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**Collectivizations: The
constructive
achievements of the
Spanish Revolution.
Essays, documents and
reports**

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**Collectivizations: The Constructive Achievements of the Spanish Revolution. Essays, Documents and Reports—
Agustin Souchy and Paul Folgare¹
Publisher's Note from the Spanish Edition of 1977**

This work, which comprises one of the main sources that must be referred to for any analysis of the collectivizations that took place during the Spanish Revolution, was first published by “Tierra y Libertad” in Barcelona in 1937. After the Civil War it was republished in Toulouse by the CNT, in an edition that omitted the authors' names.

The mere fact that the first edition of this book was published in 1937 will be enough to alert the reader to the existence of certain very general limitations imposed on the interpretation of the text. On the one hand, it was written during the critical moments of the Revolution, and vividly reflects one of the Revolution's most important features; on the other hand, this very fact explains the optimistic tone and the apologetic character of the work, whose shortcomings include the scarcity or absence of criticisms of the collectivization process (a trait that also reflects the obvious didactic and propagandistic purposes of the authors). The positive aspects of the collectivizations, however, far outweigh

the negative ones; this book presents a magnificent tableau of revolutionary achievements, and highlights, perhaps more clearly than the vast majority of literature addressing this theme, the interaction between the spontaneous elements of collectivization and the conscious elements of their creation, which were primarily led by the CNT.

The authors, the German anarchists Souchy and Folgare (actually, according to Frank Mintz, the latter name should be spelled Polgare), crafted the book on the basis of a kind of “collage” technique, mixing, as the second subtitle indicates, “essays, documents and reports”. The purpose of this technique is obviously to allow, to the greatest possible extent, by way of documents, proclamations and interviews, the collectivist workers to express themselves in the book. The authors’ role is reduced to a labor of ordering and the minimum amount of editing necessary to confer coherence upon the mass of materials they selected.

This mixture of materials introduces certain structural complications in the reading of the text, so that it is sometimes difficult, for example, to distinguish between the text written by the authors and the text consisting of the reproduction of documents or the transcription of oral accounts. Although the edition published by “Tierra

y Libertad” represented a notable effort to resolve this difficulty, in the present edition we have endeavored to enhance the structural clarity of the book, especially by means of the standardization of the styles utilized for the chapter headings, subtitles, sections, etc.

We have strictly adhered to the text of the first edition of 1937. The changes that, without modifying the actual text, we have thought advisable, are as follows:

Rectification of obvious typographical errors, including various sporadic inconsistencies in internal references.

Orthographical modernization in accordance with current norms.

Changing certain initials of numerous names from the upper case to the lower case, although we preserved the upper case usage wherever it was minimally admissible.

We have not eliminated the quite numerous solecisms; only in rare cases, and when it was strongly advisable, have we changed an incorrect word and inserted the correct one, but have on such occasions noted the change in a footnote; on other occasions, we have preserved the incorrect word from the original text, and have inserted a footnote in which we have suggested the word we think is the correct one. Almost always,

however, the context makes the meaning of the words that are incorrectly used clear enough to make any such clarification unnecessary.

The punctuation in the text, although often dubious, has been nonetheless preserved as it is in the original, as it does not in any case prejudice a correct understanding of the text.

Introduction

Workers all over the world have understood that the Spanish struggle is their struggle, too. The obstinate silence of the entire bourgeois press, as well as all the resulting difficulties and the scarce media outlets possessed by the Spanish revolutionaries, on the one hand, and the persecution, the cover-up, and the prohibition of their dissemination of information by the enemies of the working class, on the other hand, have generally prevented the workers from obtaining a veracious account of the revolutionary achievements of the libertarian movement in Spain. Nonetheless, this has not prevented them from expressing all their sympathies for them.

Meanwhile we have deemed it useful and necessary to provide an account, for all those who have long felt

sympathy for and acted in support of the freedom fighters, of this labor of liberation that was carried out in the rearguard.

It seemed to us that we would best serve this informational purpose by letting the Spanish revolutionaries speak for themselves as much as possible. The summary that we present here contains, besides some brief schematic explanations (added only in order to provide a more complete picture), original documents, for the most part: confiscation decrees, reports of the trade unions, minutes of meetings, statutes, etc., and the reports drafted by the Industrial committees and by the various local committees for the organs of the revolutionary movement.

Nor have we thought it necessary to change either the style or the content of these documents. Through them the Spanish Revolution speaks, the action of the proletariat as it was expressed at the time, and the quite simple pathos of some of these declarations from those memorable days of struggle provides a better depiction of the events to the foreign reader than the most precise statistics or the most profound analyses.

You will not find within this book either falsifying praise, or distorting exaggerations. We have simply let the

Spanish worker speak for himself so he can tell the entire world what he has done to vindicate and defend his liberty and his well-being.

Part 1

The New Collective Economy

1. Collectivization in Spain

I

The military revolt of July 19, 1936 had wide-ranging consequences for the economic life of Spain. Defense against the militarists and the clergy was only possible with the help of the proletariat. Alone, the republican bourgeoisie would have succumbed. It had to align itself with the proletariat. In 1934, when the Catalanian left sought to challenge Madrid without the workers, and against the anarchists and the syndicalists, Madrid was victorious. The advocates of Catalanian autonomy were defeated. After this conquest, Madrid exacted its vengeance. The Catalanian politicians, beginning with Companys, were sentenced to years in prison.

If the petty bourgeoisie did not want to expose itself this time to the same danger, it had to join forces with the anarchists and syndicalists.

This alliance could not be limited to the political terrain. The anarchists and syndicalists had bad experiences with the bourgeois republic. It was not to be assumed that they would be content to serve as a barrier against the clerical-militarist coup. It was assumed that they would embark on a transformation of the economic system. They did not want to allow economic exploitation to persist, which they perceived to be the cause of political oppression.

The clergy, the military camarilla and the big capitalists allied with them, were aware of this. They knew quite well what was at stake. The victory of the military would have meant the establishment of a military dictatorship, an exacerbated version of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. Had this taken place, not only would the privileged classes have saved themselves, but they would also have provided themselves with the opportunity to exploit the workers even more intensively in the future. This is why they supported the military conspirators.

The generals were the active agents, while the big capitalists pulled the strings behind the scenes. They did not show their hand. To some extent, they were not even at the site of the events. Juan March, Francisco Cambó and others from their class were not even in Spain at the outbreak of the uprising. They awaited the development

of events from other countries. If the military was victorious, these financiers would have returned. In Catalonia, however, as in more than half of Spain, the coup d'état failed. The capitalist financiers did not return to Spain.

Similarly, the captains of industry, the factory directors and the managers of major enterprises preferred to wait outside Spain for the armed struggle to come to an end. On July 19, and during the following days, all the major businesses were abandoned by their managers. The directors of the railroads, of the transportation network in the cities, of the shipping companies, of the major textile mills and forges, the leaders and delegates of the employers' associations, had all disappeared. The general strike of the workers, a defensive measure employed against the military coup d'état, completely paralyzed economic life for eight days.

After having annihilated the resistance of the military rebels, the proletarian organizations decided to go back to work. The trade unions of the CNT were soon convinced that work could not resume under the same conditions as before. The general strike was not a wage struggle. There were no negotiations about a shorter working day or better working conditions. There were no employers. The workers not only had to resume work at

their lathes, their locomotives, trolleys and offices; they also had to take over control of the factories, the workshops, and the transport networks. In other words, the management of industry and of all economic life passed into the hands of the workers and employees.

But one cannot speak in this connection of planned socialization or collectivization. For nothing had been prepared, everything had to be improvised. As in all revolutions, practice came before theory. Theories were superseded and modified by reality. The advocates of the notion that social progress can be obtained by way of peaceful transformation were just as mistaken as those who thought that a whole new social and economic system can be created all at once by force, if only political power falls into the hands of the workers. Reality has proven that both assumptions were equally false. It has demonstrated the correctness of the postulate that it is necessary to shatter the official military and police power of the capitalist state in order to clear the way for new forms of social life. It has demonstrated the correctness of the view that the creators of these new forms of life must prepare themselves for their mission in theory and practice, with regard to their program and organization. Every social theory contains a good share of utopia. And this is as it

should be; otherwise, there would be no creation. There must be ideas, concepts and concrete understanding of the road that must be followed.

The anarchists and syndicalists of Spain possess a well-defined doctrine, while the Marxists, with regard to the question of socialization, advocate the idea that the state must take over the economy, and that industry must be nationalized. The anarchists, on the other hand, believe that socialization must be carried out by the workers, in the workshops, the factories, and in every activity related to economic life. The latter method proceeds from the bottom up, from the periphery towards the center; the Marxist way, however, leads from the top down, from the state to the village.

In Spain, and especially in Catalonia, the process of socialization began in accordance with the anarchist understanding of the concept, as *collectivization*. This collectivization must not be understood as the implementation of a preconceived program. It arose spontaneously. The anarchist influence on this process, however, cannot be ignored. For decades the anarchists and syndicalists of Spain have considered the social transformation of society as their fundamental goal. In the assemblies of their trade unions and groups, in their newspapers, pamphlets and books, the problem of the

social revolution has been continuously and systematically discussed. What must be done on the day after the victory of the proletariat? The apparatus of state power must be overthrown. The workers must themselves take over the management of the enterprises and administer them on their own; the trade unions must have control over economic life. The industrial federations must direct production; the local federations must regulate consumption. Such were the ideas of the anarchosyndicalists. These ideas were also accepted by the FAI. In its conferences and its congresses it has always defended the theory that economic life must be under the control of the trade unions.

If one compares the course of events in Barcelona and many other population centers of Catalonia and Spain, one sees that practice has largely proceeded in accordance with these theories. The executive public powers passed into the hands of the anarchosyndicalist trade unions and the political parties of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie. The Committee of Antifascist Militias was the superior organ, in which the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, the Catalan separatists, the Unió de Rabassaires, the CNT and FAI, the Unified Socialist Party (PSUC) and the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM) were represented. The anarchists

and syndicalists were capable, in the first weeks after July 19, of seizing all public power for themselves alone. They did not do so; they refused to do so. The Catalan government only existed on paper. The Parliament did not reconvene. Two and a half months later this government disappeared completely. On September 28 a new Council met, composed of all the antifascist organizations that had suppressed the military coup d'état.

Such were the changes in the political arena. On the economic terrain, the trade unions worked alone. After July 19, 1936, the trade unions of the CNT took over the production and distribution of food. The trade unions devoted special efforts to solve the most urgent problem, which was how to provide for the population's basic needs. Canteens were opened in all the neighborhoods and at the trade union centers. The supply committees created for this purpose withdrew provisions from the warehouses throughout the city and the countryside. These provisions were paid for with coupons endorsed by the trade unions. All the members of the trade unions, the wives and children of the militiamen as well as the general population received free food. The workers did not receive any pay during the days they were on strike. The Committee of Antifascist

Militias agreed to pay the workers and employees for the days they were on strike. The moneyless economy of the antifascists lasted about two weeks. When work was resumed and economic life was once again set in motion, the money economy returned. After a few weeks, even the benzene for automobiles had to be paid for again. The trade unions, however, still controlled the consumption of benzene as before.

The first stage of collectivization began when the workers confiscated the enterprises. In each workshop, in each factory, in the offices, warehouses and stores, trade union delegates were elected who assumed responsibility for the management of these enterprises. Quite often, these directors had no theoretical preparation at all and very little knowledge of the national economy. They did, however, have a profound sense of their own needs and understood the demands of the moment. The problem of wages, prices and products; they had never scientifically examined the relation between all these factors. They were neither Marxists nor Proudhonists. But they understood their trades and professions, they were familiar with the production processes in their industries and they were not slow to learn. If there were no orders, they used their ingenuity. In some textile factories they manufactured

red and black silk bandanas emblazoned with antifascist inscriptions and offered them for sale on the market.

“How do they determine the price? How do they establish the profit margins?”, asked a foreign Marxist journalist.

“I don’t know anything about profit margins”, answered the worker. “We look in the books to find out how much the raw materials cost, we calculate the current expenditures, we add a surcharge for reserve purposes, we account for the wages and then add another surcharge of ten percent for the Antifascist Militias, and that was the price.”

The bandanas were offered for sale on the market at a price below what could have been charged before; the wages of the workers were higher; the capitalist profit was devoted to the struggle against fascism.

This is how the managerial transition was carried out in most enterprises. The employer was excluded if he opposed the new course of events. A place was found for him if he accepted the change. In the latter case he continued to work as a technical manager or commercial specialist, and sometimes as a worker, and received a wage commensurate with that of the workers or technicians of his trade or profession. This process and

this change were relatively simple. Difficulties only arose later. Supplies of raw materials were rapidly exhausted. In the first days after the revolution they were requisitioned. Later, they had to be paid for or obtained on credit. Few raw materials came from foreign countries. The prices of these raw materials began to rise, and as a result so did those of the finished products. Wages were increased. But this measure was not universally applied. In some industries the increase was considerable. During the first stage of collectivization, the wages of the workers and employees were different even within the same industry. By limiting the collectivization process only to the abolition of the privileges of a handful of employers, or to the elimination of the employer's profits in a corporation, the workers became the beneficiaries, simply replacing the previous owners. This change was a more just arrangement than the one that had previously prevailed, because now the workers effectively obtained the fruit of their labor. But this system was neither socialist nor communist. Instead of a capitalist, there was a kind of collective capitalism. Whereas previously there was only one owner in a factory or a café, now the workers of the factory or the staff of the café became the collective owners. The waiters in a café that did a lot of business enjoyed higher incomes than those in less fortunate establishments.²

Collectivization in Spain could not stop at this stage. This was what everyone felt. The trade unions decided to take over the management of the enterprises themselves. The industrial trade unions were transformed into industrial enterprises. The construction workers trade union in Barcelona took over the management of all the building and construction projects underway in the city. The barbershops were collectivized. In each barbershop there is a trade union delegate, who hands over all the barbershop's income to the Economic Committee of the trade union every week. The expenses of all the barbershops are paid for by the trade union, including wages.

The workers' trade unions have replaced the employer-sponsored trade unions. Social justice was obtained within some industries. But some industries are doing better than others. There are poorer and wealthier industries, higher and lower wages. The process of collectivization cannot stop at this stage, either.

In the Local Federation of Trade Unions of Barcelona (CNT) a discussion is currently underway concerning the establishment of a Liaison Committee; the latter would embrace all the economic committees of all the trade unions; all the money would have to be concentrated in one fund, and this one account would be the source of

an equitable distribution. In some industries such liaison committees and central accounts have existed from the beginning. The Barcelona Bus Company, managed by the workers, is prosperous and generates a surplus. Part of this surplus is destined for a reserve fund to enable the enterprise to purchase raw materials from foreign countries, and the rest is used to subsidize the Streetcar Company, which does not operate so profitably.

Completely unprofitable enterprises, such as the cable car that connects Montjuich with the port of Barcelona, are shut down, for economic reasons, during the winter.

When benzene began to become scarce, four thousand taxi drivers were put out of work; the trade union had to pay their wages. This was a heavy burden on the Transport Trade Union. It was compelled to request aid from the other trade unions and from the Barcelona city administration. The textile industry was running out of raw materials. It cut back on work; some factories only operated three days a week. But the workers had to be paid. Since the manufacturing and textile industries did not have sufficient resources, they had to seek assistance from the Generalitat.

The collectivization process cannot stop at this stage. The syndicalists are calling for socialization. For them, socialization does not mean nationalization, that is, the

transfer of the economy to the state. Socialization must be a *generalization of the collectivizations*: the consolidation of the funds of all the trade unions in a central account, a concentration in the framework of the Local Federation that would be transformed into a kind of collective economic enterprise. This would be socialization from below, or from the workers enterprises to the collectivity as a whole. Without workers organizations there can be no socialization.

II

Not much has been said up to now about expropriation. It is understood that this is a negative concept that expresses the abolition of one form of property, but it says nothing about the form of the new organization. The Marxist formula: expropriate the expropriators, is not very well known in Spain. Collectivism, on the other hand, possesses deeply rooted traditions; it existed in its ancient form long before the modern proletarian movement. It was given new life in the First International. Unlike various other countries with Roman legal traditions, the form of feudal exploitation in Spain consisted less in individual landownership rights than in the right of usufruct exercised over the products of the land. This form survived to some extent right up to the

outbreak of the revolution. Under the leasehold system of the *rabassa* in Catalonia, the peasants had to pay their rent in the form of agricultural products. In 1934, the issue of the amount of rent due to the landowners led to a serious conflict between Catalonia and Madrid. Madrid proclaimed the right to appoint the magistrates responsible for issuing rulings on the demands of the landowners. The small farmers sought to defend their rights by recourse to support for Catalonian autonomy. The struggle for the political independence of Catalonia has an economic dimension. The big landowners supported Madrid.

But this was true not only of Catalonia; in all the regions of Spain collectivist traditions survive. After crushing the forces of the generals, the desire to collectivize the large estates was felt throughout the rural areas. The syndicalist organizations and the anarchist groups took the lead in these attempts to collectivize the land. They remained faithful to their traditions. At the CNT Congress of Madrid in June 1931 the collectivization of the land was designated as one of the most important goals of the rural workers. The resolution approved at the Congress clearly outlined the road that would be followed by the rural workers in July and August 1936. This resolution demanded:

- a) “Expropriation without indemnification of all latifundia, pasturelands, hunting preserves and all fallow arable land, and its designation as social property. Cancellation of the current lease contracts held by the landowners, and their replacement with others that will bring the trade unions into harmony with the needs of each locality.
- b) “Confiscation of the surplus livestock, seeds, farming tools and machinery found in the possession of the expropriated landowners.
- c) “Free and equitable distribution in usufruct of the lands and appurtenances mentioned above to the peasant trade unions for their direct and collective exploitation and administration.
- d) “Abolition of dues, land taxes, debts and mortgage payments that weigh on those properties that constitute the means of life of their owners and are directly cultivated by them without the continuous use or exploitation of other workers.
- e) “Suppression of rent in money or in kind which the small leaseholders (*rabassaires, colonos*, municipal lessees, etc.) are currently forced to pay to the large landowners and their intermediaries who sublet their lands.

