attracted by

[63] See note 18. A number of citations from Berneri's writings are given by Broue and Temime. Morrow also presents several passages from his journal, *Guerra di Classe*. A collection of his works would be a very useful contribution to our understanding of the Spanish Civil War and to the problems of revolutionary war in general.

this bold scheme, given his reliance on the eventual backing of the Western democracies. On the basis of what we know today, however, Jackson's summary dismissal of revolutionary war is much too abrupt.

Furthermore, Bertoni's observations from the Huesca front are borne out by much other evidence, some of it cited earlier. Even those who accepted the Communist strategy of discipline and central control as necessary concede that the repressions that formed an ineliminable part of this strategy "tended to break the fighting spirit of the people."[64] One can only speculate, but it seems to me that many commentators have seriously underestimated the significance of the political factor, the potential strength of a popular struggle to defend the achievements of the revolution. It is perhaps relevant that Asturias, the one area of Spain where the system of CNT-UGT committees was not eliminated in favor of central control, is also the one area where guerrilla warfare continued well after Franco's victory. Broue and Temime observe[65] that the resistance of the partisans of Asturias "demonstrates the depth of the revolutionary elan, which had not been shattered by the reinstitution of state authority, conducted here with greater prudence." There can be no doubt that the revolution was both widespread and deeply rooted in the Spanish masses. It seems quite possible that a revolutionary war of the sort advocated by Berneri would have been successful, despite the greater military force of the fascist armies. The idea that men can over come machines no longer seems as romantic or naive as it may have a few years ago.

Furthermore, the trust placed in the bourgeois government by the anarchist leaders was not honored, as the history of the counterrevolution clearly shows. In retrospect, it seems that Berneri was correct in arguing that they should not have taken part in the bourgeois government, but should rather have sought to replace this government with the institutions created by the revolution.[66] The anarchist minister Juan Garcia Oliver stated that "we had confidence in the word and in the person of a Catalan democrat and retained and supported Companys as President of the Generalitat,"[67] at a time when in Catalonia, at least, the workers' organizations could easily have replaced the state apparatus and dispensed with the former political parties, as they had replaced the old economy with an entirely new structure. Companys recognized fully that there were limits beyond which he could not cooperate with the anarchists. In an interview with H. E. Kaminski, he refused to specify these limits, but merely expressed his hope that "the anarchist masses will not oppose the good sense of their leaders," who have "accepted the responsibilities incumbent upon them"; he saw his task as "directing these responsibilities in the proper path," not further specified in the interview, but shown by the events leading up to the May Days.[68] Probably, Companys attitude toward this willingness of the anarchist leaders to cooperate was expressed accurately in his reaction to the suggestion of a correspondent of the New Statesman and Nation, who predicted that the assassination of the anarchist mayor of Puigcerd would lead to a revolt: "[Companys] laughed scornfully and said the anarchists would capitulate as they always had before."[69] As has already been pointed out in some detail, the liberal-Communist party

[64] Cattell, *op. cit.*, p. 208. See also the remarks by Borkenau, Brenan, and Bolloten cited earlier. Neither Cattell nor Borkenau regards this decline of fighting spirit as a major factor, however.

[65] *Op. cit.*, p. 195, n. 7.

[66] To this extent, Trotsky took a similar position. See his *Lesson of Spain* (London: Workers' International Press, 1937).

[67] Cited in Richards, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[68] H. E. Kaminski, *Ceux de Barcelone* (Paris: Les Editions Denoel, 1937), p. 181. This book contains very interesting observations on anarchist Spain by a skeptical though sympathetic eyewitness.