“The constructive preparation of the peasants in accordance with our principles is the most important and most difficult mission of syndicalism in the countryside. Most important because, without it, the further development of the social revolution would not be viable. Most difficult, because of the very numerous traditional and subjective obstacles, cultural backwardness, the proprietary instinct and egocentric individualism that hinder the receptivity of the peasant masses to collectivist objectives. The syndicalist peasant movement can and must overcome these obstacles by means of clear, comprehensive and tenacious propaganda regarding its ideological goals as well as educational and trade union activity that will foster habits of collective solidarity among the rural workers and predispose them for and render them capable of collaborating without any hesitations and in their own interests in the establishment of the collectivist or libertarian communist regime.”

“The Congress declares that the socialization of the land and all the means and instruments that make agrarian production possible, as well as its cultivation, use and administration by the agricultural trade unions of federated producers, is the essential precondition for the organization of an economy that would assure to the

laboring collectively the enjoyment of the whole product of its labor.”

The collectivization of the land followed a different course in Spain than in Russia. All the properties of the big landowners were collectivized within each commune. These landowners were supporters of the clerical militarists and fought against the people. The landowners who accepted the economic transformation joined the trade union and worked alongside its other members. These landowners played leading roles in the collectivization movement. Exporters also joined the trade union; in many places even the small landowners joined.

The land is collectively worked by the peasants; all the products are delivered to the trade union. The trade union pays the wages and sells the products. The small landowners who do not want to join the collective remain outside the trade union. They must struggle very hard to survive. They are not forced to do anything, but they cannot benefit from the economic advantages of the trade union, either. In the trade union, on the other hand, labor is organized in a rational manner. In the trade union, the following principle prevails: all for one, one for all. The small landowner, however, remains outside the commune. When the time comes to

distribute the agricultural tools, housing, etc., the small landowner is last in line.³

The life of the rural workers has improved economically with the collectivization of labor and the new regulation of consumption; politically, it is now free. The peasant has been able to preserve his customs and his individual freedoms have not suffered any diminution. No one has to live in big apartment buildings; no one has to eat in collective kitchens. The spirit of property, however, the “demon of possession”, which precisely in the countryside reached the highest extremes of crass egoism, has been annihilated.⁴

Today, the agricultural trade union is an economic enterprise. It is responsible for washing and packing the fruit destined for shipment. The trade union pays the workers. In some communes almost all economic life is in the hands of the trade union. The trade union elects various committees devoted to the organization of labor, consumption, distribution, and defense against fascism. Cafes and movie theaters, where they exist, are under trade union control. In the small villages there are no distinctions between the various trades and unions. All are united in the local federation. The latter is the real

brain of economic life and at the same time the political and cultural center of the village.

III

In Barcelona the victory over fascism assumed the aspect of liberation from a heavy yoke. Everyone enjoyed the recovery of their freedom.

Many people, however, believed that an era of *laissez faire* had been inaugurated for them, an era in which they could do whatever would bring them profit; the factories, the workshops and the warehouses whose owners were fascists were abandoned. The unemployed rushed into the streets and set up as street vendors and hawkers. This trend spread like an epidemic. All the major streets of the capital were flooded with all sorts of goods, which were sold on the sidewalks and even in the middle of the street. The entire city took on a new look. For the owners of retail stores, the street commerce meant major competition. Soon, however, they discovered the remedy. They hired salesmen to sell their commodities in the streets. The trade union of street vendors grew to gigantic proportions. It grew from a few hundred members to many thousands. In order to sell goods in the street, one had to have the membership card of one's trade union. The trade union of the CNT

assumed responsibility for rectifying the situation. It agreed not to admit any more members. Then the street vendors formed a trade union affiliated with the UGT. Those who were not admitted into the CNT trade union could join the UGT-affiliated trade union. Now, in addition to the superabundance of street commerce, Barcelona was also afflicted by the competition between the two organizations. The matter was brought to the attention of the local federation of the CNT. The latter resolved to put an end to the constant increase in the number of street vendors. It only admitted a limited number of street vendors in its trade union, assigning them certain places in the city to ply their trade. This trade union resolution had the effect of a decree. Thousands of street vendors disappeared overnight from the streets of Barcelona.

This was a transitional stage, which was quite important for the status of the capital of Catalonia. The intervention of the trade unions played a decisive role. They established the course and the pace of the process, they regulated the economic life of the city; they exercised control not only over the workers in the factories, but even over the street vendors.

IV

There was no collectivization in one industry: banking. For reasons that are easy to understand. Collectivization is not carried out by decree from above, but by the intervention of the workers and employees in each enterprise.

Why were the banks not collectivized? The bank staff and employees were largely unorganized. There were two trade unions in the banking sector, one affiliated with the CNT and the other with the UGT; the latter, which controlled the majority of the trade unions in this sector, was against collectivization and advocated nationalization.

Socialization must be implemented, according to the doctrine of the UGT, by governmental decree. The government did not decree the collectivization of the banks. Thus, most of the employees of the banks did not know what they should do. Collectivization was not undertaken.

The CNT minority was unable to convince the majority of the bank employees to accept its ideas about the economic and financial transformation of society.

The collectivization or socialization of the banks would have undoubtedly conferred a different course on the development of events. The wealth of the banks does not consist in machinery and tools, but in means of circulation, nominal values, money. The confiscation of bank accounts would have made it possible to centralize and coordinate the distribution of existing financial means, and thus a planned economy. A controlling center would have intervened in the process. With the collaboration of the representatives of the industrial trade unions, the employees of the banks would have been able to elaborate a program of financial assistance to the enterprises of vital importance. It would therefore have been possible to place the financial institutions at the service of collectivization. In that case, nothing could stand in the way of collectivization; it would embrace all economic life. The process of collectivization is comparable to a construction project; stones are brought from far and wide, and small buildings are built one by one. Had the banks been integrated into the collectivization program, the realization of the latter would have been accomplished in a systematic fashion, like a construction project. This did not take place, and time was lost.

But time lost in one respect was time gained on another. No limits were placed on individual initiative. Within the span of six months of experiences, the trade unions learned that it was necessary to coordinate the efforts of the collectivized enterprises in the various industries. They based their deliberations on practical experience. The leading committees that were now being created no longer needed to appoint subordinate institutions; the latter already existed. The superstructure of collectivization was based on solid foundations, powerfully rooted in the industrial trade unions, in the professional sections, in the enterprises and in the workshops themselves. It is on this basis that the power of collectivization in Spain rests.

V

In the development of collectivization we encounter the same characteristic as we see in the development of the political situation: a rejection of all totalitarian methods. While the trade unions asserted their influence over the distribution and supply of provisions, they did not want to monopolize them. The trade union of the food industry took over the bakeries (there were no large bread factories in Barcelona). There were also many small commercial ovens. These continued to operate on

their own account, as before. The shipment of milk from the countryside to the cities is in the hands of the trade unions. The latter supply most of the dairies. The trade unions of the food industry control the rural farms and collaborate with the collective farms and the agricultural trade unions. Restrictions on imports of condensed milk led to a scarcity of milk. The trade union of the food industry bought condensed milk on foreign markets and solved this problem in Barcelona. In Russia, the stores remained closed during the entire first stage of the revolution. This did not take place in Spain. Wholesale trade passed into the hands of the trade unions. Retail stores obtained their commodities from the trade union. Maximum prices were established for retail goods. Domestic commerce was unified and regulated. At the head of this "monopoly" was the Supply Council. Its purpose was to organize in a uniform manner the entire supply of provisions for Catalonia, in order to provide for the basic needs of all the towns and neighborhoods. Standard prices were stipulated for the collectivized communes, the trade unions of fishermen and other food industries in agreement with the institutions responsible for distribution. The goal pursued by this measure of political economy was to prevent the prices of provisions from rising. It was intended to put an end to speculation and usury.

This policy was suddenly interrupted in the middle of December, however. On December 16, there was a change of personnel in the Council of the Generalitat. The Communists were successful in their attempt to evict the POUM (Partido de Unificación Marxista) representative from the Council. In the newly constituted Council, Comorera was in charge of Provisions. He is a member of the Unified Socialist Party (a tool of Moscow). Doménach, the representative of the CNT, was assigned to a different ministry. Comorera put an end to the monopoly of the Supply Council. He reintroduced free trade. With this, the way was cleared for price increases. The process of collectivization was interrupted on this terrain. It was a kind of NEP in miniature.

In Catalonia, events progressed more rapidly than they did in Russia. What took years to accomplish in Russia, was done here in a matter of months. The new turn towards a Catalonian NEP, however, did not put an end to the process of collectivization. The working class population did not want to stop or retreat. Collectivism could not be exterminated in Spain. The further development of society proceeds along this road. Not even the war can stop this process.

VI

In this book we have systematically described the course of collectivization in each of its stages and industries. We have depicted, with supporting documentation, how the workers took over the enterprises and operated them on their own. We have also tried to evaluate the results of collectivization. Does collectivization have a favorable or unfavorable impact on production? With regard to this question we no longer have to settle for a merely theoretical answer. We have the results from many enterprises right before our eyes. We may also consult the subjective opinion of numerous workers. If they are happy, they work harder. If they feel that they are responsible collaborators, they have a greater interest in production.

In the transport sector, the advantages of collectivization are striking. Despite the general increase in prices, the fares charged by the transport system have not risen in Barcelona. The wages of the workers in the transport sector have not declined, however. Nor have the workers been uninterested in the cleanliness and appearance of the vehicles: freshly-painted streetcars and new buses are seen in the streets. All the taxis have been refurbished.

The textile industry is not doing so well. The shortage of raw materials has caused many factories to operate only three days a week; but they pay their workers wages for four days. The longer this state of affairs lasts the worse it is for the enterprises. Four days wages are not enough. This is not a consequence of the collectivizations, but of the war. The Catalonian textile industry has lost its principle markets. Part of Andalusia, Extremadura, and Old Castile, and all of the northern part of Spain, with its densely populated industrial districts, and Asturias, all are cut off or in the hands of the fascists. No new markets have been found to replace them. This has led to a crisis in the textile industry.⁵

The collectivization of agriculture and industry opens up a new stage in the proletarian movement: it leads us to the structural transformation of society. It is still too soon to pronounce a final judgment on this development, which constitutes one of the most interesting phenomena of our time.

Collectivization teaches new perspectives; it leads us down new paths. In Russia the revolution took the road of nationalization. In Italy and Germany fascism placed its hopes in the idea of the corporate state. In the democratic countries, too, there is a widespread belief

that the solution to the current economic crisis is to be found in a new restructuring of the political and economic bases of society. In America, Roosevelt proceeds along new paths; in Belgium, De Man is proposing a kind of semi-socialism. In France there are democratic theoreticians who base their proposals on the corporative idea. They are recommending the adoption of a collective electoral system, which must supplement the individual electoral system; thus, they propose the establishment of an economic Parliament alongside the political one. The citizen must not only be represented in his capacity as a consumer: the worker must also have his representation as a producer, the representation of his trade in the state and in the national organization of his country.

In these innovations they perceive the solution for the political, economic and spiritual crisis, the cleansing of social life. In Spain no new theories have been elaborated; the people themselves, the peasants, and the workers in the cities, have taken the land and the means of production into their hands. With great efforts, sometimes tentative and error-ridden, but also moving forward, they are striving to construct a more just system of society, one in which the fruits of their labor will be enjoyed by the workers themselves.

This is the meaning of collectivization in Spain. This is what you must keep in mind as you read this book.

A. Souchy

2. The Collectivization Decree⁶

[The criminal military revolt of July 19 has led to an extraordinary disruption of the economy of the country. The Council of the Generalitat must attend to the reconstruction of the damage caused to the industry and commerce of Catalonia by the treason of those who tried to impose a regime of violence on our country. The popular reaction triggered by this revolt has been of such intensity that it provoked a profound economic-social transformation, whose foundations are being laid in Catalonia. The accumulation of wealth in the hands of an ever smaller group of persons was followed by the accumulation of misery in the working class and, because the former group, in an attempt to preserve its privileges, did not hesitate to provoke a bloody war, the victory of the people will be equivalent to the death of capitalism. It is now therefore necessary to organize production, orienting it in such a way that the only beneficiary must be the collectivity, the workers, to whom the directive function of the new social order will devolve. What is necessary is the suppression of the concept of income that does not proceed from labor.]

The principle of the economic-social organization of big industry must be collectivized production.

The replacement of individual property by collective property, is conceived by the Council of the Generalitat as the collectivization of the goods of large enterprises, that is, their capital, while allowing the private ownership of consumption goods and leaving small industry in the hands of their current owners.

The revolutionary effort of the working class, which rose with arms in hand to crush fascism, poses the question of this change in the economic and social structure which endured until quite recently. One of the fundamental problems that this new situation poses is that of an organization of labor that would coordinate the sources of wealth and order their distribution in accordance with social needs.

After July 19, the openly fascist bourgeoisie deserted their posts. Most have fled to foreign countries; some have disappeared. The affected industrial enterprises cannot be left without direction, and the workers decided to intervene and created Workers Control Committees. The Council of the Generalitat must authorize and provide guidance for what the workers spontaneously enacted in their enterprises.

As a result of the situation encountered by some of them, the workers, in order to safeguard their interests, had to

confiscate these enterprises, thus creating the necessity of collectivizing the various sectors of industry. The Council of the Economy, responding to the desires of the working class and complying with a program that had already been set in motion, must pay close attention to the wishes of the workers and orient the entire economic life of Catalonia in accordance with their will.

The collectivization of the enterprises, however, would be of no importance if it did not further their development and growth. For this purpose, the Council of the Economy has been assigned the task of studying the basic norms required to proceed towards the constitution of a Bank of Industrial and Commercial Credit that would distribute financial assistance to the collectivized enterprises and organize our industry into large concentrations, which would assure the maximum output and facilitate the major transactions of our foreign trade. A study is also in progress concerning the creation of a research and technical advisory body that would enable our industry to enjoy greater efficiency and progress.

In view of the above considerations, and in cognizance of the report of the Minister of the Economy and with the agreement of the Council,

It is hereby Decreed:]

“Article 1. In accordance with the standards that have been established by this Decree, the industrial and

commercial enterprises of Catalonia are classified as follows:

- a) *Collectivized enterprises*, in which the responsibility for management falls upon the workers in these enterprises, who are represented by an Enterprise Council, and
- b) *Private enterprises*, in which management is the responsibility of the owner or manager, with the collaboration and budgetary oversight of the Workers Control Committee.

I

Collectivized Enterprises

Article 2. Collectivization will be compulsory for all industrial and commercial enterprises which, as of June 30, 1936, employed more than one hundred wage workers, as well as those enterprises that, employing fewer workers, were owned by individuals who were declared to be rebels or who abandoned their enterprises. However, enterprises employing fewer than one hundred workers may be collectivized if the majority of their workers and their owner or owners agree to do so. Enterprises with more than fifty but fewer than one hundred workers may also be collectivized at any time if three-fourths of the workers support collectivization. The Council of the Economy may also agree to authorize the collectivization of those other industries that, due to their importance in the national economy or for other

reasons, the Council considers to be advisable to withdraw from the influence of private enterprise.

Article 3. For the purposes of the preceding Article, the designation of enterprise owners as rebel elements can only be made by the Peoples Tribunals.

Article 4. As for the working class elements, for the purposes of determining the total number of workers who comprise the employees of an enterprise, every individual who is on the payroll of the enterprise, regardless of his job, whether intellectual or manual, is considered to be an employee of the enterprise.

Article 5. All the assets and liabilities of the original enterprise will be transferred to the collectivized enterprise.

Article 6. For the purposes of collectivization, enterprises composed of independent subsidiaries devoted separately to production or sales, and all other enterprises that have various outlets and factories, will continue to constitute a single organization and can only be separated with the express authorization of the Minister of the Economy, after the latter examines a report from the Council of the Economy of Catalonia.

Article 7. The former owners or managers of the collectivized enterprise will be adapted to serve the latter, and they will be assigned to a job where, due to

their managerial or technical skills, their collaboration would be most advantageous to the enterprise.

Article 8. Once collectivization has been implemented in an enterprise, no workers in that enterprise may be laid off, unless they are transferred to another workplace within the same industrial category, if circumstances so require.

Article 9. In those enterprises that are wholly or partly owned by foreign interests, the Enterprise Councils or the Workers Control Committees, in each instance, will notify the Minister of the Economy of this fact, and the latter will convene a meeting of all the interested parties or their representatives in order to address the matter and decide what measures should be undertaken for the purposes of the due safeguarding of those interests.

II

The Enterprise Councils

Article 10. The supreme management of the collectivized enterprises will be the responsibility of an Enterprise Council elected by the workers, from their own ranks, in general assemblies. The assemblies will determine the number of workers who will form the Enterprise Council, whose numbers will be no less than five and no more than fifteen, and the Enterprise Council will be subdivided into various departments: Production, Administration, Technical Services and Commercial

Exchange. Where the size of the enterprise permits, the various trade union federations to which the workers belong will also be proportionally represented on the Enterprise Council.

The term of service in these positions will be two years, and elections will be held every six months to confirm the mandates of the delegates. Delegates to the Enterprise Council may serve more than one term.

Article 11. The Enterprise Councils will assume the functions and the responsibilities of the former Boards of Directors of Corporations and Partnerships.

The Enterprise Councils will be responsible for their management to the workers of their enterprises and to their respective General Councils of Industry.

Article 12. The Enterprise Councils must ensure that, in the execution of their duties, the process of production is adapted to the general plan promulgated by the General Council of Industry, coordinating their efforts in accordance with the principles that regulate the development of the industrial sector to which they belong, considered as a single whole. With regard to the establishment of profit margins, fixing the general conditions of sales, acquisition of raw materials, and in connection with the rate of amortization of the fixed capital and formation of circulating capital, a reserve

fund and the distribution of profits, they will also act in accordance with the rulings of the General Councils of Industry.

In the social order they will exercise vigilance to see to it that the rules affecting this domain are strictly complied with, suggesting any other rules that they believe would be advisable. They will take the necessary measures to guarantee the physical and moral health of the workers; they will carry out an intensive cultural and educational labor, and will foster the formation of clubs, recreation centers, sports, cultural events, etc.

Article 13. The Enterprise Councils of the industries that were confiscated before the publication of this Decree and those that will be collectivized henceforth, will submit their constitutions to the Secretary General of the Council of the Economy within fifteen days; a template for these constitutions will be sent to the various offices of the Enterprise Councils.

Article 14. In order to assure continuous monitoring of the overall progress of the enterprises, the Enterprise Councils will elect a Director, to whom shall be delegated, in whole or in part, the functions that are incumbent on the Council.

In enterprises employing more than fifty workers, or in those whose capital exceeds one million pesetas, or

which manufacture or assemble products related to national defense, the election of this Director must be approved by the Council of the Economy.

Article 15. Each collectivized enterprise will be subject to mandatory oversight by an Inspector from the Generalitat who will be a member of the Enterprise Council, and who will be nominated by the Minister of the Economy with the approval of the workers.

Article 16. The legal representation of the enterprise will be exercised by the Director, and his signature will accompany the signatures of two members of the Enterprise Council chosen by the Enterprise Council. The names of the nominees will be communicated to the Council of the Economy, which will verify them for banks and other institutions.

Article 17. The Enterprise Councils will post the minutes of their meetings and will send certified copies of the resolutions they adopt to their respective General Councils of Industry. When these resolutions require it, the General Council of Industry will intervene as necessary.

Article 18. The Councils will have the obligation to take note of the demands or suggestions formulated by the workers and these demands or suggestions shall be included in the minutes of the Enterprise Councils, so

that they may be brought to the attention of the General Council of Industry where practicable.

Article 19. The Enterprise Councils will be obliged, at the end of each fiscal year, to provide an account of their conduct to their workers, meeting in a general assembly. Furthermore, the Enterprise Councils will also produce copies of their balance sheets and semi-annual or annual reports for submission to their respective General Councils of Industry; these reports will provide details concerning the business status or business plans.

Article 20. The delegates to the Enterprise Councils may be dismissed from their positions by the workers meeting in general assemblies and by their respective General Councils of Industry, in case of manifest incompetence or refusal to abide by the rules established by the latter. When their dismissal has been confirmed by their respective General Councils of Industry, if the workers of the enterprise, meeting in a general assembly, agree, they may direct an appeal to overturn this decision to the Minister of the Economy, which appeal, should it then be rejected, with the prior notification of the Council of the Economy, is unappealable.

III

Concerning the Control Committees in the Private Enterprises

Article 21. In the industries or businesses that have not been collectivized, the formation of Workers Control Committees will be mandatory, in which all the departments of the enterprise will be represented—production, technical support and administration. The number of delegates composing these Committees will be freely decided by the workers, and the representation of each trade union federation will be proportional to the number of their members in the enterprise.

Article 22. The mission of the Control Committee shall be as follows:

a) Exercise control over working conditions, that is, to ensure strict compliance with the legal standards affecting pay, working hours, social benefits, hygiene and safety, etc., as well as to enforce strict discipline on the job. All warnings and notices that must be issued by the manager of the enterprise to its personnel will be passed on to the Control Committee.

b) Administrative control in the sense of inspection and control over income and expenditures, both with regard to cash on hand and cash advanced by banks, with the object of responding to business requirements, and also intervening in all the other operations of a commercial

nature.

c) Control of production, consisting in close collaboration with the employer in order to improve the process of production. The Workers Control Committees will seek to maintain the best possible relations with the technical personnel in order to assure the smooth operation of the work process.

Article 23. The employers will be obliged to present to the Workers Control Committees the account books and annual reports of their enterprises, and the Committees will send summary reports of the same to their respective General Councils of Industry.

IV

The General Councils of Industry

Article 24. The General Councils of Industry will be constituted in the following manner:

Four representatives of the Enterprise Councils, chosen in a manner that is most convenient for the Councils.

Eight representatives of the various trade union federations, each federation to be represented in proportion to the number of members it has in the industry. This proportion will be established by a procedure that the trade union federations shall agree upon in advance.

Four technicians nominated by the Council of the Economy.

These Councils will be presided over by their respective delegates on the Council of the Economy of Catalonia.

Article 25. The General Councils of Industry will formulate the general outlines of the operational plans of their respective industries, helping the Enterprise Councils to carry out their functions and, in addition, they will oversee: the regulation of the total production of their respective industries; the standardization of cost prices in those industries to the greatest possible extent, in order to avoid competition among the enterprises; study the general needs of the industries; study the requirements of consumption of their products; examine the opportunities for domestic and foreign markets; observe, furthermore, the general trends in the industries and establish in each case the limits and rate of production for each kind of product; propose the closure of factories or their expansion depending on the needs of industry and of consumption, or recommend the merger of certain factories; submit proposals concerning the reform of certain methods of labor, means of obtaining credit and circulating products; suggest modifications in the levels of customs duties and the terms of trade agreements; organize purchasing

consortia and institutions for the acquisition of equipment and raw materials; administer certain commercial agreements with the industries of other parts of Spain or foreign countries; manage bank and credit transactions; organize joint laboratories for technical research; compile statistics for production and consumption; supervise efforts to replace imported materials with domestic sources. Furthermore, the General Councils of Industry will be able to study and adopt those measures that they deem necessary and to be of interest for the improvement of the labor process for which they are responsible.

Article 26. The accords that will be adopted by the General Councils of Industry will be compulsory, they will have the force of law and no Enterprise Council or private enterprise may refuse to comply with them under any pretext that cannot be fully justified. Their only recourse will be an appeal to the Minister of the Economy, whose ruling, after consultation of the report of the Council of the Economy, will be unappealable.

Article 27. The General Councils of Industry will be in constant contact with the Council of the Economy of Catalonia, and will comply with the rulings of the latter at all times, and when necessary these two institutions will undertake joint action.

Article 28. The General Councils of Industry must submit to the Council of the Economy of Catalonia, within a time limit that will be established for each particular case, a detailed document in which the general progress and status of their respective industries will be analyzed and summarized and in which plans for future improvements will be set forth.

V

Classification of Industries

Article 29. For the purpose of promoting the formation and organization of the General Councils of Industry, the Council of the Economy will draft, within fifteen days after the promulgation of this Decree, a proposal that will include a classification of the different industries and their duly structured organization, in accordance with their respective specialties and requirements of coordination between the sections into which each of them will be divided.

Article 30. For the purposes of this classification, attention will have to be devoted to raw materials, the totality of industrial operations set in motion up to the sale or the industrial consumption of the product, the technical unity and opportunities for commercial management, with the goal of the complete concentration of industries in order to overcome disturbing factors.

Article 31. At the same time that it will be working on the classification of industries with a view to industrial concentration, the Council of the Economy will propose regulations with which the constitutions and functioning of the industries will have to comply.

VI

The Obligations of the Industries

Article 32. In every collectivization or socialization of an enterprise, whether domestic or foreign interests are involved, and regardless of the size of the enterprise, an inventory-balance sheet will be compiled in each case, based on the account books of the enterprise, duly verified, accompanied by a detailed and itemized summary of the goods, both real property and other goods of every description that belong to the enterprise.

Article 33. The inventories submitted in accordance with the previous Article will be revised by a commission formed of six technicians and accountants named by the Council of the Economy, presided over by a Chairman who is a specialist in such enterprises, and this commission carry out its investigation and submit its report for the approval of the Council.

Article 34. The Council of the Economy of Catalonia, once it has studied the report mentioned in the above Article, will be authorized, if it deems that it is advisable, to undertake a second revision of the document, issuing a

final ruling and submitting its report to the Minister of the Economy of the Generalitat, against whose ruling no appeal of any kind will be permitted.

Article 35. Once the inventory of social assets has been compiled and debts and liabilities are deducted, and in the event that the result shows a positive balance, it will be filed in the Council of the Economy of the Generalitat for the purpose of determining the identities of their legitimate claimants and the social compensation to which the latter are entitled.

Article 36. For the purposes of calculating the compensation mentioned in the above article, there will be a breakdown of the part represented by the contribution or the participation of foreign assets, what part pertains to the people's savings and loan institutions, as well as credit establishments, and which corresponds to individuals or other domestic enterprises, and the corresponding announcements will be published in each case by the Council of the Economy, always understanding that all such participation must refer to a date prior to the July 19 just past.

Article 37. The social compensation that corresponds to the first case mentioned in the above Article will be completely recognized by the Generalitat. Its value will be estimated in the national currency of the claimant.

Article 38. The compensation that corresponds to the second case mentioned in the Article 36 will be subordinated to other considerations, in view of their volume.

Article 39. For those small industries and commercial enterprises that have already been subjected to collectivization prior to the publication of this Decree, the Council of the Economy will study their status and propose a just social compensation.

For this purpose, the Council of the Economy will proclaim an open period for information that will conclude on November 30 so that interested parties may present their petitions.

Barcelona, October 24, 1936.—The Prime Minister, *Josep Tarradellas*.—The Minister of the Economy, *Joan P. Fàbregas*.”

One may observe that the decree reproduced above did nothing more for the most part than legalize a situation that already existed in most industries and the transport system. It contains no special initiative that goes beyond the framework of the action carried out by the workers.

Practically the only enterprises that preserved their status as private enterprises were artisans and some small industrial workshops, but even in these private enterprises the regulations on workers control and the

requirements that these enterprises must comply with the directives of the Councils of Industry left little leeway for the “employer’s authority” and the other characteristics of capitalist property.

By means of this Decree, a “new economy” is legally established in all Catalonian production. For the enterprises, it is the Councils elected by the workers that are responsible for commercial, technical and social management functions; the workers councils themselves, however, consult with each other, and observe the general directives of their trade union federations and of their new institution, the General Council of Industry.⁷ The collectivized enterprises function almost just like the stock corporations of the capitalist economy. The general assemblies, the workers, proceed to elect the Council within which all the phases of the activity of their workplace are represented: production, administration, technical services, etc. The representatives of the trade union federations are also represented and thus assure a permanent connection with the rest of the industry.

The workers councils, however, are practically limited to the control over management, which is entrusted to a director elected in the largest enterprises, whose election is subject to ratification by the General Council of Industry. This director is often the former owner,

manager or director of the enterprise, and the Decree authorizes the employment of these former “captains of industry” if their competence and loyalty permit.

This is more often the case than one would like to think. Many directors and employers, formerly full of a ferocious hatred and an extreme intransigence with regard to the workers and their demands, were compelled to render homage to the constructive effort displayed by those same workers in all the collectivized factories. They had to acknowledge the order and the common sense with which they regulated their affairs and the numerous improvements introduced by the new system, both from the economic as well as the social point of view, and a good number of them voluntarily placed themselves at the disposal of the workers, and the latter, more interested in assuring the future of the common labor than in avenging past injuries, almost always accepted collaboration that was spontaneously offered.

One may observe in this Decree that foreign interests represented in the Catalonian enterprises were respected. One Decree pertaining to this issue, not reproduced here, regulates the various modalities of compensation, of collaboration, etc., with these foreign owners, who are invited to discuss, in each particular

case, with the Council of the Economy, the regulation of their participation in these enterprises.

3. A Brief Sketch of the Catalonian Economy

Although it comprises no more than six percent of the total area of Spain, Catalonia is nonetheless, at least in terms of economics, the wealthiest and most important province of the peninsula.

Whereas economic activity in the rest of Spain is essentially oriented towards agriculture, industry is largely concentrated in Catalonia. As a result, Catalonia has a population density twice that of the median population density of the peninsula as a whole.

Besides the riches derived from below the surface of the ground, which can be found almost everywhere in Spain, Catalonia possesses a major share of the national wealth. One will therefore understand why the collective exploitation of enterprises, which is our topic, plays such a considerable role in the intensive development of Catalonian industry.

Thus, for example, the textile industry, the largest in Spain, is almost exclusively concentrated in Catalonia. Ninety-three percent of Spain's spinning mill workers are employed in factories in Tarrasa and Sabadell, two small industrial towns in the province of Barcelona. These two

towns are more central to Spanish industry than Lille, Roubaix and Tourcoing are to French industry. This cotton industry, around which all the other textile industries have developed, such as wool production, natural and artificial silks, clothing, dressmaking, etc., employs more than 200,000 workers. It has long been Spain's leading importer, due to its demand for cotton, and has consistently been one of Spain's leading exporters of manufactured products.

Vital industries are not yet very highly developed in Spain. Thus, with regard to this issue, Catalonia is the most advanced province in the country. It features a large metallurgical sector, and several major chemical plants transform part of our raw materials into finished commodities.

Today, however, as is the case throughout Spain, most of the minerals extracted from Spanish mines cross the borders in their natural state and are returned to us in the form of various kinds of machinery and other commodities.

To the above samples, other industrial sectors of greater or lesser degrees of development must be added. The production of leather and skins, various kinds of wood—a thriving industry—agricultural production, fisheries,

etc., which have made a significant contribution to the overall rate of progress attained, are concentrated in this small region of Catalonia.

If Catalonia's industry is more advanced today than it is in the rest of the peninsula, its opportunities for development in the future are even greater. Thanks to its abundant variety of important minerals (coal, lignite, iron, lead, zinc, potash, manganese, salt, bauxite, etc.) and thanks to an exceptional abundance of waterfalls and other opportunities for the exploitation of hydraulic energy resources, Catalonian industry will be in a position to rapidly multiply the volume of its production.

Spain as a whole is very close to meeting all the practical requirements of an ideal autarchy (its soil and subsurface resources provide almost everything required by industry and consumption). Catalonia itself seems to be very close to such a self-sufficient economy. Its agriculture, far from possessing the rich soils of Castile, Andalusia and Extremadura, therefore produces a wide variety of indispensable products. Even though the volume of this agricultural production is not sufficient to meet the needs of such a densely populated region, Catalonian agriculture supplies it with cereals, corn, beans and rice as easily as grapes and olives. The latter, planted for the most part along the Mediterranean coast, yield a harvest

that exceeds the demand of domestic consumption and therefore constitutes an excellent product for export.

Alongside the cultivation of the land, the geologically diverse topography of Catalonia features grasslands suitable for grazing livestock of every kind, as well as forests containing a wide variety of trees.

Its proximity to Aragon, whose agriculture is even more highly developed, constitutes another food reserve for industrial Catalonia. The most important transport routes in Spain that also pass through Catalonia, and the Mediterranean shipping that arrives at the docks of the great port of Barcelona, assure the technical possibilities for further economic development on the basis of the initial steps taken during the first days of the exploitation of the factories by the workers.

- 1. See the short biographical article by Nick Heath at: <http://libcom.org/history/partos-pal-1911-1964-aka-paul-polgare-pablo-polgare-folgare> for the various pseudonyms employed by Paul or Pablo Folgare, a/k/a Paul Polgare, a/k/a Pal Partos. The original Spanish edition of 1937 utilized the Spanish version of Souchy's first name, but not Folgare's [Note added by the translator of the English edition].

- 2. The collectivization process in Russia never went beyond this stage. André Gide describes this in his book, *Retour de l'URSS*, as follows: “We visited a model Kolkhoz in the neighborhood of Sukhum. It dates from six years back. After having struggled obscurely for some time, it is now one of the most prosperous in the country. It is known as ‘the millionaire’ and is bursting with life and happiness. This Kolkhoz stretches over a very large tract of country. The climate ensures a luxurious vegetation. The dwelling-houses, built of wood and standing on stilts to keep them from the soil are picturesque and charming; each one is surrounded by a fairly large garden full of fruit trees, vegetables and flowers. This Kolkhoz succeeded last year in realizing extraordinarily big profits, which made it possible to set aside a considerable reserve fund and enabled the rate of the daily wage to be raised to sixteen and a half roubles. How is this sum fixed? By exactly the same calculations that would settle the amount of the dividends to be distributed among the stockholders if the kolkhoz were a capitalist agricultural concern. So much has been definitely gained: the exploitation of the greater number for the benefit of the few no longer exists in the USSR. This is an immense advance. There are no stockholders; the workmen themselves, that is, share the profits without any contribution to the State.

(At least that is what they repeatedly told me.) This would be perfect if there were no other Kolkhozes that were not doing so well. If I understood correctly, each Kolkhoz is independent, and there is no trace of mutual aid. Perhaps I am mistaken? I would very much like to be proven wrong about this.” Agricultural collectivization still appears to be in its initial stage in Russia. They have not yet reached socialization. (See André Gide, *Return from the U.S.S.R.*, tr. Dorothy Bussy, A. A. Knopf, 1937).

- **3.** I had the opportunity to attend an assembly of an agricultural trade union in the province of Valencia. The small landowners were also represented there. They complained about how they suffered from a shortage of one thing or another. A commission submitted its report on the plan to make improvements in the cultivation of the land. It was quite instructive to observe how the peasants complemented the commission’s proposals with their own experiences.
- **4.** Here is a brief anecdote. During a visit to the orange plantations, one of my traveling companions, a foreigner, wanted to buy some oranges. “We do not sell them”, said the peasants, who were busy picking oranges. “But it is not possible to obtain oranges here?” “As many as you want, but not with money.” And the peasants gave us a bag containing 50 kilograms of

oranges, for free. All of our attempts to pay them somehow by bartering some of our possessions of equal value were futile. “When we come to Barcelona, you can give us some of them....”