[69] May 15, 1937. Cited by Richards, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

coalition had no intention of letting the war against Franco take precedence over the crushing of the revolution. A spokesman for Comorera put the matter clearly: "This slogan has been attributed to the P.S.U.C.: 'Before taking Saragossa, it is necessary to take Barcelona.' This reflects the situation exactly…"[70] Comorera himself had, from the beginning, pressed Companys to resist the CNT.[71] The first task of the antifascist coalition, he maintained, was to dissolve the revolutionary committees.[72] I have already cited a good deal of evidence indicating that the repression conducted by the Popular Front seriously weakened popular commitment and involvement in the antifascist war. What was evident to George Orwell was also clear to the Barcelona workers and the peasants in the collectivized villages of Aragon: The liberal-Communist coalition would not tolerate a revolutionary trans formation of Spanish society; it would commit itself fully to the anti Franco struggle only after the old order was firmly reestablished, by force, if necessary.[73]

There is little doubt that farm workers in the collectives understood quite well the social content of the drive toward consolidation and central control. We learn this not only from anarchist sources but also from the socialist press in the spring of 1937. On May 1, the Socialist party newspaper Adelante had the following to say:

> "At the outbreak of the Fascist revolt the labor organizations and the democratic elements in the country were in agreement that the so-called Nationalist Revolution, which threatened to plunge our people into an abyss of deepest misery, could be halted only by a Social Revolution. The Communist Party, however, opposed this view with all its might. It had apparently completely forgotten its old theories of a "workers' and peasants' republic" and a "dictatorship of the proletariat." From its constant repetition of its new slogan of the parliamentary democratic republic it is clear that it has lost all sense of reality. When the Catholic and conservative sections of the Spanish bourgeoisie saw their old system smashed and could find no way out, the Communist Party instilled new hope into them. It assured them that the democratic bourgeois republic for which it was pleading put no obstacles in the way of Catholic propaganda and, above all, that it stood ready to defend the class interests of the bourgeoisie."[74]

[70] Cited by Broue and Temime, *op. cit.*, p. 258, n. 34. The conquest of Saragossa was the goal, never realized, of the anarchist militia in Aragon.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 175.

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 193.

[73] The fact was not lost on foreign journalists. Morrow (*op. cit.*, p. 68) quotes James Minifie in the *New York Herald Tribune*, April 28, 1937: "A reliable police force is being built up quietly but surely. The Valencia government discovered an ideal instrument for this purpose in the Carabineros. These were formerly customs officers and guards, and always had a good reputation for loyalty. It is reported on good authority that 40,000 have been recruited for this force, and that 20,000 have already been armed and equipped… The anarchists have already noticed and complained about the increased strength of this force at a time when we all know there's little enough traffic coming over the frontiers, land or sea. They realize that it will be used against them." Consider what these soldiers, as well as Lister's division or the asaltos described by Orwell, might have accomplished on the Aragon front, for example. Consider also the effect on the militiamen, deprived of arms by the central government, of the knowledge that these well-armed, highly trained troops were liquidating the accomplishments of their revolution.

[74] Cited in Rocker, *The Tragedy of Spain*, p. 37.

That this realization was widespread in the rural areas was underscored dramatically by a questionnaire sent by Adelante to secretaries of the UGT Federation of Land Workers, published in June 1937.[75] The results are summarized as follows:

> "The replies to these questions revealed an astounding unanimity. Everywhere the same story. The peasant collectives are today most vigorously opposed by the Communist Party. The Communists organize the well-to-do farmers who are on the lookout for cheap labor and are, for this reason, outspokenly hostile to the cooperative undertakings of the poor peasants.
>
> It is the element which before the revolution sympathized with the Fascists and Monarchists which, according to the testimony of the trade-union representatives, is now flocking into the ranks of the Communist Party. As to the general effect of Communist activity on the country, the secretaries of the U.G.T. had only one opinion, which the representative of the Valencia organization put in these words: "It is a misfortune in the fullest sense of the word."[76]

It is not difficult to imagine how the recognition of this "misfortune" must have affected the willingness of the land workers to take part in the antifascist war, with all the sacrifices that this entailed

The attitude of the central government to the revolution was brutally revealed by its acts and is attested as well in its propaganda. A former minister describes the situation as follows:

> "The fact that is concealed by the coalition of the Spanish Communist Party with the left Republicans and right wing Socialists is that there has been a successful social revolution in half of Spain. Successful, that is, in the collectivization of factories and farms which are operated under trade union control, and operated quite efficiently. During the three months that I was director of propaganda for the United States and England under Alvarez del Vayo, then Foreign Minister for the Valencia Government, I was instructed not to send out one word about this revolution in the economic system of loyalist Spain. Nor are any foreign correspondents in Valencia permitted to write freely of the revolution that has taken place."[77]

In short, there is much reason to believe that the will to fight Franco was significantly diminished, perhaps destroyed, by the policy of authoritarian centralization undertaken by the liberal-Communist coalition, carried through by force, and disguised in the propaganda that was

[75] For references, see Bolloten, *op. cit.*, p. 192, n. 12.