- 5. During January 1937 the situation has somewhat improved. Work orders have arrived for the production of war materiel. In Sabadell, a major center of the textile industry, with 60,000 inhabitants, the industry has returned to normal output. In Barcelona, some spinning mills are still working part time.
- 6. The “Decret de Collectivitzacions i Control Obrer” was elaborated on the basis of a meeting in which representatives of all the organizations of the Council of the Economy of the Generalitat of Catalonia participated. It was promulgated on October 24, 1936. The previous editions of this book omitted the Decree’s Preamble, proceeding directly to the Articles. We have inserted the Preamble in brackets, and in italics, to distinguish it from the rest of the text of the Decree. We have translated the Preamble from the Catalan on the basis of the complete text of the Decree included among the appendices of the work by Albert Pérez-Baró, *30 mesos de collectivisme a Catalunya*, Ariel, Barcelona, 1970 [Note from the Spanish edition of 1977].

- 7. Up until now only the provisional foundations of these Councils have been established, and while their final form is still being elaborated, many CNT-UGT liaison committees function almost like real General Councils in each industry.

Part 2

Collective Labor in the Various Sectors of the Economy

1. TRANSPORT

Two Confiscation Proclamations from the Catalanian Railroads—How our comrades seized the railroads and how they organized the transportation services—The Port of Barcelona—The Compañia Transatlantica—The work of the CNT has improved trolley service in Barcelona.

PROCLAMATION OF THE CONFISCATION OF THE RAILROADS OF CATALONIA

In the town of Manresa, on July twenty-fourth of the year nineteen hundred thirty-six, at a meeting of the trade union organizations of the National Federation of the Railroad Industry, affiliated with the National Confederation of Labor, and the National Railroad Trade Union, affiliated with the General Workers Union, which have hereby agreed, in the name of and representing the personnel of the Compañia General de Ferrocarriles Catalanes, for the Barcelona-Manresa, Martorell-Igualada, Manresa-Suria and Bordeta a Puerto lines, to unanimously ratify the decision to proceed to the practical and official confiscation of all the services and

departments of the lines mentioned above, therefore assuming, immediately, complete responsibility for the administration, direction and normal operation of the services of the above-cited lines.

The parties hereto also agree to notify the Public Relations Committee of the FNIF and the Executive Committee of the 9th Zone of the SNF, as well as the Regional Anti-fascist Revolutionary Committee and the Government of the Generalitat, of all subsequent actions undertaken with regard to this matter.

(This is a copy of the original, which is duly signed and sealed by the respective organizations.)

THE CATALONIAN RAILROADS

CNT/UGT

To All Personnel

For the knowledge and satisfaction of all the comrades, we are pleased to reproduce below, in its entirety, the document which, for the purpose of confirming the confiscation of the former Compañia General de Ferrocarriles Catalanes, with the greatest guarantees of a legal nature, was signed and issued by us and by the Generalitat of Catalonia on July 27, 1936.

In the City of Barcelona, on the twenty-eighth of July in the year nineteen hundred thirty-six, the National Federation of the Railroad Industry, affiliated with the

National Confederation of Labor, and the National Railroad Trade Union, affiliated with the General Workers Union, having confiscated all the equipment necessary for the operation of the lines of the Compañia General de Ferrocarriles Catalanes, i.e., the Barcelona, Martorell and Manresa line; the Manresa, Oliván and Guardiola line; the Martorell to Igualada line; and the Manresa to Suria and Bordeta-Port line, as well as having assumed control over the provision of the corresponding services, with regard to both the technical as well as the administrative and commercial aspects, hereby notifies the Generalitat of Catalonia, which, upon having been notified, has no objection and accepts the fact of the confiscation on the following conditions:

A. An inventory will be drawn up for the equipment, both mobile as well as other kinds, that is necessary for the operation of the services mentioned above, and will be completed and formally presented within no more than ten days.

B. A financial accounting of the confiscated enterprise will be formulated showing its status as of the moment of confiscation, which will include all hard cash in safes and all additional items.

C. Everything that constitutes the assets of the lines mentioned above which is not included in the previous

sections will be itemized in detail in a supplemental addendum.

D. The Generalitat of Catalonia, by accepting this confiscation, reserves the right to intervene in the confiscated enterprise in the following way:

The Generalitat of Catalonia will nominate a delegate from the Generalitat, whose mission will consist exclusively in inspecting the operations and the revenues which are obtained in any and all ways from said operations, for the essential purpose of assuring that said revenues are devoted to the maintenance of the wages of the personnel and the improvement of their working conditions, as well as to meet all the corresponding expenditures relating to operations and amortization, in the explicit understanding that among the latter the obligations corresponding to the former rights of the stockholders and creditors are nullified.

E. At the same time, the Generalitat of Catalonia recognizes the right of above mentioned trade union organizations to organize all the services, both technical and industrial as well as bureaucratic, in the way they deem most expedient, for the purpose of more efficient operations, and will have the right to eliminate or create jobs as they see fit, regardless of the category or level.

F. The Generalitat will furthermore, in order to

contribute to the more efficient operation of the confiscated services, contribute such advice and counsel that it deems fitting with regard to the technical aspect, when its help is solicited.

And the record will show that this proclamation was made in triplicate, and was signed by the Honorable Minister of the Government of the Generalitat of Catalonia and by other representatives of the National Railroad Trade Union and by the National Federation of the Railroad Industry on the date first recited "*ut supra*".
Signed:

FOR THE GENERALITAT OF CATALONIA: The Minister of the Government, *José María España*—FOR THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE RAILROAD INDUSTRY: *Emiliano Martínez, Antonio Casanovas, Pedro Rius, José Pericas* and *Eduardo Casals*—FOR THE NATIONAL RAILROAD TRADE UNION: *Miguel Salvador, Isidro Medina, Pedro Corrons, Miguel Canals* and *Julio Guardiola*.

Barcelona, July 31, 1936—*The Directive Committee.*

CNT-FAI BULLETIN

How our comrades took over the railroads and how they organized the rail services.

On Monday, July 21, the workers took over the lines of the M.Z.A. and the North; they formed Revolutionary

Committees and organized the defense of the rail stations with guards armed with rifles and machine guns. In the M.Z.A. the comrades of the CNT-affiliated trade union were the first to arrive and confront the task of reorganizing the rail service. Nonetheless, the composition of the Revolutionary Committee of the station was equally divided between the CNT trade union and the UGT-affiliated trade union.

In the North as well it was the CNT-affiliated trade union that took the initiative to occupy the station, and later allotted the UGT-affiliated trade union equal representation on the Revolutionary Committee formed on that line. In the North they proceeded as follows:

By means of the railroad telegraph a message was sent to all the stations notifying them that the CNT trade union had taken over the enterprise. This notice was received everywhere with satisfaction. A CNT Station Committee was elected, and the Police and all other staff members put themselves at its service.

On Tuesday the UGT members arrived, and assumed their positions on the Committee, which was composed of six comrades, three from each organization, and two liaison members, one for each trade union.

They proceeded to nominate by means of a circular, ratifying the orders transmitted during the first few hours, revolutionary Subcommittees in the most important stations: Sabadell, Tarrasa, Manresa, Granollers, Vich and Ripoll. Relations were established with Lerida, where the comrades had formed a Committee.

The Revolutionary Station Committee directly assumed responsibility for organizing labor and administrating the enterprise. The fires of the Civil War were raging in Spain, and the first measure that was adopted with regard to labor organization was to armor two engines and two cars in the workshops of San Andrés. The workers labored with enormous celerity. The workers gave a demonstration of their enthusiasm, and two days later this job was finished. These two engines, with their two cars, were used by the first column to leave for the Aragon front. Both engines remained in the service of the column that is operating near Huesca. The initiative for and the implementation of this achievement was entirely due to the efforts of the CNT.

All the managers of the service departments were dismissed, and were informed that they should not show up for work until further notice.

On the San Juan line a small reconnaissance train was dispatched from Vich to Ripoll and another from Vich to La Franquesa.

At the request of the Committee of Militias a hospital train was organized with boxcars, in which electrical equipment was installed and on which large red crosses were emblazoned. Operating rooms were built inside the boxcars. In the other cars, four beds were installed in each car. The train was composed of seven cars. A huge Red Cross was painted on the front of the train. The medical personnel who were assigned to the train were so satisfied that they delayed the departure of the train until government representatives arrived, who were summoned for the purpose of making them appreciate the voluntary labor of the workers.

The following Service Committees were formed:

Workshop Committee.

Committee for Fuel and Engines.

Committee of Train Personnel.

Tracks and Repair Committee.

Exploration Committee.

Machinists Committee.

These Service Committees held daily meetings attended by one delegate from each Committee and one delegate from the Revolutionary Committee.

A Control Commission was elected, which investigated the official and private papers of the managerial staff. In accordance with the results of this investigation, the managerial staff was dismissed from the services. Meanwhile, many of them offered to collaborate as technical advisors with the Service Committees.

One of the responsibilities of the Revolutionary Station Committee was to organize a unit of guards for the protection and surveillance of the station. This task was scrupulously and cautiously carried out, and the station was renovated and a kitchen for the guard unit was installed. An important and urgent task was to examine the goods that had piled up in the boxcars that had been detained because of the fascist revolt and the general strike. Those goods that were perishable or subject to rust or damage were taken out of the boxcars and placed under the control of the Supply Committee.

After having attended to these urgent services, in compliance with the resolution of the confederal organization to return to normal, partial service was

restored. First Barcelona-Manresa, which was then extended to Lerida.

Rigorous control was exercised over travelers, who were not allowed to travel with more than 200 pesetas in their possession.

Later, service was partially restored to the Barcelona-San Juan de las Abadesas line. Gradually, service was extended until the trains ran normally within the territory where the fascist insurrection had been defeated. Outside this territory the trains did not run. Trains carrying people and goods ran to Tardienta, that is, to the point where the antifascist columns are posted. The financial situation of the enterprise can be considered to be generally good, despite the hardly propitious situation for normal rail traffic. However, it is not possible at the present time to concretely ascertain the precise time of arrivals and departures. Proposals for immediate and future implementation will be studied by the assemblies of the respective trade union organizations. Meanwhile, the same level of wages and the same hours are maintained as were current before the Civil War.

The morale of the personnel could not be better for the prospect of undertaking collectivized economic reconstruction.

THE PORT OF BARCELONA

The new working conditions that resulted from the recent events that transformed the City of Barcelona have also affected the operations of the Port.

Middlemen, who constituted a parasitic plague that grew fat on the toil of the workers, have been suppressed.

These middlemen contracted the loading and unloading of ships, reserving for themselves, naturally, the lion's share of the money received from the ship-owners, the shipping agents and the consignees. The middlemen organized teams of workers. To provide some idea of the profits made by this useless pest, one need only note that in the cotton and egg markets, commodities that pay the highest rates for longshoremen, their profits reached 200 pesetas per day per team. The team included eleven men on board and five on shore. In some ships, four or five of these teams were organized. This means that, on these occasions, the profit they pocketed, without any other work than that of contracting the personnel, approached one thousand pesetas per day.

This is the parasitic category that has just been eliminated from the Port of Barcelona in order to clear the way for a direct contract between the ship-owners, shipping agents and consignees. Nor should the recognition of the rights of the latter be considered as a concession to capitalism, but rather as a result of the material impossibility for the trade union to deal directly with the export firms that have their offices in other cities in Spain and other nations. The consignee, for example, is the representative in the Port of Barcelona of foreign enterprises and one must come to an understanding with him. Now, however, it is the trade union that contracts the labor rather than the middlemen who made this contract the instrument of a veritable act of highway robbery.

The Administrative Committee will establish the charges for loading and unloading in accordance with the prevailing rates, organize the teams of workers and pay them their wages. The ship-owners, shipping agents and consignees do not recognize any other institution than that of the Transport Union of the CNT. As a result, the Confederation, besides participating in a major leap forward towards the socialization of wealth, imposes its control in an absolute manner.

In the contract entered into by the representatives of the ship-owners and the consignees with the Trade Union, the following points are set forth among others:

1. The ship-owners, shipping agents and consignees who sign below undertake that, in effecting every kind of operation related to loading, unloading, packing and unpacking of ships, as well as the delivery of the commodities to the receiver and the reception of the same for their shipment, they will recognize exclusively and solely the workers of the Transport Workers Union, of the Port Section, Onboard Subsection, in accordance with the wage rates that currently prevail, approved by the Chamber of Trade and Shipping, including in the expressed rates the quantities that make reference to Articles 4 and 9 below.
2. First, an Administrative Committee will be elected, which will be responsible for examining and inspecting the final accounting of the cargo, precisely at the conclusion of each operation, which each consignee will be obliged to send to the Committee.
3. Before beginning work onboard or any other kind of operation, the consignee will be obliged to send to the Administrative Committee a copy of the consignment certificate or cargo manifest, and in the latter case an itemized list of the cargo.

4. It is agreed that for the purposes of providing for a fund for disability and accident insurance for the workers, fifty centimos per ton will be assessed for all categories of commodities and every kind of cargo.

5. With regard to the payments stipulated for unemployment insurance, they will continue to be collected at the rate of forty and seventy-five centimos per ton, depending on the type of goods, in accordance with the agreement of July 7, 1936.

The document contains 19 long Articles. Among other things, a working day of seven hours is established, extending from eight a.m. to noon and then from two p.m. to five p.m. Overtime is not authorized.

This collective contract will make it easy to assess the traffic in the Port of Barcelona: entry and departure of ships, the weight and kinds of goods, etc., since control is now entirely in the hands of the Transport Trade Union.

THE COMPAÑÍA TRANSATLÁNTICA

The Compañía Transatlántica, which was once one of the most powerful shipping companies in Spain and the world, has over the last few years lost its dominant position in maritime shipping, because the government had cut back on its subsidies, reducing them to a

minimum. The precarious situation in which the company found itself on July 18 encouraged its workers to take over the services of its Barcelona branch. On July 27 the employees of the maritime agencies affiliated with the UGT arrived at the company offices and notified the Generalitat that they were confiscating the company.

The major economic difficulties encountered by the workers led them to conceive of the benefits that would accrue to them if the confiscation was transformed into control, when the comrades of the CNT arrived to participate in the Committees.

The Central Committee was formed in the following manner: three comrades from the CNT (sailors, machinists and assistants); two from the UGT (maritime agencies); one assistant from the UGT, and two delegates from the Generalitat, one from Madrid and one from Barcelona.

The Committee is responsible for organization and administration (excluding the official delegates) and is in charge of the overall direction of the enterprise.

Once the funds were counted, they found 63,000 pesetas in safes and other small quantities in the form of foreign currencies.

In the local banks the company had a balance of one million eight hundred thousand pesetas, of which approximately one million had already been withdrawn to pay current and future payroll obligations to subcontractors, such as Vulcano and Maquinista. There is also a remainder, also in the banks, of 1,700,000 pesetas, deposited at a fixed rate of interest, whose terms vary from one to three months.

The company currently has six ships in active service, with a total tonnage of approximately 100,000 tons. None of these ships have been seized by the fascist forces.

At the time when the organization agreed to return to work, the Committees were busy trying to bring the operations of the company back to normal. For this purpose, they prepared the “Comillas” for a voyage to Central America and the “Habana” for a voyage to New York.

Later, the Committee of Militias agreed to equip the “Comillas” as a hospital ship. Once the necessary renovations had been completed, the ship set sail on the 8th for Mahon in order to transport medical personnel and stand ready to take casualties from the attack on Mallorca, when it takes place.

The Compañía Transatlántica never excluded from its ships either the clergy or religious displays. It was ready, immediately after it was confiscated, to clear its ships of all priests, whose wages were paid up to the 18th, and then fired; this agreement was accomplished with the mediation of the ships' captains.

Among the personnel who had ceased to perform services for the company were the following: Monturiol, who earned 47,700 pesetas a year, managing administrator; Ferrer, who made 32,850 pesetas a year, assistant administrator; Galilea, making 13,500 pesetas a year, secretary; Serra, earning 16,875 pesetas a year, accountant; García Luis, 13,500 pesetas a year, vice-secretary; Pérez Carpio, 5,040 pesetas a year, secretary for Güell, who never showed up for work.

In addition to the proposal to fire the entire Administrative Council, there was also the Commission composed of members of this Council, who had large incomes from salaries and commissions. The total amount of money saved up to the present day is 262,300 pesetas a year.

The rest of the employees have stayed on the job at their previous pay rates and conditions of work, except for the managerial role, which has become that of the technical

advisor, without any other executive power besides what he implements on behalf of the Committees. As is the case in the other confiscated or controlled enterprises, the technical personnel has without exception offered to collaborate with the workers who have risen to become the rulers of the economy.

Because 400,000 pesetas must be raised this month in order to pay maritime insurance on the ships, the Central Committee has requested financial assistance from Madrid. The Director of the Department of Maritime Trade has responded with evasive answers to the repeated requests of the committees and, finally, has notified the committees, in order to assert his power, that the offices of the shipping companies in the capital of the Republic must be placed under the control of the Alliance of Maritime Federations. Furthermore, the Government has appointed a socialist deputy as director of the Company. The Committee deliberated concerning a proposal to send a commission to Valencia (to represent it) for the purpose of seeking a satisfactory solution to this problem, which prevents the normal operation of the shipping operations, since, according to claims made by a comrade of the Committee, they will not dare to allow the departure of a ship without first paying the insurance premium, since in case of accident

they would not be able to pay off the pensions to the families of the victims that the sinking of one of their ships might cause, and that they would not dare to run the risk of assuming this responsibility.

As much as possible given the situation, since the civil war requires the Committee to transfer some of its ships to war service, such as the “Uruguay” and the “Argentina” as prison ships, and the “Comillas” as a hospital ship, etc., the workers of Transatlántica will seek to normalize the shipping operations as soon as possible.

The personnel dismissed by the company as a result of the social conflict are returning to the extent that the services require them, as well as those personnel who, due to their incompatibility with the directive Councils, had been fired.

Between 70 and 80 percent of the workers employed by the company belong to our CNT. The old onboard committees will continue to perform their functions as technical committees, subordinated to the Central Committee. There is a proposal to hold a general assembly in order to vote on referendums or change the composition of the Committees.