[76] Cited in Rocker, *The Tragedy of Spain*, p. 37.

[77] Liston M. Oak, "Balance Sheet of the Spanish Revolution," *Socialist Review*, vol. 6 (September 1937), pp. 7–9, 26. This reference was brought to my attention by William B. Watson. A striking example of the distortion introduced by the propaganda efforts of the 1930s is the strange story of the influential film *The Spanish Earth*, filmed in 1937 by Joris Ivens with a text (written afterward) by Hemingway — a project that was apparently initiated by Dos Passos. A very revealing account of this matter, and of the perception of the Civil War by Hemingway and Dos Passos, is given in W. B. Watson and Barton Whaley, "The Spanish Earth of Dos Passos and Hemingway," unpublished, 1967. The film dealt with the collectivized village of Fuentiduena in Valencia (a village collectivized by the UGT, incidentally). For the libertarian Dos Passos, the revolution was the dominant theme; it was the antifascist war, however, that was to preoccupy Hemingway. The role of Dos Passos was quickly forgotten, because of the fact (as Watson and Whaley point out) that "Dos Passos had become anathema to the Left for his criticisms of communist policies in Spain."

disseminated among Western intellectuals[78] and that still dominates the writing of history. To the extent that this is a correct judgment, the alternative proposed by Berneri and the left "extremists" gains in plausibility.

As noted earlier, Caballero and the anarchist ministers accepted the policy of counterrevolution because of their trust in the Western democracies, which they felt sure would sooner or later come to their aid. This feeling was perhaps understandable in 1937. It is strange, however, that a historian writing in the 1960s should dismiss the proposal to strike at Franco's rear by extending the revolutionary war to Morocco, on grounds that this would have displeased Western capitalism (see p. 109 above).

Berneri was quite right in his belief that the Western democracies would not take part in an antifascist struggle in Spain. In fact, their complicity in the fascist insurrection was not slight. French bankers, who were generally pro-Franco, blocked the release of Spanish gold to the loyalist government, thus hindering the purchase of arms and, incidentally, increasing the reliance of the Republic on the Soviet Union.[79] The policy of "nonintervention," which effectively blocked Western aid for the loyalist government while Hitler and Mussolini in effect won the war for Franco, was also technically initiated by the French government — though apparently under heavy British pressure.[80]

As far as Great Britain is concerned, the hope that it would come to the aid of the Republic was always unrealistic. A few days after the Franco coup, the foreign editor of Paris-Soir wrote: "At least four countries are already taking active interest in the battle-France, which is supporting the Madrid Government, and Britain, Germany and Italy, each of which is giving discreet but nevertheless effective assistance to one group or another among the insurgents."[81] In fact, British support for Franco took a fairly concrete form at the very earliest stages of the insurrection. The Spanish navy remained loyal to the Republic, and made some attempt to prevent Franco from ferrying troops from Morocco to Spain. Italian and German involvement in overcoming these efforts is well documented;[82] the British role has received less attention, but can be determined from contemporary reports. On August 11, 1936, the New York Times carried a front-page report on British naval actions in the Straits of Gibraltar, commenting that "this action helps the Rebels by preventing attacks on Algeciras, where troops from Morocco land." (A few days earlier, loyalist warships had bombarded Algeciras, damaging the British consulate.) An accompanying dispatch from Gibraltar describes the situation as it appeared from there:

> "Angered by the Spanish factions' endangering of shipping and neutral Gibraltar territory in their fighting, Great Britain virtually blockaded Gibraltar Harbor last night with the huge battleship Queen Elizabeth in the center of the entrance, constantly playing search lights on near-by waters.

[78] As far as the East is concerned, Rocker (*The Tragedy of Spain*, p. 25) claims that "the Russian press, for reasons that are easily understood, never uttered one least little word about the efforts of the Spanish workers and peasants at social reconstruction." I cannot check the accuracy of this claim, but it would hardly be surprising if it were correct.

[79] See Patricia A. M. Van der Esch, *Prelude to War: The International Repercussions of the Spanish Civil War (1935–1939)* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1951), p. 47; and Brenan, *op. cit.*, p. 329, n. 1. The conservative character of the Basque government was also, apparently, largely a result of French pressure. See Broue and Temime, *op. cit.*, p. 172, no. 8.

[80] See Dante A. Puzzo, *Spain and the Great Powers: 1936–1941* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 86 ff. This book gives a detailed and very insightful analysis of the international background of the Civil War.

[81] Jules Sauerwein, dispatch to the *New York Times* dated July 26. Cited by Puzzo, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

[82] Cf., for example, Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp. 248 ff.

> Many British warships patrolled the entire Strait today, deter mined to prevent interference with Britain's control over the entrance to the Mediterranean, a vital place in the British "lifeline to the East."

This action followed repeated warnings to the Spanish Government and yesterday's decree that no more fighting would be permitted in Gibraltar Harbor. The British at Gibraltar had become increasingly nervous after the shelling of Algeciras by the Loyalist battleship Jaime I.

Although British neutrality is still maintained, the patrol of the Strait and the closing of the harbor will aid the military Rebels because Loyalist warships cannot attempt to take Algeciras, now in Rebel hands, and completely isolate the Rebels from Morocco. The Rebels now can release some troops, who were rushed back to Algeciras, for duty further north in the drive for Madrid.

It was reported in Gibraltar tonight that the Rebels had sent a transport across the Strait and had landed more troops from Morocco for use in the columns that are marching northward from headquarters at Seville.

This was the second time this year that Britain warned a power when she believed her measure of Mediterranean control was threatened, and it remains to be seen whether the Madrid Government will flout the British as the Italians did. If it attempts to do so, the British gunners of the Gibraltar fort have authority to fire warning shots. What will happen if such shots go unheeded is obvious.

All the British here refer to the Madrid Government as the "Communists" and there is no doubt where British sympathies now lie, encouraged by the statement of General Francisco Franco, leader of the Rebels, that he is not especially cooperating with Italy.

The British Government has ordered Spaniards here to cease plotting or be expelled and has asked Britons "loyally to refrain from either acting or speaking publicly in such a manner as to display marked partiality or partisanship."

The warning, issued in the official Gibraltar Gazette, was signed by the British Colonial Secretary here.

The warning was issued after reports of possible Communist troubles here had reached official ears and after strong complaints that Spanish Rebels were in Gibraltar. It was said Rebels were mak ing headquarters here and entering La Linea to fight." [My italics]

I have quoted this dispatch in full because it conveys rather accurately the character of British "'neutrality" in the early stages of the war and thence forth. In May 1938, the British ambassador to Spain, Sir Henry Chilton, "expressed the conviction that a Franco victory was necessary for peace in Spain; that there was not the slightest chance that Italy and/or Germany would dominate Spain; and that even if it were possible for the Spanish Government to win (which he did not believe) he was convinced that a victory for Franco would be better for Great Britain."[83] Churchill, who was at first violently opposed to the Republic, modified his position somewhat after the crushing of the revolution in the summer of 1937. What particularly pleased him was the forceful repression of the anarchists and the militarization of the Republic (necessary when "the entire structure of civilization and social life is destroyed," as it had been by the revolution, now happily subdued).[84] However, his good feelings toward the Republic remained qualified. In an interview of August 14, 1938, he expressed himself as follows: "Franco has all the right on his side because he loves his country. Also Franco is defending Europe against the Communist danger-if you wish

[83] As reported by Herschel V. Johnson of the American embassy in London; cited by Puzzo, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[84] See Broue and Temime, *op. cit.*, pp. 288–89.