The monthly payroll rose to approximately 450,000 pesetas. An exact figure cannot be provided, since the

captains of the ships have budgets that rise or fall according to the ports of call and how long they must stay in each port.

Next month they must attend to the results of the examination that will be carried out in Madrid by the commission that we have mentioned, for the purpose of requesting the assistance of the Government and the Alliance of Maritime Federations.

One of the tasks that has been undertaken and which will take a great deal of work, especially metallurgical and carpentry work, is that of sanitizing the crews' living compartments, which up to this time has not been completed despite all the protests and strikes of the workers.

The hours of labor in the Port of Barcelona have been reduced to 40 hours a week. This is not true of the hours worked on the ships, where the personnel have not wanted to reduce it and by unanimous consent work 48 hours a week. So, too, has a study concerning wage increases been put on hold, and the workers have not received a wage increase, not even the 15 percent promised them by the decree of the Generalitat.

THE WORK OF THE CNT HAS IMPROVED TROLLEY SERVICE IN BARCELONA

With arms in hand

On the morning of July 24, when the people defended their most cherished ideals in the streets of Barcelona with arms in hand, various comrades of the CNT temporarily abandoned their front line posts, in obedience to an order issued by the Organization, and travelled in an armored truck to the offices of the Streetcar Company, where they confiscated the industry in compliance with a resolution of the Transport Workers Trade Union.

Gunfire was still echoing in the streets, as the prelude to a dawn of liberty, when our comrades, who were unaware of what kind of people and how many of them they would find in the building harboring the offices of the company, arrived at the company headquarters. There they found a corporal of the Civil Guard and four privates, for whom it sufficed to demonstrate a serious and unanimous attitude on the part of our comrades in order to cause them to discretely withdraw from the building.

Minutes later, on the ground floor of the building, with the sumptuous offices of the now-fugitive Administrative

Council, the workers of the CNT encountered the arena where they could develop their intelligence and their initiatives at the service of a revolution that had just begun.

An act of humanity

Upon searching the offices our comrades found a fascist lawyer in one of them, the only remaining member of the former Administrative Council. More dead than alive, this unhappy attorney maintained that he was unaware of the whereabouts of the other members of the Council. Stuttering with fear he could barely say that they had left him alone and without any orders of any kind, and then our comrades, possessing that humanity and decency that was later repaid with the barbaric brutality of soulless officers, authorized him to leave, although the profession of lawyer has been one of the most harmful to the cause of the working class.

There is no money—High salaries and slush funds

Once the confiscation committee had arrived at the Accounting Department, it found that there was no money there. Why not? This was easy to discover. A few days before the enterprise was confiscated the magnates who presided over the company's operations had made off with amounts of money that they thought were sufficient. One named Nadal, 32,000 pesetas; one named

Veiga, 28,000; Victor Mesa, the president of the Administrative Council, 35,000.... And so on in an endless list that was found in the account books. Other account books and many documents later presented obvious proofs that this unscrupulous gang that made up the Directive Council had given themselves unbelievable salaries. The director earned 11,000 pesetas a month, and his henchmen were not far behind. All of them supplemented their salaries with constant withdrawals from the fund for secret expenditures.

In the documentation pertaining to this account they found entries for lavish banquets, notations of amounts paid to police and informers to imprison and assassinate workers and other details that evinced the extensive immorality that guided the actions of the former directors.

Broken equipment, the cause of serious accidents

All of our readers will remember, of course. The condition of the rails in that period was, quite simply, lamentable. Many of them were broken, so that one cannot understand how serious catastrophes did not occur on a daily basis. The General Repair Shops had been stripped of all their best machinery; the streetcars were often inoperable and many of them did not even have motors, and the spare parts to repair them were of

such low quality that a brief examination was capable of discovering the cause of so many accidents and crashes that took place every day. There was only one bright spot: the offices of the executives, in which fantastic luxury made it obvious that these departments were used more for relaxation and recreation than practical work.

The CNT begins to take action—Difficulties overcome

This mess had to be fixed and streetcar service had to resume. In addition to the equipment problems there was the fact that the revolution had raised numerous barricades on the streets of Barcelona, which rendered the railways unusable and had also knocked down many of the poles supporting the elevated power lines. It also appeared that these lines had been cut in various places throughout the city.

The workers of the CNT, however, were not at all daunted by the prospect of such intensive hard work. They put their faith in their ideals and set their minds on the achievement of this goal, and began to spontaneously volunteer every day to repair the damage. There were no set hours of work, or fixed roles, or specific job descriptions. All the workers laboring together uninterruptedly demonstrated in just a few hours to the people of Barcelona, Spain and the whole

world, that the workers are capable of running their own affairs without despotic bosses or club-wielding foremen.

Only three days after its confiscation by the workers, the people of Barcelona expressed their gratitude to the workers when they saw the first streetcars running through the city.

Improved service and fare reductions

“And today,” we asked a comrade from the Control Committee, “has the service improved?”

“The service,” he told us, “has improved by 25%.”

“And have you been able to reduce fares for some of the routes?”

“On lines 37 and 38 the fares have been reduced by 40%. And the night surcharge has been abolished, which increased the price of a ticket by five centimes, and a study is currently being conducted regarding a general fare reduction that would allow the creation of a discount ticket for workers, valid from four to eight in the morning, and from six to eight in the evening. A study is also underway on the possibility of a standard ticket price or a 40% reduction in the ordinary fare.”

The wages of the workers of the collectivized enterprise

We continued to gather information, thanks to the friendly assistance of our comrade from the Control Committee.

“Have the wages of the workers been increased?”

“The wages of the lowest-paid workers have risen by 35%, and for the workers in the higher income brackets, their wages have been increased by 20%, 15% and 10%.”

“Has there been an increase in income for the streetcar enterprise?”

“Income has increased by 25%, and production has increased by 200%.”

“What future projects are planned?”

“We are currently engaged in the complete renovation of all the rails that are in bad condition. Furthermore, because our work never ends, since there are new horizons opening on the job, plans are currently being reviewed to expand the urban streetcar network, to the benefit of the railways, the organization and the people in general. We are also studying—and this will be the cornerstone of our work, for now—the implementation of a standard fare in the city. We are counting on major advantages for the realization of our plans, one of which—the most important one—is that all the workers

of the collective are conscious of the transformation that is underway and are willing to work as hard as they can, because they know that it will benefit them. The mission of the Control Committee is the provision of efficient service and the lowest possible fares, and to do so in the most practical way possible.”

“What about the kinds of cars you are using?”

“Now there are eight different kinds on the routes; but we want to use just one. To do this it has been necessary to overcome difficulties with regard to the importation of foreign equipment. Before, we imported 85% of our equipment, but now, because we have discovered Spanish sources for these materials, we only import 10% or 15% of our equipment.”

“Has there been an increase in the numbers of workers employed on the streetcars?”

“When we seized the industry, there were 3,100 workers; today, there are 3,800. These 700 new co-workers have the same rights and the same duties as the other workers.”

“What about the administrative apparatus?”

“It has been streamlined, and we are now obtaining the maximum efficiency of labor from the technical and

office personnel thanks to this streamlining, now that the bureaucratic luxury has disappeared. No one has been fired. When we took over the industry, we called a meeting of the entire technical and administrative staff and told them that anything they were willing to do to assist us in our work would be received with open arms and that they could retain their former jobs. All of them responded admirably to our appeal, and today,” our informant concluded, “without any obstacles or clouds on the horizon, we advance towards the realization of our aspirations, which are those of the organization and therefore those of the people.”

2. THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The structure of the textile industry—Report of the Textile Trade Union of Barcelona—The structure of the collective organizations in the textile industry. Three patterns—La España Industrial: Report on the activity of the Central Committees in the factories.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

REPORT OF THE TEXTILE TRADE UNION OF BARCELONA

One of the most important industries in Catalonia, most heavily concentrated in Sabadell and Tarrasa, is the textile industry. The trade union mentioned above has 40,000 CNT workers in Barcelona alone.

The two major trade union federations together have 230,000 workers in the industry, 170,000 of whom are members of our Confederation. The current proportions among the unionized workers are approximately 70% in the CNT, and 30% in the UGT.

Wages

The workers in the Dry Cleaning section, before July, earned a weekly wage of 68 pesetas. Today they receive 78.20 pesetas, or 15% more than they did before the revolution. They receive the same wage as the workers in the Washing section.

Hosiery

This subdivision used to be paid by the piece, obtaining, prior to July 19, weekly wages of up to 175 pesetas, working on "Cotton" (men) and working an average of 10 hours per day. Today they receive 135 pesetas a week, and work forty hours a week for an hourly wage.

The workers who work on "Standard", who received between 60 and 70 pesetas a week prior to July, and were also formerly paid by the piece, now receive a fixed wage of 65 pesetas a week.

Industrial technicians, before July, made anywhere from 250 to 350 pesetas; today, they make between 200 and 250 pesetas a week.

Foremen, before July, made 125 pesetas; today, they make between 125 and 150 pesetas a week.

It might very well appear, from the figures provided above, that wages have declined, but in reality this is an advantage for the worker, since he receives a fixed and steady wage, piecework having been eliminated. Another factor that must be taken into account is the number of hours the worker currently works and those he worked before the revolution; before July 19, the workers who worked on "Cotton" and "Standard", in order to make the wages we just enumerated above, would have had to work 80 hours a week; today, in the factories where the short week has not been introduced (as a result of the shortage of raw materials), they work only 40 hours. If we divide the weekly wage by the number of hours worked, we find that the worker is making more money per hour than he did under the bourgeois regime.

Militiamen to the front

A very large number of CNT members from the manufacturing and textile industries have left their jobs in the factories and workshops operated by our Confederation in order to go to the front, and we may say that at the present time this sector of industry has undergone a major reduction in the number of workers it employs. From the City of Barcelona, between 20,000

and 25,000 workers who are members of the CNT have left for the front as volunteers. Of those who have volunteered from Barcelona, only about 3,000 are members of the UGT.

The elimination of rebel elements and fugitives. The bourgeois element.

The following numbers will give us an idea of the approximate position of this element in the present situation. Of the total numbers of bourgeoisie, who in Catalonia number about 20,000 persons, whose most concentrated focus is in Barcelona (5,000), about 10% have remained in their factories, working and participating like simple workers: this was achieved by the collectivization process; about 40% have been eliminated from the social arena, and approximately 50% have fled to foreign countries, gone into hiding, etc.

Up to 30 factory or workshop foremen have been eliminated due to their anti-revolutionary ideas and actions (SUFT-CNT). Between 12 and 14 workers have suffered the same fate for identical reasons.

Donations for the victims of fascism

The SUFT has to date delivered to the Committee to Aid the Victims of Fascism 2,500,000 pesetas. Due to the reductions in the working week due to a shortage of raw

materials, the weekly collections, which once averaged about 110,000 pesetas, have been reduced to about 55,000 pesetas. Here is a detailed list of the amounts contributed to the Militia Committee by each affiliate of the CNT, from the Water, Manufacturing and Textile Industries:

The Water Industry: each worker gives 5 pesetas each week for aid to victims of fascism and to the militias.

Manufacturing and Textiles: 5% of the wages of the workers who are working short weeks; 10% of the wages of the workers on full time weeks, and 15% of the wages of the workers who earn more than 100 pesetas a week.

Collectivization

Almost the entire textile and manufacturing industry of Catalonia is collectivized.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE COLLECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Once the enterprises are fully collectivized, the Control Committees will become Technical-Administrative Committees. These Committees will be elected by the workers in each factory, meeting in a general assembly, and the latter will be convoked by the trade union

Factory Committee and by the Federation's industrial section.

The Committees will consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of nine comrades, and it will be a matter of importance at all times to seek to ensure that both technical as well as manual workers should be represented on these Committees. All the different industrial departments of the factory will also be represented on these Committees, and once they are formed they will include the following departments:

1. Internal Department.
2. Statistics.
3. Economics and Finance.
4. Liaison.

The mission of the Internal Department:

- a) Maintain the machinery in good working order and assure that it meets prevailing standards of safety.
- b) Maintain the working areas and locker rooms and make sure they meet modern standards of hygiene.
- c) Allocate labor by sections and conduct all business of a technical order that was previously handled by the directors.

The mission of the Statistics Department:

- a) Raw materials needed on a monthly and annual basis.
- b) Machinery, its types and output.
- c) The number of manual and technical workers categorized by their specialties.
- d) All kinds of accessory details not covered by the questionnaire that could serve to improve the operations of the industry.

Mission of the Department of Economics and Finance:

- a) Oversee the financial situation of the factory. Disburse wages.
- b) Payment of wages to all manual and technical workers.
- c) Payments for all kinds of operations, such as repair of the machinery, building maintenance, etc.
- d) Cost-cutting for the collective with regard to all those aspects of the old regime that were superfluous and useless.
- e) Establish prices for costs and manufacture.
- f) Provide precise statistics regarding days of work lost and injuries, whether as a result of illness or accident.

Mission of the Department of Liaison:

- a) This Department will be the Secretariat of the Committee.
- b) It will maintain direct relations with the local Committee of Industry, as well as with the Factory

Committee, with regard to all those matters that affect the trade union order.

c) It will assume responsibility for all the orders that must be transmitted from one Committee to another.

Additional Note—In the factories where, due to their small workforces, only between three and five comrades need to be elected to the Committee, these comrades will divide the responsibilities for the above Departments among themselves, even if this means that one person might have to be responsible for two Departments.

A town that only has one or two factories does not have to have a Local Committee, as this function will be assumed by the Regional or District Committee, which implies that the Department of Liaison of the factory or factories will be in close contact with said Committee, since the latter will have the obligation to facilitate whatever is necessary for the efficient operation of the factory.

LOCAL COMMITTEES OF INDUSTRY

Their structure

All the different industrial sectors that exist in a locality will be represented on these committees. These committees will be divided into sections or departments and each department, in accordance with the directives

of the Trade Union of the Industry, will be able to avail itself of the services of all the necessary technical and bureaucratic personnel.

Departments

1. Liaison.
2. Economics and Finance.
3. Statistics.
4. Warehouse.
5. Labor allocation.
6. Private and individual initiatives.

This Committee will be elected by all the technical-administrative committees of the local factories subject to the ratification of the general assembly of the Trade Union of the entire industry.

The General Secretariat will be formed by the Department of Liaison. This Secretariat will convoke the plenary meetings.

These plenary meetings will take place as often as the Secretariat deems necessary or else by request of the Central Committee of the Trade Union of the Industry.

The representative or representatives of the Trade Union may attend these meetings, with the right to address the meeting, deliberate and vote.

The General Secretariat of the Local Committee will be obliged to deliver to the Central Committees of the Trade Unions all production statistics, as well as statistics for expenses and income and any observations that would be of use to the collective.

Department of Liaison

- a) Receive all the reports of the Local and Trade Union Committee of the Economy.
- b) Maintain permanent contact with all the Factory Committees or Technical-Administrative Committees.
- c) Safeguard the well-being of all the workers in the industry, as well as seeking to establish the most perfect harmony between the Factory Committees and the workers.
- d) Attend all the meetings of the workers of the factories of the industry.
- e) Meet at least once a month with all the Technical-Administrative Committees for the purpose of establishing the necessary solidarity.
- f) Receive from the District Committee all the requests for the manufacture of particular goods.

Department of Economics and Finance

- a) Monitoring of expenses and income generally.
- b) Draft summaries on Thursday of each week depicting the weekly total balance sheet of revenues and

withdrawals from the Industry's General Fund.

c) Register all those payments made for insurance claims in general, in the form of actual insurance claims or in any other forms that may arise.

d) Register all the goods produced and their cost of production.

e) Register all the varieties of goods produced and delivered to the District Committee and all the raw materials that the industry received.

Department of Statistics

a) Inventory of the machinery of each industrial process and its production capacity, as well as its value in pesetas or other types of valuation that may be adopted.

b) Monthly and annual requirements for raw materials.

c) Types of production, and monthly and annual quantities.

d) Personnel employed in the local industry and their specialties.

e) Monthly and annual ratios of expenses to income, as well as receipt and shipment of raw materials and manufactured or finished products.

f) The precise accounting of all days of work lost and injuries due to accidents or illness and the total number of hours of work they represent.

g) Determine the cost of the goods produced, based on

the summary of the monthly or quarterly inventories that may be conducted.

Warehouse Department

- a) Collect all the raw materials and manufactured products in a warehouse or warehouses.
- b) Ship these raw materials to the factories and keep track of the manufactured products.
- c) Request from the District Committee all the necessary raw materials and deliver to it the products that the District Committee requests; in order to accomplish this, this Department will have access to the necessary means of transport.

Department of Labor Allocation

- a) Receive from the Liaison Department notifications of the quantities and specifications for articles to manufacture.
- b) Allocate this labor in accordance with the conditions of the quality and capacity of each center of production or factory.
- c) Advise the Local Committee of the Economy and the Trade Union concerning the process of manufacture and the exact number of hours necessary for production, following instructions received from the District Committee.
- d) Be open to new ideas for the improvement of the

production process, and facilitate the practical implementation of the new ideas.

Department of Initiative

- a) This Department will be staffed by the most knowledgeable industrial technicians and by expert manual workers.
- b) Foster improvements of industry in all its aspects.
- c) Be open to all the viable initiatives that are presented to it, studying them carefully, and provide facilities for the possible realization of the new initiative.
- d) To fulfill its mission it will be in constant contact with the Department of Labor Allocation, the General Secretariat of the Economy and the Committees of each Section of the Trade Union.

[DISTRICTS]¹

Catalonia, with respect to the textile and manufacturing industries, will be divided into Districts that will be established in accordance with the map of industrial sites and then on the basis of a detailed technical and scientific study.

In each District an Industrial Committee will be created, which will be the institution responsible for facilitating relations with the different localities in the District.

These Committees will be composed of representatives of all the industrial sectors that exist in the District and will be subdivided into the following Departments:

- Statistics.
- Economy and Finance.
- Labor Allocation.
- Liaison.
- Warehouse and Distribution.

Department of Statistics

- a) Ascertain the total production of the District and provide details regarding types of goods and their qualities.
- b) Produce an inventory of machinery. The type of machine and its output.
- c) Required raw materials and types of raw materials.
- d) Number of factories in each locality and the production capacity of each factory.
- e) Total number of manual and technical workers employed and unemployed, by factories and localities.
- f) All kinds of supplementary details not foreseen in this questionnaire.

Department of Economy and Finance

- a) Oversight over the financial situation of the District.
- b) Disbursement, to the localities, of weekly wages and

social assistance.

c) Pay for raw materials.

d) Provide a precise accounting for the wages of each locality.

e) All kinds of purchases or expenditures will be the responsibility of this Department.

f) Ascertaining the cost price and the price of manufacture.

Department of Labor Allocation

a) Allocation of labor in accordance with the technical characteristics of each locality.

b) Receive requests for goods.

c) Progressive labor relations, seeking to carry out the work in the most practical and best way.

d) This Department will be responsible for the replacement or repair of machinery and its adaptation to the needs of production orders.

e) When one locality has too many or too few workers, whether manual or technical workers, this Department, after previous agreement with the Trade Union or the Labor Center (since no Department may act without the approval of the latter), will solve the problem in the best way possible.

Department of Liaison

a) Maintain contact with the Regional Committee of Industry with regard to all the above tasks, whether involving raw materials, exchange and or any other kind of operations concerning which the other Departments have notified it.

b) Maintain contact with the Trade Unions, whether agricultural or metallurgical, with respect to every kind of problem that may arise within the textile industry.

c) This Department, always with the agreement of the Trade Unions or Regional Committees and in conjunction with them, will seek the most harmonious possible solutions for all the conflicts of a moral order that may affect the workers of the industry which cannot be resolved by the localities.

d) All the operations that may affect the day to day progress of the industry, whether related to exchange, purchase of machinery, requests for raw materials, movement of funds, shortage of cash, or anything that has an impact on the general order of production, will have to proceed via this Department to the knowledge of the Regional Committee, without whose endorsement no operation on this scale would be possible.

e) All business, whether relating to Economy, Warehouse, Labor Allocation or Statistics, which requires consultations with other institutions, whether or not involving those already referred to above, will pass

through the Department of Liaison, which will be responsible for implementing it, as well as for maintaining constant contact with the localities that compose the District.

Department of Warehouses and Distribution

- a) Process requests for and oversee distribution of raw materials.
- b) Receipt, storage and distribution in accordance with requests of finished goods.
- c) Produce a catalog of samples of every kind of product manufactured in the District.
- d) This Department will receive all proposals for exchange and will transmit them to the Department of Liaison for conveyance to the Regional Committee.

These committees will be elected at the Local Plenums of each District and these Plenums will be convoked by the National Liaison Committee of the Manufacturing and Textile Industry of Spain, and will be composed of the number of comrades that the Plenum deems necessary for the dignified fulfillment of the mission with which they are entrusted.

The criterion of residence will also determine who attends the Plenum, always taking into account the fact

that some areas will have more favorable transportation facilities than others.

This Committee will have the right to appoint the technical and bureaucratic personnel required to comply with its mandate.

THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

This Committee will be structured according to the following norms:

It will be divided into two parts: the technical-administrative part and the executive part.

The technical-administrative part will be composed of those comrades who will be elected at the District Plenums and who reside in the same District where the Committee is located.

The executive part will be composed of one representative of each manufacturing District, elected by the Districts as mentioned above, and will also be a member of the Liaison Department of the District Committee of the District he represents.

The Regional Committee will be divided like the others into Departments.

These Departments will be as follows:

- a) Department of Statistics.
- b) Economy and Finance.
- c) Allocation of Labor.
- d) Liaison.
- e) Purchase, sales and exchanges.
- f) Technical and Initiative.

Department of Statistics

- a) Ascertain the total production of the region, providing details of types and qualities of the products.
- b) Machinery. Types of machinery and output.
- c) Necessary raw materials and their types.
- d) Determine the number of factories in each District and the production capacity of each factory.
- e) Determine the total number of workers employed in each District and the total number of unemployed workers in the region.
- f) All other such statistical details that can facilitate the smooth operation of the manufacturing industry.

Department of Economy and Finance

- a) Oversee the financial situation of the entire region.
- b) All kinds of payments and income.
- c) Precise accounting for the wages paid in each District.
- d) Establishment of cost, manufacturing and sales prices.

e) Send an itemized account of the weekly output of the workers to each District, always accompanied by the requisite documentation, which will always bear the signatures of the responsible members of the District Committees.

f) Study the proposals to economize as much as necessary for the benefit of the collective.

Department of Labor Allocation

a) Receive from the Liaison Department the orders for the quantities and the specifications of the articles to manufacture.

b) Allocate this work in accordance with the conditions of quality and capacity of each production District.

c) Advise the Committee of Regional Economy and the corresponding District and Trade Union Committees of the manufacturing process and the precise number of hours required for production, in accordance with the orders received from the Regional Council of the Economy and form the Regional Supply Committee.

d) Draw up economic plans that apply the most advanced organic-industrial technology to certain production Districts or to all of them.

e) Diligently collect all new ideas for the improvement of production, facilitating all possible applications of the

new ideas, and seeking to obtain international patents on them.

Liaison Department

- a) This Department will form the Secretariat of the Regional Committee, and will be responsible for implementing all the resolutions of the Committee, as well as those of the Plenums, whose number will be determined by the needs of industry.
- b) This Department will also maintain contact with all the other institutions, whether trade union or economic in nature.
- c) This Department will also have the right to appoint as many comrades as it will deem necessary to carry out inspections, whether at the District, local or factory level, and they will be responsible for seeing to it that the resolutions of the Plenums and Assemblies are complied with.

Department of Purchases, Sales and Exchanges

- a) Import all kinds of raw materials, whether from domestic or foreign suppliers, and distribute them in accordance with the requests from each District.
- b) Produce a sample catalog of all products manufactured in the region and store those products in warehouses.
- c) Coordinate, in accordance with the Council of the

Economy and the Supply Committee, every kind of domestic and foreign exchange.

d) This Department will have in each District a delegate authorized to coordinate sales and exchanges for the purpose of avoiding the shifting of buyers towards the center and to facilitate the distribution of the products.

e) Precise oversight over all sales in the region.

Department of Technical Affairs and Initiative

a) This Department will be composed of the most knowledgeable technicians of the industry and expert manual workers.

b) The mission of this Department will be to safeguard the industrial and commercial advancement of the industry.

c) Collect all the new initiatives for the improvement of the industry, carefully studying them, and providing facilities for the implementation of the new ideas.

d) This Department will be in direct contact with the technical departments of the production Districts.

e) Study all foreign patents and report on their advantages and their drawbacks.

THE POWER OF THE CONFEDERAL ORGANIZATION WITH RESPECT TO THE COLLECTIVIZATION OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The confederal organization will have its direct representatives in every factory of the industry; these representatives, who may be members of the Factory Committee of the Trade Union, will exercise control over every aspect of the conduct of the Technical-Administrative Committees, and in the case that abnormalities in their conduct should arise, these representatives will expose the abnormalities to the Industry Committee, so that the latter may convoke an Assembly of all the personnel of the factory to resolve the conflict or apply the sanctions that they believe to be appropriate.

The confederal organization will have two representatives in the local Industrial Committee, who will be workers from the industry, and they will remain in very close contact with the Industry Committee, and will always be prepared to denounce anything that would imply a step backwards in the revolutionary order.

In the case of immorality or something else that is not within the normal purview of the local Industrial Committee, the Industry Committee will have the right to

convoke an Assembly of Committees to express its complaints, and if it is thought to be advisable, this Assembly of Committees will have the right to convoke the general assembly of all the workers in the industry so that the latter can issue their ruling. The same thing applies to the District Committee, and the latter will be under the control of the regional Committee, and the latter will have the right to call a meeting of all the factory Committees of the region in case of anomalies. The Regional Committee of industry will be under the control of the Regional Committee of the CNT and in case of abnormalities such as discussed above, the Regional Committee of the CNT will have the right to convoke Plenums of local and regional factory Committees, and, if it is considered to be necessary, even a Trade Union Plenum, in order to resolve any such problems that may be encountered.

“ESPAÑA INDUSTRIAL”

Report on the activities of the Central Committee of Industry (October 25, 1936)

Once it had assumed its responsibilities, the first thing the first Committee elected by the Assembly did was to admit into its ranks, as it had been ordered, the two representatives from the comrades of the Barcelona

office, who had previously been unanimously elected at a meeting of the personnel of their Department, the comrades Rabadá and Segura. At the first session of this Committee, it was noted that one delegation had undoubtedly been overlooked, that of the factory of Sabadell, which was completely integrated with the factory at Sans. Individuals from the recently formed Committee, elected as delegates by the Plenum of the Committee, went to Sabadell and, after verifying the duly conducted negotiations held by the comrades in the factory there, with some difficulties at first as a result of some misunderstandings, quite expected in such cases, but fortunately overcome with absolute unanimity, in an Assembly of all the comrades of that factory, the comrades Bernat and Vilará were elected as representatives of the entire factory, who have attended all the ordinary Plenums held by the Central Committee.

Internal Organization of the Committee. Its Activities.

Once these first difficulties had been taken care of, and now that the Committee was definitively fully established, the Committee was perfectly aware of the immense scale of the task that it had to accomplish, and considering that it would merely obstruct the Committee's normal operations if it had to debate every matter with its 19 members, it was agreed to divide into

special commissions, each of which would be responsible for various specific aspects of the task at hand, with the right to independently resolve all the minor issues itself and to approve resolutions that it thought proper, after studying each matter, in order to then transmit them to the Plenums of the Committee where final decisions would be made. Some of these commissions have subdivided into sub-commissions, in order to more effectively carry out their responsibilities.

The Committee Plenum, from the very first week, has met every Saturday morning at the Barcelona office, and its 19 members have all attended almost every meeting.

The various commissions meet on a certain day each week, sometimes during working hours and sometimes after work.

We have the satisfaction of being able to say that so far this organization has yielded good results, with regard to the allocation of the multiple tasks that we have to address.

Each week, different persons from the Committee are assigned the task of producing an account of the Committee's funds.

This is the way the Committee has organized its work, and it has demonstrated before the Assembly that it has done so with all the power at its disposal required by the necessities of its tasks and with the intimate conviction that it is fulfilling the job with which it was entrusted by the first Assembly, and with the clear consciousness that the omissions, errors, failures of initiative, negligence, incorrect decisions and all the thousands of imperfections from which the Committee suffers are inevitable in all human works, which can always be improved by the same elements that are now attempting to execute them or by others.

The useful and necessary things that we have not carried out are as obvious to the Committee as they are to you. With regard to this question the only thing you need to know is that, for our part, it is impossible for us to get a clear picture of the moral and material benefits that have been obtained during the time that you have entrusted us with the responsibility for “España Industrial”, but you must always take into account the fact that all of us are only harvesting the fruits of those who, with arms in hand, have risked death, and with their hearts open to a future in which there are only the arms of labor, science and the arts, and fraternity and love prevail, they fight in not-so-distant lands to conquer human rights, to

preserve what has already been won, to prevent other men from seizing from us the smallest moral and material improvements that the fighters for progress have with so many sacrifices been able to obtain. We point this out, since we have spoken of benefits that undoubtedly exist in fact and in law, but if the events that flow from the current circumstances cause us to have to make material sacrifices, we would only be so many fools if it was only upon these facts we were to make an unfavorable commentary, when this could have repercussions on the collective.

The financial situation

As the comrade from the accounting section reported in the last Assembly, the financial situation of “España Industrial” has only become critical recently. This is why the Committee approved emergency measures in response to the situation, in order to regulate, as far as possible under the current state of affairs, all available resources. One such resource and the most important one whose expenditure must be postponed, until the situation has more or less stabilized, is the payment of invoices for supplies received before July 28, the date when the activities of our enterprise were resumed, after the reprehensible fascist uprising; it must be understood that we are not saying that we shall renounce any of

these commitments, but that we shall address them by making allowances for the available resources that we are acquiring in order to give preference to the new purchases of raw materials, facilities and wages, within the framework of the development of activities in the regime that has been imposed on us since that date. That is, those credits contracted for verified purchases since the date of confiscation of the enterprise shall have priority. While at this time we cannot be optimistic about being able to provide a complete and satisfying solution for this financial situation, we cannot say, as was stated in the last Assembly, that we are throwing in the towel, because we have not made any use of all the resources at the disposal of "España Industrial", always keeping in mind the fact that we have always had to take them into account in order not to jeopardize in the least the commercial credit that our enterprise had enjoyed in the old bourgeois system.

For the information of the Assembly, we shall point out that the total wage bill paid since the last Assembly up until this date amounts to 1,162,336.90 pesetas, of which 1,038,008.85 correspond to the personnel of the Sans plant, 70,019.20 to the Sabadell plant, and 6,251.40 to Valencia, as well as 95,268 pesetas for the monthly salaries of the office employees in the factories and at

the Barcelona headquarters. Another 24,581.10 pesetas were disbursed as subsidies to comrades who were unable to work because of illness.²

The nature and origin of some raw materials that are consumed in large amounts in our factories, among others those of such importance as cotton and artificial fibers, have also forced us to make significant payments, because they are only obtainable, depending on the case, with cash, and in some cases must be paid for even before they arrive at our warehouses. We have managed, nonetheless, to avail ourselves of the commercial credit mentioned above, in all those cases where it has been possible, and have always accommodated and made an effort to honor our commitments at the moment when they are due.

Therefore, we have completely ceased to pay dividends and stock premiums, which were suspended at the moment of confiscation, the labor of our Committee having been carried out without the stockholders' and investors' interference, since nothing else would have been acceptable to us, as this is how we have interpreted the mandate you have imposed upon us.

Sales difficulties

One of the first and most difficult problems that we have faced is that of marketing our various products.

Unfortunately, due to the territorial reductions caused by the fascist rebellion that have limited our consumers market, on the one hand, and the increase in demand for certain kinds of products as opposed to others, on the other hand, our various products have accumulated in our inventory in the proportions approximately expressed below:

Pieces in stock on August 8, 1935 48,213

Pieces in stock now 50,321

Articles destined for the needs of the war

During this period it has been possible to shift the production of some articles to war use, although subject to such limitations that are imposed by the special structure of our industry and the scarcity of certain materials, which has temporarily given work to some of our productive workers making commodities that will generate cash in the short term. The sectors devoted to the production of other types of finished goods for the winter season, and all those articles called luxury goods, have suffered from all the consequences of their orders being cancelled.

Exports

Nonetheless, the Commission of Commercial Affairs whose members sit on this Committee, also from the

very first moments and with a view based on reality, in consideration of the fact that, as long as the current limitations on consumption for the domestic market mentioned above persist, a normal development of commercial activities will not be possible, has elaborated a plan in which the situation is summarized and advises the study of the existing export commodities, a plan that deserves the approval of this Committee. To address the practical realities in accordance with this plan, it has been necessary that day after day, patiently, they examine an endless number of technical difficulties of every type, such as currencies, customs, trade agreements, quotas, etc., all of which are intimately connected with the rules and regulations in effect in the various countries where our products can be shipped. In order to bring all these deliberations to a good conclusion, it has been necessary to carry out a parallel project, following the norms and rules of the Council of the Economy, where, by the way, we have always encountered intelligent and cordial collaboration. Today we can say that, regarding the progress of these projects, we have solid hopes, since, after a preparatory labor carried out on previously chosen markets, our comrade Rabadá, fully authorized by this Central Committee and also with the authorization of the Council of the Economy, has journeyed to these markets where, by

delegation of all of us, he is administering these previously planned sales operations.

Cost prices

Another serious problem and one that we must inform you about, is the imbalance between the current cost prices of our manufactures, increased by the rise of the cost of labor power and raw materials, the latter having resulted from the decline undergone by the value of our currency, taking into account the fact that a large proportion of our finished goods is of foreign origin, and the price of these finished goods must be set by the market, compelled by regulations that make it impossible for us to attenuate this imbalance. Not long ago, in relation to this problem, the Council of the Economy was presented with a document in which we informed it of this anomalous situation, and we are assured that this institution, once all the indispensable data has been compiled, will provide us all the guidelines to follow to redress this situation.

It has also been our special concern to expedite as effectively as possible the production of those articles destined for military use or to obtaining them as soon as possible, and as you shall see, in a proposal that we shall discuss below, our proposal is subordinated to this

priority, not without first having consulted and studied the resolution of all technical difficulties.

Changing fashions in clothing

A very subtle point, but one that deserves the very close attention of the Commission of Commercial Affairs, is the fact often witnessed over the course of the history of major social convulsions, that the latter entail new esthetic conceptions, which also affect the arts of clothing and upholstery, all the elements of which comprise our specialties and as a result imply radical changes in the articles to be produced. The most basic precautions make it advisable for all technical or design personnel to keep these factors in mind for future reference, and these trends have resulted in a transformation of the labor process that has obliged the relocation of our comrades from the “Jacquards” section.

Difficulties in obtaining raw materials

We must emphasize and explain for your consideration the difficulties, every day more pronounced, with which the manufacturing and textile industry of Catalonia, and therefore our enterprise, has run up against in its attempt to acquire raw materials. We consumed most of the existing “stocks”, and facing all kinds of problems in restoring our supplies of stocks, such as the lack of foreign currency for foreign purchases and the

inaccessibility of the domestic productive and extractive centers, despite the multiple labors and initiatives carried out by the Supply Committees and the Liaison Committees and the superior institutions, it has been necessary and indispensable to distribute the currently existing stocks of supplies and raw materials to those work processes or finished goods going to the comrades who are fighting on the front.