to put it in those terms. But I, I am English, and I prefer the triumph of the wrong cause. I prefer that the other side wins, because Franco could be an upset or a threat to British interests, and the others no."[85]

The Germans were quite aware of British sentiments, naturally, and therefore were much concerned that the supervisory committee for the nonintervention agreement be located in London rather than Paris. The German Foreign Ministry official responsible for this matter expressed his view on August 29, 1936, as follows: "Naturally, we have to count on complaints of all kinds being brought up in London regarding failure to observe the obligation not to intervene, but we cannot avoid such complaints in any case. It can, in fact, only be agreeable to us if the center of gravity, which after all has thus far been in Paris because of the French initiative, is transferred to London."[86] They were not disappointed. In November, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden stated in the House of Commons: "So far as breaches [of the nonintervention agreement] are concerned, I wish to state categorically that I think there are other Governments more to blame than those of Germany and Italy."[87] There was no factual basis for this statement, but it did reflect British attitudes. It is interesting that, according to German sources, England was at that time supplying Franco with munitions through Gibraltar and, at the same time, providing information to Germany about Russian arms deliveries to the Republic.[88]

The British left was for the most part in support of the liberal-Communist coalition, regarding Caballero as an "infantile leftist" and the anarchists as generally unspeakable.

The British policy of mild support for Franco was to be successful in preserving British interests in Spain, as the Germans soon discovered. A German Foreign Ministry note of October 1937 to the embassy in Nationalist Spain included the following observation: "That England cannot permanently be kept from the Spanish market as in the past is a fact with which we have to reckon. England's old relations with the Spanish mines and the Generalissimo's desire, based on political and economic considerations, to come to an understanding with England place certain limits on our chances of reserving Spanish raw materials to ourselves permanently."[89]

One can only speculate as to what might have been the effects of British support for the Republic. A discussion of this matter would take us far afield, into a consideration of British diplomacy during the late 1930s. It is perhaps worth mention, now that the "Munich analogy" is being bandied about in utter disregard for the historical facts by Secretary Rusk and a number of his academic supporters, that "containment of Communism" was not a policy invented by George Kennan in 1947. Specifically it was a dominant theme in the diplomacy of the 1930s. In 1934, Lloyd George stated that "in a very short time, perhaps in a year, perhaps in two, the conservative elements in this country will be looking to Germany as the bulwark against Communism in Europe… Do not let us be in a hurry to condemn Germany. We shall be welcoming Germany as our friend."[90] In September 1938, the Munich agreement was concluded; shortly after, both France and Britain did welcome Germany as "our friend." As noted earlier (see note 53), even

[85] Cited by Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, p. 531, no. 3. Rocker, *The Tragedy of Spain*, p. 14, quotes (without reference) a proposal by Churchill for a five-year "neutral dictatorship" to "tranquilize" the country, after which they could "perhaps look for a revival of parliamentary institutions."

[86] Puzzo, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 147. Eden is referring, of course, to the Soviet Union. For an analysis of Russian assistance to the Spanish Republic, see Cattell, *op. cit.*, chap. 8.

[88] Cf. Puzzo, *op. cit.*, pp. 147–48.

[89] *Ibid.*, p. 212.

[90] *Ibid.*, p. 93.

Churchill's role at this time is subject to some question. Of course, the Munich agreement was the death knell for the Spanish Republic, exactly as the necessity to rely on the Soviet Union signaled the end of the Spanish revolution in 1937.

The United States, like France, exhibited less initiative in these events than Great Britain, which had far more substantial economic interests in Spain and was more of an independent force in European affairs. Nevertheless, the American record is hardly one to inspire pride. Technically the United States adhered to a position of strict neutrality. How ever, a careful look raises some doubts. According to information obtained by Jackson, ""the American colonel who headed the Telephone Company had placed private lines at the disposal of the Madrid plotters for their conversations with Generals Mola and Franco,"[91] just prior to the insurrection on July 17. In August, the American government urged the Martin Aircraft Company not to honor an agreement made prior to the insurrection to supply aircraft to the Republic, and it also pressured the Mexican government not to reship to Spain war materials purchased in the United States.[92] An American arms exporter, Robert Cuse, insisted on his legal right to ship airplanes and aircraft engines to the Republic in December 1936, and the State Department was forced to grant authorization. Cuse was denounced by Roosevelt as unpatriotic, though Roosevelt was forced to admit that the request was quite legal. Roosevelt contrasted the attitude of other businessmen to that of Cuse as follows:

> "Well, these companies went along with the request of the Government. There is the 90 percent of business that is honest, I mean ethically honest. There is the 90 percent we are always pointing at with pride. And then one man does what amounts to a perfectly legal but thoroughly unpatriotic act. He represents the 10 percent of business that does not live up to the best standards. Excuse the homily, but I feel quite deeply about it."[93]

Among the businesses that remained "ethically honest" and therefore did not incur Roosevelt's wrath was the Texas Company (now Texaco), which violated its contracts with the Spanish Republic and shipped oil instead to Franco. (Five tankers that were on the high seas in July 1936 were diverted to Franco, who received six million dollars worth of oil on credit during the Civil War.) Apparently, neither the press nor the American government was able to discover this fact, though it was reported in left-wing journals at the time.[94] There is evidence that the American government shared the fears of Churchill and others about the dangerous forces on the Republican side. Secretary of State Cordell Hull, for example, informed Roosevelt on July 23, 1936, that

[91] *Op. cit.*, p. 248.

[92] Puzzo, *op. cit.*, pp. 151 ff.

[93] *Ibid.*, pp. 154–55 and n. 27.

[94] For some references, see Allen Guttmann, *The Wound in the Heart: America and the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1962), pp. 137–38. The earliest quasi-official reference that I know of is in Herbert Feis, *The Spanish Story* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), where data are given in an appendix. Jackson (op. cit., p. 256) refers to this matter, without noting that Texaco was violating a prior agreement with the Republic. He states that the American government could do nothing about this, since "oil was not considered a war material under the Neutrality Act." He does not point out, however, that Robert Cuse, the Martin Company, and the Mexican government were put under heavy pressure to withhold supplies from the Republic, although this, too, was quite legal. As noted, the Texas Company was never even branded "unethical" or "unpatriotic," these epithets of Roosevelt's being reserved for those who tried to assist the Republic. The cynic might ask just why oil was excluded from the Neutrality Act of January 1937, noting that while Germany and Italy were capable of supplying arms to Franco, they could not meet his demands for oil.

"one of the most serious factors in this situation lies in the fact that the [Spanish] Government has distributed large quantities of arms and ammunition into the hands of irresponsible members of left-wing political organizations."[95]

Like Churchill, many responsible Americans began to rethink their attitude toward the Republic after the social revolution had been crushed.[96] However, relations with Franco continued cordial. In 1957, President Eisenhower congratulated Franco on the "happy anniversary" of his rebellion,[97] and Secretary Rusk added his tribute in 1961. Upon criticism, Rusk was defended by the American ambassador to Madrids who observed that Spain is "a nation which understands the implacable nature of the communist threat,"[98] like Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, and selected other countries of the Free World.[99]

In the light of such facts as these, it seems to me that Jackson is not treating the historical record seriously when he dismisses the proposals of the Spanish left as absurd. Quite possibly Berneri's strategy would have failed, as did that of the liberal-Communist coalition that took over the Republic. It was far from senseless, however. I think that the failure of historians to consider it more seriously follows, once again, from the elitist bias that dominates the writing of history-and, in this case, from a certain sentimentality about the Western democracies.

The study of collectivization published by the CNT in 1937[100] concludes with a description of the village of Membrilla. "In its miserable huts live the poor inhabitants of a poor province; eight thousand people, but the streets are not paved, the town has no newspaper, no cinema, neither a cafe nor a library. On the other hand, it has many churches that have been burned." Immediately after the Franco insurrection, the land was expropriated and village life collectivized. "Food, clothing, and tools were distributed equitably to the whole population. Money was abolished, work collectivized, all goods passed to the community, consumption was socialized. It was, however, not a socialization of wealth but of poverty." Work continued as before. An elected council appointed committees to organize the life of the commune and its relations to the outside world.