These shortages and the interventions that the various entities and organizations have had to carry out due to the abnormal current situation have rendered the processes of purchase and acquisition of many materials extremely difficult, which in the past could be accomplished with a simple phone call. All of us think that it is possible, and understandable, that many of our comrades present here, due to your various daily tasks, have no precise idea of these difficulties of every description that must be overcome, which is why we feel that it is indispensable to bring to your attention those elements of judgment necessary so that you may perceive these difficulties and express your views. When a truck full of raw materials passes through the gates of our factory, many of you, always accustomed to such a sight, only observe the last stage of a process, but not the whole process. One example out of many that we

could cite is that of the acquisition of artificial fibers to replace the stocks of our factory in Sabadell, in which it took twenty-two days from the date when this Committee approved its purchase to the date the commodity entered our warehouses and obliged a necessary daily journey by various individuals from this Committee in order to obtain the purchase authorizations, foreign currency, permits, etc., something that in the past did not require more than filling out three or four simple forms. This explains the many trips you have seen the members of this Committee make, not only within the factory, but also in the offices.

This Committee has sought at all times to be informed of all the many resolutions that the workers organizations have approved and the goals these resolutions seek to achieve in order to instill their spirit into all our activities, as well as to adapt them to the regime of labor of all of us, and is therefore always available to speak with all their directive committees, having found the latter to be always cooperative and obliging.

The technical commission

This Committee having resolved to change the electric power supply network for one part of the Spinning section, just as it is not being used much in any other part of the section, whose reduction in electric power

and lubrication we have decided is of importance; but we have made this modification conditional on an improvement of our financial situation, despite the good credit terms that have been offered to us by the comrades who are responsible for supplying and installing the equipment.

New machinery in Sabadell

Two machines have been shipped during this period to the factory at Sabadell, machines whose purchase contracts were already signed, and while we had to pay for them with cash, because they were imported from a foreign country, we can say that their need was essential for the normal function of the spinning of artificial fibers, which occupies a large part of the factory and whose normal function and efficiency of labor our comrades in that city have been able to note.

A combing machine owned by “España Industrial”, which had until now been stored by a manufacturer in Sabadell, on deposit, has been shipped to our factory, and this increased the productivity of our comrades.

Materials for war industries

This Committee, having been required by the Commissar of Defense to issue a declaration of materials useful for the war, and being aware of the existence of old

machinery in the basement of our factory, previously inspected by technical personnel and after close examination determined to be totally unserviceable, proceeded to register it as utterly useless, in order to place the materials at the disposal of the needs of the war industry, this Committee is pleased to tell the Assembly that the arduous labor that this process implied was undertaken by volunteer labor on the part of the comrades employed in the water industry sections, whose presence was not urgently required in their respective sections, and were thereby made available for this task.

Commission for internal organization

As for the regime of labor and its remuneration, many and various resolutions have been approved by the corresponding section and ratified at the Committee's plenums, many of which you are aware of and the most important of which we shall enumerate below so that everyone may be informed of their contents.

Full sick pay for comrades who are unable to work because of illness, first approved for Sans, has been extended to the workers of Sabadell, who, because they are insured by a Mutual Aid plan, will not be covered by the Sans statutes for the first three days because they are covered by their own Mutual Aid plan for that period.

The various work rules approved by the various trade union organizations have continued to be in force for all our comrades.

Another resolution of this Committee is the suppression of all kinds of bonuses that some of our technical, commercial and production comrades have been receiving, which has resulted in a saving of 118,075 pesetas.

We have also postponed the implementation of a resolution, in accordance with our interpretation of the desires expressed at the last Assembly, to increase the retirement allowances for the comrades, leaving the standard payment for all at 25 pesetas a week.

An exception was made for the money set aside for pensions for the widows of two workers from “España Industrial” who were killed during an attack carried out in 1921 in a street near the Sans factory, these being the only two pensions we have found that the former owners had to concede.

In compliance with the resolutions approved at the last Assembly, those individuals who did not come to work during the first moments of the revolution and then failed to come to work thereafter without any justifiable

reason are definitively dismissed from employment at the plant.

Another measure this Committee deemed necessary is the evacuation of the apartments in the factory compound that were occupied by unauthorized personnel, with the exception, due to the special mission with which he is entrusted, of the Chief Porter, comrade Alvarez, in consideration of the fact that the residence corresponds to the functions he performs.

It is the opinion of the Committee, with regard to the question of the replacement or nomination of comrades to assume responsibility for sections or job allocations, that the comrades themselves, and only taking into account the abilities and knowledge of the job that has to be done, will be the ones who designate the people to whom these functions are delegated, without any increase in wages.

We must also report to all of our comrades that, from now on, in order to obtain the necessary workers for the plant, we shall send requests to the labor centers of the respective sections of the Trade Union, thus denying the requests made on behalf of family members of the current workers at the plant.

Hiring of new personnel

An exception to the last-mentioned rule will be made in the case of a brother of a Sabadell comrade killed at the front in the struggle for the consolidation of the proletarian demands, at the request of the family and of the Trade Union to which the unfortunate comrade belonged and with the agreement of the Committee and the other trade union organizations.

Due to an unfortunate automotive accident caused by one of our factory's vehicles, we invited to join our staff a son of the victim, who is sixteen years old, taking into consideration the precarious state in which his family has been left after the accident. This Committee judged that, since the trade union organizations were previously consulted, this request was just, and relying in advance on the noble feelings of all the personnel of our factory, this young man is now working with us.

Statutes

The Commission of Personnel and Internal Organization is responsible for the drawing up of Statutes that are in accordance with the new democratic regime of labor and the norms of freedom achieved by the proletariat.

The rulings that have been repeatedly promised, and not just by the Minister of the Economy, but also by other

institutions, that were supposed to be issued shortly concerning the regulation and structure of the new system of labor, have caused the Committee to postpone any attempt on its own part to resolve at the present time the problem of regulations, which we consider, as all of you do also, to be of the greatest urgency, since the immediate need of having to adapt to this new expected regulatory system to which we have referred has caused us to delay their drafting for many days, until such a time as the promised rulings will be issued.

The Statistical Commission

The Statistical Commission has been, during this delay in our mandate, informing the plenum of the Committee of the variations in the cost of labor power and the output and efficiency of the producers' efforts in the factory of Sans. We have implemented a very sensible change with respect to the extremes of the latter, concerning which, in order to study it in detail, information was requested of the delegates of the Committee with respect to the causes to which they could attribute these changes. This study led to the notice that you have seen posted at the gates of the factory and in various other locations.

The Sub-commission for Social Assistance

In order to facilitate the distribution of labor in the many varieties overseen by the comrades of the Personnel

Committee, as we pointed out above, the Sub-commission of Social Assistance was created, whose first study dealt with the reorganization of the nursery and day-care services. To this end, as you have seen, their direction was entrusted to technical and specialized personnel.

This Committee thought that the nursery and day-care services required the care of specialists and that we should not be sparing of care for the little ones of today, who will be the men of tomorrow. For this reason the rules established by the current director of these services are being followed, in order to adapt all the suggestions to modernize and make more pleasant our young ones' stay in these departments.

We need, we plead and hope that, all the suggestions, initiatives or requests concerning this special task that you will believe to be appropriate, you will bring to the Committee's attention, without any hesitations, in the assurance that you should be most attentive to this Commission, since it is by means of your own efforts that we can obtain the maximum efficiency and improvement of these services.

Internal security

The Commission for Internal Organization has recently ruled that at the entry to the factory, besides the usual door-wardens, there should also be a permanent armed guard. This measure, fully debated at the Committee Plenum, which, of course, is responsible for such matters, like all its other decisions, is undoubtedly considered to be a sensitive issue, and that is why we are now bringing it to your attention. Commissions of armed individuals have presented themselves at the factory gates on various occasions, intending to enter the factory with their weapons in hand, sometimes for the purpose of requisitioning transport vehicles and for other reasons on other occasions, sometimes successfully, without paying any attention to the requests of the unarmed door-wardens at the gates. This was considered intolerable, and that is why a permanent armed guard was established. This Committee, however, will as soon as possible seek to abolish this post, since it is the first to regret its necessity and accepts full responsibility for the bad impression this has made on those who are not acquainted with the true reasons for its ruling.

The report of the comrades of Sabadell

The comrades of Sabadell have delivered to us a report on that production center, which is summarized in the

report you are reading now. We must note, however, one striking aspect of that report, and concerning which we are pleased to inform the Assembly, and this is that the work in that factory is being carried on perfectly normally, having registered, after confiscation, a decrease in the production cost of the goods, at the same time that we are also informed that the 124 workers, our comrades of Sabadell, identify wholly with the workers of Sans.

The need for further improvements and additional projects

We have received requests for further improvements and additional projects that are thought to be necessary. This Committee shares the good intentions that have motivated these requests, but it regrets that it has to announce that it has been unable to carry them out as was its intention, since, first of all, the requisite personnel are occupied with other improvements, and second of all, we cannot ourselves assume sole responsibility for carrying out projects whose costs are beyond our current economic possibilities. We, the workers, who, by being in contact with the consequences, have always had to regret the imperfections and defects of everything that affects the safety and hygiene of the personnel in the factories and

workshops, now that we enjoy full powers to remedy them, are incapable of doing so to the full extent we would like.

This is, however, the situation of all revolutionary periods; but you know, comrades, just how important this question is for making man's life in the factory as pleasant as we desire and we have this goal before our eyes.

How often the Assembly shall meet

This Assembly, as we see it, is convoked at what we could call reasonable intervals. It is true that there was no resolution at the last general meeting concerning the precise date when this Assembly should be held, nor does any current Statute set forth how often the Assembly shall meet. Flyers are currently being circulated concerning this issue; some call for monthly meetings, others quarterly meetings. We believe that, since the last meeting, nothing serious has taken place that would have justified the convocation of a general assembly. There is no doubt that today's agenda contains certain issues of obvious importance, but even without such issues of importance we would have summoned the comrades from their homes, since we consider the time that has passed since the last meeting to be reasonable. It is no less true, however, that in a meeting of militants

and Committees it was suggested or requested that an Assembly should be held soon.

This is the summary of the activities of this Committee that is submitted for the consideration of the Assembly; and we understand that if you find some omission in it, you should attribute it to forgetfulness or carelessness, or to our desire not to make this report endless, and we are here, as at every other moment, ready to provide any clarifications or explanations that may be requested of us.

The Central Committee

3. MISCELLANEOUS INDUSTRIES

Hispano-Suiza—The optical industry, born from the Revolution—The collectivized C.A.M.P.S.A. of Catalonia
HISPANO-SUIZA

The workshops of this important enterprise are working most intensely and with the greatest variety for the supply of the working class militias. The trade union organizations proceeded from the very beginning to confiscate the factory, and the workers have been entirely reorganized under the direction of the institutions created by the proletariat for that purpose, adapting the factory to the needs imposed by the civil

war. Never before has a factory's production been so completely transformed from peacetime to war production. All war production in the factories of the metal industry is subject to the control of the Committee of Militias, which acts through a direct delegate specially appointed for this task. The comrade who performs such a complicated and sensitive function is one of the most outstanding members of the Metal Workers Trade Union (CNT), whose offices are located in Hispano-Suiza. In this factory the direction of the war-related metal production is concentrated.

1,400 workers are employed in what has become a collectivized enterprise. The weekly payroll amounts to approximately 110,000 pesetas.

The internal direction of the factory is under the control of an Enterprise Committee, composed of a representative of each section, and one each for the technical staff, the clerks, engineers, etc.

The following special projects have been undertaken:

Armored trucks.

The manufacture of hand grenades.

Ambulances.

Machine gun tripods.

Belts and rucksacks.

Planning is underway for the manufacture of tanks and artillery.

Among the things that were previously made at Hispano-Suiza, the manufacture of automobiles and airplane engines continues, some of which have been delivered to the airport at Prat and to the Madrid Government.

The spirit of the workers is admirable. All do their best to complete these projects, which are veritable front line outposts in the war against fascism. In the first seven days 15 trucks were armored with double layers of steel plate and cork padding, which is a true "record". All these trucks have already been sent to the front in Aragon.

The production of hand grenades amounts to 500 per day, which, completely finished, are delivered for shipment. We need only add that they are well made and powerful.

At the present time it is not possible to compare current production figures with those of the past, due to the fact that the production process has been transformed and the complex situation created by the civil war renders all

such calculations idle. We present below, however, an account of the progress of this factory, which will make its financial situation all the more interesting, since it is one of the most genuine expressions of the capabilities of the proletariat and of the new form of organization, which is born already concealing the seed of promise for the future.

THE OPTICAL INDUSTRY IS BORN FROM THE REVOLUTION

It seems impossible, but it is true. Prior to July 19, there was no optical industry in Spain, if by that term you understand one of the accepted meanings of the term, according to which industry is the sum and whole of the industries of one single industry or of various kinds of industries of a country or a region or part of a region.

The domestic bourgeoisie should have been capable of carrying out the work needed to raise the Spanish optical industry to the level of that of the other countries in which the faltering capitalist regime still prevails. This was not the case, however. Prior to July 19 the optical glass sector was distributed among sixty-five workshops, with the same number of owners, in which the very idea of consolidation had never even arisen.

Life therefore painfully evolved in this imitation of an industry, dominated by imported products. Nothing or

almost nothing was manufactured in Spain, and only the grinding and polishing was done here, a simple enough activity if you take into account the numerous steps involved in the manufacture of optical glass.

Durruti's binoculars

Everyone is familiar with them. A photograph has made the rounds of the world of the proletariat and made them famous. Those binoculars that hang from the noble breast of our great Durruti were his most distinctive emblem. The glorious fighter, who still lives in our hearts, did not need to flaunt stars, epaulets or medals to convince himself and his subordinates that he was not only a leader, but one of the strongest pillars of the Revolution. His only distinguishing hallmark, the one that he was most fond of, were those binoculars hanging around his neck that were captured by the photographer and which, covering his generous and noble heart, extended the radius of his vision to the infinite.

These binoculars, together with more or less all of the optical equipment provided to the entire Durruti Column when it formed and left for the front, in the first days of the movement, were the products of the efforts of all the workers of the optical industry of Barcelona, who, taking over the most important workshops of the profession,

worked tirelessly day and night to attend to the needs of their brothers who were marching to the front.

The first accords—Planting in familiar soil

When the struggle in the streets of Barcelona came to an end, a struggle in which all the workers of the industry took an active part, the latter met for the purpose of making some decisions about their industry. One of their first resolutions was to do everything necessary to carry out the collectivization of the industry and, as collectivization proceeded, to establish in each workshop a Control Committee that would prevent the employers from absconding with funds and goods.

Immediately thereafter a study was undertaken to determine how to reduce the expenses of the industry that was being born at that moment, and the standard family wage was established, in the hope that the Organization would issue general directives to that effect.

Today, the women who work in the optical glass workshops make the same salary as the men; that is, there are no separate categories or pay scales based on gender. Everyone earns the same amount. At the age of twenty-four the workers earn the four hundred pesetas per month that was established in the accord; but if,

before reaching this age—at the age of eighteen, for example—they get married, they automatically become eligible to receive the four hundred pesetas, plus fifty pesetas for each dependent person who relies on their incomes. These dependents include their parents and anyone who lives under the worker's roof, even if they are not members of his family.

The consolidated factory—The creation of the industry

Despite the obvious increase in the cost of living after the beginning of the movement, the comrades of the collectivized Optical section, affiliated with the Trade Union of the Glass Industry, did not increase the salaries that they chose to pay themselves at the beginning of the movement. All their efforts and all their desires converged on one idea: collectivization and with it the creation of a factory that embraces all the specialties of the industry.

The goals of the workers were achieved. The factory is in operation and the industry that did not exist before has been born there.

The study and the perseverance of the workers in this factory have resulted in the fabrication of scientific lenses and quality color crystal lenses that are as good as those produced in other countries, and among the most

important sectors of the industry is the celluloid production sector, where every variety of film is produced; stamped aluminum cases; containers made of celluloid, leather and cardboard; assembly lines for the production of metal shielding and protective goggles for automobile drivers, aviators, and welders and other occupations.

As a complement to all these sectors, there is a mechanical sector that supplies the others with all their equipment and fabricates the small machines for independent optical firms.

A single warehouse for optical instruments

Just as the industry has organized itself by accumulating in one place all the equipment of the various small workshops, always inspired by collectivization and determined in their desire to reduce costs, the workers have concentrated all the warehouses into one warehouse. From this new warehouse the industry supplies all the retail outlets in Barcelona as well as the export trade.

There are sections for special orders, such as those for lenses, frames, film and cases.

In both the factory and the warehouse, the needs of modern life and the comforts that the workers deserve

have been taken into account, and showers and all the other fixtures have been installed that are necessary for this purpose. Finally, an almost complete concentration has been achieved in the economy with regard to the optical glass industry, and we say “almost” because there is still a small fraction of unabsorbed workshops, which will eventually recognize the importance of the achievements of the workers.

The creation of a school of optics

The Optical Glass Sector is incubating many projects. Thanks to the hard work it has devoted to planning, very soon this Sector will be prepared to supply to the Council of War as many scientific instruments as it needs, besides binoculars, such as goniometers, goggles, rangefinders and, in short, everything required by war. Currently, despite the fact that the equipment for the construction of such instruments has not yet been adapted to the new system, all the damaged equipment that has been sent back from the front is being repaired.

But the most important project is that of the creation of the Technical School for the Industry. The intricate specialties of this industry do not allow for the easy training of operatives. The School will train workers by giving them hands-on experience in all manual and scientific aspects of the trade. This systematic approach

is the product of the constructive spirit that animates the workers of the Optical Industry who are members of the CNT.

Foreign materials are no longer imported

The overall impression one gets from the work carried out by the comrades of the Optical Glass industry is that they have created an industry where none existed before, and which can today offer for the consideration of their brothers the fact that they have achieved total independence of foreign supplies in this industry.