The Texas Company continued to act upon the pro-Nazi sympathies of its head, Captain Thorkild Rieber, until August 1940, when the publicity began to be a threat to business. See Feis, *op. cit.*, for further details. For more on these matters, see Richard P. Traina, *American Diplomacy and the Spanish Civil War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), pp. 166 ff.

[95] Puzzo, *op. cit.*, p. 160. He remarks: "A government in Madrid in which Socialists, Communists, and anarchists sat was not without menace to American business interests both in Spain and Latin America" (p. 165). Hull, incidentally, was in error about the acts of the Spanish government. The irresponsible left-wing elements had not been given arms but had seized them, thus preventing an immediate Franco victory.

[96] See Jackson, *op. cit.*, p. 458.

[97] Cf. Guttmann, *op. cit.*, p. 197. Of course, American liberalism was always proloyalist, and opposed both to Franco and to the revolution. The attitude toward the latter is indicated with accuracy by this comparison, noted by Guttmann, p. 165: "300 people met in Union Square to hear Liston Oak [see note 77] expose the Stalinists' role in Spain; 20,000 met in Madison Square Garden to help Earl Browder and Norman Thomas celebrate the preservation of bourgeois democracy," in July 1937.

[98] *Ibid.*, p. 198.

[99] To conclude these observations about the international reaction, it should be noted that the Vatican recognized the Franco government defacto in August 1937 and de jure in May 1938. Immediately upon Franco's final victory, Pope Pius XII made the following statement: "Peace and victory have been willed by God to Spain … which has now given to proselytes of the materialistic atheism of our age the highest proof that above all things stands the eternal value of religion and of the Spirit." Of course, the position of the Catholic Church has since undergone important shifts — something that cannot be said of the American government.

[100] See note 14.

The necessities of life were distributed freely, insofar as they were available. A large number of refugees were accommodated. A small library was established, and a small school of design.

The document closes with these words:

> "The whole population lived as in a large family; functionaries, delegates, the secretary of the syndicates, the members of the municipal council, all elected, acted as heads of a family. But they were controlled, because special privilege or corruption would not be tolerated. Membrilla is perhaps the poorest village of Spain, but it is the most just."

An account such as this, with its concern for human relations and the ideal of a just society, must appear very strange to the consciousness of the sophisticated intellectual, and it is therefore treated with scorn, or taken to be naive or primitive or otherwise irrational. Only when such prejudice is abandoned will it be possible for historians to undertake a serious study of the popular movement that transformed Republican Spain in one of the most remarkable social revolutions that history records.

Franz Borkenau, in commenting on the demoralization caused by the authoritarian practices of the central government, observes (p. 295) that "newspapers are written by Europeanized editors, and the popular move ment is inarticulate as to its deepest impulses … [which are shown only] … by acts." The objectivity of scholarship will remain a delusion as long as these inarticulate impulses remain beyond its grasp. As far as the Spanish revolution is concerned, its history is yet to be written.

I have concentrated on one theme-the interpretation of the social revolution in Spain-in one work of history, a work that is an excellent example of liberal scholarship. It seems to me that there is more than enough evidence to show that a deep bias against social revolution and a commitment to the values and social order of liberal bourgeois democracy has led the author to misrepresent crucial events and to overlook major historical currents. My intention has not been to bring into question the commitment to these values-that is another matter entirely. Rather, it has been to show how this commitment has led to a striking failure of objectivity, providing a particularly subtle and interesting example of "counterrevolutionary subordination."

In opening this discussion of the Spanish revolution, I referred to the classical left-wing critique of the social role of intellectuals, Marxist or otherwise, in modern society, and to Luxemburg's reservations regarding Bolshevism. Western sociologists have repeatedly emphasized the relevance of this analysis to developments in the Soviet Union,[101] with much justice. The same sociologists formulate "the world revolution of the epoch" in the following terms: "The major transformation is the decline of business (and of earlier social formations) and the rise of intellectuals and semi-intellectuals to effective power."[102] The "ultra-left" critic foresaw in these

[101] See, for example, the reference to Machajski in Harold D. Lasswell, *The World Revolution of Our Time: A Framework for Basic Policy Research* (Hoover Institute Studies; Palo Alto, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1951); reprinted, with extensions, in Harold D. Lasswell and Daniel Lerner, eds., *World Revolutionary Elites: Studies in Coercive Ideological Movements* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1965), pp. 29–96. Daniel Bell has a more extensive discussion of Machajski's critique of socialism as the ideology of a new system of exploitation in which the "intellectual workers" will dominate, in a very informative essay that bears directly on a number of the topics that have been mentioned here: "Two Roads from Marx: The Themes of Alienation and Exploitation, and Workers' Control in Socialist Thought," in *The End of Ideology*, pp. 335–68.

[102] Lasswell and Lerner, op. cit., p. 85. In this respect, Lasswell's prognosis resembles that of Bell in the essays cited earlier.

developments a new attack on human freedom and a more efficient system of exploitation. The Western sociologist sees in the rise of intellectuals to effective power the hope for a more humane and smoothly functioning society, in which problems can be solved by "piece meal technology." Who has the sharper eye? At least this much is plain: there are dangerous tendencies in the ideology of the welfare-state intelligentsia who claim to possess the technique and understanding required to manage our "postindustrial society" and to organize an international society dominated by American superpower. Many of these dangers are revealed, at a purely ideological level, in the study of the counterrevolutionary subordination of scholarship. The dangers exist both insofar as the claim to knowledge is real and insofar as it is fraudulent. Insofar as the technique of management and control exists, it can be used to consolidate the authority of those who exercise it and to diminish spontaneous and free experimentation with new social forms, as it can limit the possibilities for reconstruction of society in the interests of those who are now, to a greater or lesser extent, dispossessed. Where the techniques fail, they will be supplemented by all of the methods of coercion that modern technology provides, to preserve order and stability.

For a glimpse of what may lie ahead, consider the Godkin lectures of McGeorge Bundy, recently delivered at Harvard.[103] Bundy urges that more power be concentrated in the executive branch of the government, now "dangerously weak in relation to its present tasks." That the powerful executive will act with justice and wisdom-this presumably needs no argument. As an example of the superior executive who should be attracted to government and given still greater power, Bundy cites Robert McNamara. Nothing could reveal more clearly the dangers inherent in the "new society" than the role that McNamara's Pentagon has played for the past half dozen years. No doubt McNamara succeeded in doing with utmost efficiency that which should not be done at all. No doubt he has shown an unparalleled mastery of the logistics of coercion and repression, combined with the most astonishing inability to comprehend political and human factors. The efficiency of the Pentagon is no less remarkable than its pratfalls.[104] When understanding fails, there is always more force in reserve. As the "experiments in material and human re sources control" collapse and "revolutionary development" grinds to a halt, we simply resort more openly to the Gestapo tactics that are barely concealed behind the facade of "pacification."[105] When American cities explode, we can expect the same. The technique of "limited warfare" translates neatly into a system of domestic repression-far more humane, as will quickly be explained, than massacring those who are unwilling to wait for the inevitable victory of the war on poverty.

Why should a liberal intellectual be so persuaded of the virtues of a political system of four-year dictatorship? The answer seems all too plain.

[103] Summarized in the *Christian Science Monitor*, March 15, 1968. I have not seen the text and therefore cannot judge the accuracy of the report.

[104] To mention just the most recent example: on January 22, 1968, McNamara testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that "the evidence appears overwhelming that beginning in 1966 Communist local and guerrilla forces have sustained substantial attrition. As a result, there has been a drop in combat efficiency and morale…" The Tet offensive was launched within a week of this testimony. See *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, February 19, 1968, for some highly appropriate commentary.

[105] See the first section of the original essay, omitted here. The reality behind the rhetoric has been amply reported. A particularly revealing description is given by Katsuichi Honda, a reporter for *Asahi Shimbun*, in *Vietnam — A Voice from the Villages*, 1967.

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Noam Chomsky
Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship
1969

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