Previously, forty or fifty million pesetas in optical commodities were imported, and today this contribution to the capitalist enemies outside of Spain has been abolished and something even more important has also been abolished: the fifty and sometimes even sixty percent commission made on the sales price that previously went into the pockets of some unscrupulous capitalists who recommended certain products.

This is the extreme to which bourgeois immorality has come. These imports were especially intolerable. It reached the point where small industrialists, although all of them were entirely bourgeois, felt ashamed of these imports and attempted to carry out the cutting and polishing operations on a larger scale; but their own bourgeois colleagues suppressed them, utilizing every

trick in the book; including the imposition of wholesale prices, which, once they saw that it was impossible for them to function under these circumstances, satisfied their desire for wealth by smuggling large quantities of lenses as contraband. Due to this criminal procedure, the lenses that arrived in Spain were much cheaper than any that could be produced here.

And this is, in conclusion, the work of a few determined men whose organization was weak before July 19 and who can today present themselves as a model of discipline and effort for the achievement of the ends sought by the collective.

THE COLLECTIVIZED “CAMPSA DE CATALUÑA”

This oil company, which up until now constituted a state monopoly, directed by an administrative council in which the government was directly represented by one delegate and four or five advisors, has been reorganized as a collectivized enterprise, run by the workers.

Of the previous council of bankers not one remains.

The personnel, meeting in a general assembly after the enterprise was confiscated, elected a Central Managerial Committee, composed of six comrades. This Committee operates with the advice and consultation of the Section

Committees and assumes the responsibility for enterprise operations on behalf of the workers.

The Section Committees are each composed of two comrades, who share responsibility for the following tasks:

Shipping Section: loading, unloading and supply of ships.

Filling Section: fueling trucks, filling barrels and tanks.

Workshop Section: general repair of gas pumps and other operating equipment.

Supply Section: control and distribution of material.

Mobile Section: mobile brigade.

Technical and Administrative Section.

The Regional Trade Union of Oil Workers simultaneously confiscated the refineries in Barcelona, Badalona, Manresa and Vich. In all of these refineries Committees of Administration have been formed, which are responsible to the Barcelona Committee and which operate in a similar way.

The Barcelona refinery employs 180 men. Of the previous technical staff, the director has been excluded.

All the other services work for the collectivized enterprise.

Working hours and wages

A six-hour working day has been established, with two shifts.

Wages have been increased as follows:

Skilled workers, 17.50; master workers, 18; assistants, 15.50. The previous pay scales were: 11.50, 12.65 14.95, 16.10 and 17.25.

Women's wages were increased by six pesetas to 11.50.

These wages are established based on experience and are thus subject to modification.

With regard to shipments, permanent relations have been established with Madrid, where the Administrative Council of CAMPSA is located, for the purpose of coordinating this activity.

Motor fuel has been declared a strategic war material, and with regard to this product the Committee of Militias exercises control over CAMPSA.

Motor fuel supplies

As of August 3, motor fuel supplies, measured in Liters, were recorded as follows:

Automobile Gasoline 28,343,846
Binary Gasoline 1,987,000
Ternary Gasoline 43,777
Diesel 2,954,000
Military Aviation Gasoline 88,386
Aviation Gasoline 75/77 427,291
Aviation Benzene 10,000
Automobile Benzene 7,000
Lubricating Oils 4,108,234
No. 1 Fuel Oil 300,000
No. 2 Fuel Oil 15,083,285
Alcohol 760,037

(Comparative data is lacking for average rates of consumption before and immediately following the July 19 and for the present.)

4. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FOOD SUPPLY

“THE DANCE COMES FROM THE BELLY”

This refrain, which the gaunt farmers of Castile pass on from father to son, perhaps from the need to concentrate in one sentence the harsh experience of their days from sunrise to sunset, with little bread and hard work, is the one that is most applicable to the dramatic situation of Spain today. The bodies of Moors

found in the vicinity of Madrid, bearing all the signs of starvation; the declarations of Hedilla, the leader of the Phalange, in which he expresses his sympathy for his fascists who march into battle with hardly anything to eat; and the “one meal days” imposed by Quepo de Llano on the impoverished people of Seville are perhaps—besides, of course, being reprehensible for other powerful reasons—the best evidence of the strategic failures of the scheming generals. The pronounced obsession of the rebel radio broadcasts, which constantly speak of our lack of food and how plentiful food is among the rebels, is nothing but a reflection of the nagging fear of malnutrition; the same concern expressed by the farmers of Castile, that is betrayed by the transmission from generation to generation of the refrain summarized by these lines.

For all these reasons the current importance of the Food Supply Trade Union of Barcelona will be obvious, in whose hands the organization of this sector is placed, which is the basis of our activity.

The comrade secretary, a man completely familiar with all the aspects of the problem, has placed himself at our disposal in order to provide us with the data presented below.

THE VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE TRADE UNION—THE BASIC FOOD INDUSTRIES

“There are approximately thirty Sections of the Food Supply Trade Union,” the secretary tells us. “Strictly speaking, not all of these Sections are Food Supply Sections, since, for instance, the Trade Union of Domestic Servants also belongs to our organization. We are not producers, but rather the people who are responsible for adapting the raw material for the needs of the collectivity.”

“What are the basic industries of the Trade Union?”

“Flour and bakeries, sugar, meat and dairy, wines and liquors, poultry, eggs and game, and cafes and restaurants.”

THE BATTLE FOR WHEAT WAS FORESEEN BY THE CNT

“Five months ago we saw that we had to create a considerable ‘stockpile’ of wheat in Barcelona. For the main problem, as we understood quite well, is not the problem of bread: it is the problem of wheat.”

“It is simply the fact that, besides the war, which presupposes a lack of bread, there is also the problem of the lack of wheat by-products. The by-products and the wastes of wheat production are indispensable for many

things, among others the feeding of livestock. This is why it is not flour that we have to buy from foreign suppliers, but wheat. When the time came we notified the organizations, the Supply Council and even the comrades at the front that, because our forces did not control the wheat producing regions—Extremadura and Castile—we predicted a shortage of wheat.”

“What was your proposal?”

“Importing wheat. It was the only solution, because there is not enough Aragonese and Catalanian wheat for our consumption needs.”

“And what response did you receive?”

“They alleged that there was no way that they could authorize the gold expenditure required, so the ‘stockpile’ we sought to create was never created.”

“Did you carry out a serious study of the problem?”

“As early as July we demonstrated that there was only enough wheat to last three months. Afterwards, on August 29, we completed a detailed report and submitted it to the Supply Council. This report stated—and documented this claim—that there was only a fifteen-day supply of wheat and flour in Barcelona. This will appear to be a lie to those who are unacquainted

with the abilities of our workers; this report, however, a model of its kind and one that could have served, if it had been taken seriously into consideration, to avoid the serious danger that threatened us, was produced by workers from the loading docks. No one has more accurate knowledge of the time that a 'stockpile' can last in the various warehouses."

"One only requires, however, just the slightest knowledge of the problem to understand that the secret lies not just in imports, but in overcoming certain kinds of resistance."

"Of course, there is no other solution besides imports; but if all the wheat-producing regions set aside their mercantile spirit, the need to resort to imports would cause the least possible amount of damage."

EDIBLE OILS, THE SECRET OF CERTAIN FASCIST MILITARY UNITS—THE PRICES OFFERED BY THE REBELS TO SOME FARMERS IN ANDALUSIA

The CNT has also addressed another problem of major importance in the food industry: the problem of edible oils.

"From our end, that is, with regard to the refining, bottling and all those other operations that have to be

conducted in order to prepare the oil for its export and consumption, the problem has been resolved,” we are told. “The comrades of the CNT do not take any holidays nor do they work shorter hours when it is a matter of serving the people. But the problem is not on our end: the problem is in the countryside.”

“How much oil was consumed in Barcelona prior to July 19?”

“One million six hundred thousand kilograms per month.”

“And now?”

“Two million four hundred thousand kilograms. We therefore have an increase of eight hundred thousand kilograms per month in consumption—maybe even more, because the figure had increased since these statistics were compiled—and we will have to deal with this.”

“To what factor do you attribute this rise in the consumption figures?”

“There is no doubt that the wage increases for the workers, implemented during the first weeks of the movement, led to an increase in buying power for the people of Barcelona. We should not be surprised that oil,

a product that is basic for life, should be purchased in larger quantities than before.”

“But Spain’s oil production is sufficient to cover this increase. Or else maybe the surplus that was previously devoted to export....”

“That is the problem. Spain is the number one exporter of olive oil in the world, and one of the top exporting regions in Spain is Catalonia. Thus we witness the picturesque case where our oils are being sent to Italy, France and Portugal, where they are bottled and shipped to America. This ‘affair’ was so scandalous that ever since the Dictatorship there has been a trend to attempt to certify the legitimacy of Spanish oil.”

“What remedy do you propose?”

“Simply, control the export trade. We have drafted a plan to regulate exports, since this cannot be done in a piecemeal and uncoordinated manner, because this would damage the economy in general. Control over oil is liquid gold; this is so much the case that the economic basis of the operations of the rebel military in Andalusia lies in the conquest of the olive crop.”

“Is the harvest a big one this year?”

“It is the biggest in many years, and it constitutes the secret of the rebel attacks in many Andalusian regions. One needs only a little acquaintance with this topic to understand the reason why the radio stations in the service of the traitorous generals are constantly broadcasting the news that they are paying 23.50 pesetas for oil, which is more than we are paying. The purpose of these offers is to encourage the peasants not to sell us oil. The peasants take the bait of a higher offer, they do not sell us their product, and then the mercenary troops come, conquer the region, seize the oil and shoot the peasants. The political objective is Madrid; but now they are attacking Madrid via Andalusia because this year’s crop is three times the size of the previous few years.”

“They can take our oil producing regions, but they will never be able to take advantage of the oil they find there. In Montoro and Bujalance there are likely harvests on the order of 550,000 and 1,100,000 bushels, respectively; but this will do them no good because the rebels do not have the labor power to harvest the olives.”

MILK CONSUMPTION HAS INCREASED AND ITS PRODUCTION HAS DECREASED

One of the Sections, in our opinion, which is of the utmost importance, is the milk Section. The distribution of this product has presented since the beginning of the war irregularities whose causes must be publicly exposed. It was concerning this topic that we now directed our questions to the comrades of the Trade Union Committee.

“The milk industry,” the comrade secretary informed us, “includes three Sections: cattlemen, dairymen and retailers. We collect the milk from the producer and transport it to Barcelona in specialized trucks.”

“Does Barcelona still receive the same amount of milk as before?”

“It receives sixty thousand liters less each day than before.”

“And the consumer demand?”

“It has considerably increased. The needs of the war, first, and then the wounded, the hospitalized, the refugees, the foreigners....”

“And to what factor do you attribute the decrease in production?”

“Besides the natural disturbances caused by the war, to the fact that in Puigcerdá and Seo d’Urgell a great quantity of condensed milk has been processed since the beginning of the conflict for shipment to the front.”

“And do you not see any solution for this shortage of the product in the capital?”

“Not a total solution, but I think that we will at least succeed in ameliorating the inconveniences in obtaining it. The entire industrial end of milk production has been collectivized. This is already a great advantage, because, by taking into our hands the pasteurization process, bottling and the derivative industries—butter, cheese, cream, etc.—we can successfully bring about a situation that approaches a normal condition with regard to distribution.”

“Do you have a plan in the works to achieve this objective?”

“Yes and it will soon be put into practice. The industry will be normalized and the ‘queues’ will disappear.”

SUGAR BY-PRODUCTS—“SUPERFLUOUS INDUSTRIES”

Another important Section in the Food Supply Trade Union is the Sugar Section.

This is one of the most important industries; but those that are derived from it are enumerated among those that are called “superfluous”. Pastries, sweets, bon-bons, caramels and everything that is not of pressing need for life, is now viewed with a certain suspicion, and this is natural; so natural that there is now a serious proposal to gradually abolish all these products.

“Can they not be abolished all at once and within a brief period of time?”

“This can be done; but it presents a serious problem: massive unemployment of all the workers who work in these industries. What do we do with them? They are men who also have the right to live. It is more sensible to allow other industries to absorb them, and by thus bringing about a situation where labor power is lacking for the production of superfluous goods, it is logical to think that the superfluous will die on its own, without the need to resort to murder. Nor can we forget that not all the sugar-related industries are slated for suppression. Cookies and chocolates, for example, are relatively useful

and possess the advantage of serving as means of exchange for other products from other regions.”

“Do we have many sugar refineries?”

“There are few in the zones we occupy. There is one in Monzón and another in Puebla de Híjar, in which sugar is extracted from beets. In Barcelona we have one refinery, but it was shut down, because for the bourgeoisie it was more useful to produce sugar outside of the capital. We reopened this refinery on July 19.”

“Has sugar consumption risen since then?”

“To the same degree as other products, and this increasing demand is becoming problematic due to the inability of the refineries of Aragon to meet the needs of Catalonia and the rest of Spain.”

“Has sugar not been imported?”

“Recently, we received three hundred tons from Russia, and we are currently buying sugar from France; but these French purchases have something outrageous about them, because we are paying a price higher than the market price for other buyers. In a word, there is a special price for Spain. They know how much we need sugar and take advantage of this to carry out some ordinary exploitation on the commercial terrain.”

“And is this kind of relation with the French sugar producers unavoidable?”

“Unavoidable. The land conquered by our militias in Aragon contains beets in abundance; but nothing can do away with our need for exports, and with it the abuses of those who sell us sugar. Currently, the sugar refinery at Monzón is operating twenty-four hours a day, in three eight-hour shifts; but all this hard work cannot meet the increasing demand. We have to import!”

HOW THE FOOD SUPPLY TRADE UNION SUPPLIES BARCELONA WITH MEAT

When we address the topic of the meat industry, the first thing we learn is that 99% of the workers in this industry belong to the CNT. This makes the trade union’s work so much easier; the workers of our organization know how to fulfill the mission imposed upon them, and do not know the meaning of the word “rest” when it is a question of working for the people.

“With respect to meat,” we were told, “Barcelona relied particularly on Galicia, Extremadura and La Mancha. After the fall of the first two regions to the fascists, we have seen a precipitous decline in the number of livestock entering Barcelona. Therefore, only one producer’s market remains, La Mancha; but the herds of

this region have been so reduced that there is only one recourse: importing meat.”

“And has a source been found?”

“Yes, our import program is very successful. We had to resort to obtaining frozen meat from Brazil, Buenos Aires and Uruguay. These meats, of course, are of an unsurpassable quality. Only one type of meat is certified for export; but it can be stated that it is carefully selected.”

“Can the food problem be solved with meat?”

“Certainly; but we must not forget the circumstances we are facing.”

“Will the ‘queues’ come to an end?”

“For meat, there should never be any ‘queues’. In Barcelona we saw ‘queues’ form five or six days after the beginning of the July movement, that is, when the ‘stockpiles’ of meat were still full and there was no reason to fear a shortage. The curious and perfectly well documented situation then prevailed in which, while the terrified residents were forming ‘queues’ and gave the impression that there was a shortage, the bullrings of Barcelona sacrificed more cattle than during the same

season the previous year, and this increase in production can be maintained for many more months.”

THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE FOOD SUPPLY TRADE UNION FOR THE WAR EFFORT

As soon as the first columns left for the Aragon front, the Food Supply Trade Union organized teams of butchers and slaughterhouse workers to oversee the construction of abattoirs near the front. Three slaughterhouses were built in Bujaraloz, Sástago and Barbastro. We also have also formed teams of bakers and cooks and, in cooperation with the quartermaster's corps, we are attempting to manage the regular supply and rationing of all the forces at the front. Our contribution not only assures the complete provisioning of the militias, but also helps the economy. Previously it was the case that a militiaman had to have his own sheep. Since he was not acquainted with all the operations he needed to master in order to assure his complete provisioning, he failed to take advantage of all the by-products. Today this is prevented from happening by the teams sent to the front.

THE COLLECTIVIZED INDUSTRIES—ECONOMIC STRUCTURE—THE FOOD SUPPLY TRADE UNION ALSO HAS ITS HEROES

“Have you collectivized some of the industries?”

“Some wine and liquor industries. We are attempting to market all beer and vermouth products under a single label. We have also collectivized the factories that produce carbonated beverages—sodas, seltzer, etc. All of this represents a major step forward with respect to quality and economy in the costs of production.”

“In what direction do you think the Trade Union should go?”

“From the point of view of the new economic structure that inspires our organization, with a real sense of anarchosyndicalism. We shall centralize its economy, coordinate the accounting of all the enterprises, unify its funds and its labels, improve on the quality of its products and reduce the sales prices. In this work that is currently underway—and at the present time for the provisioning of our city—we have issued an appeal to the Aragon collectives. Having established direct contact with them, we have abolished the middlemen.”

“Your direct contribution to the fight against the military traitors has been favorably commented upon.”

“We would succumb to the fault of false modesty if we were to conceal this. On July 19, our comrades raised barricades, dug trenches, and delivered food to the outer neighborhoods at extreme risk to their lives.... Our comrade Benito Pasanau has been immortalized by his heroism—a street in Clot has been named after him—and so has our former president José Alcodorí, who died fighting on the Aragon front. On the roof of the ‘Damm’ Brewery the workers installed a machine gun. To summarize, the supply of the city was complete and normal during those days. Even while gunfire was heard in the streets, all the workers of the food industry were doing their duty. It was the spirit of the CNT that began to be manifested in that glorious dawn of July 19.”

5. PUBLIC SERVICES

Power and light—The transformation of the Barcelona Water Corporation into the Workers Water Supply Trade Union

POWER AND LIGHT

**THE ROLE OF THE TRADE UNIONS IN THE WORKERS
DIRECTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE
COLLECTIVIZED INDUSTRIES**

The Section Committee

Generally, during the pre-revolutionary period, we called it the Technical Commission; today, so that it is not confused with the Committee composed of technicians, in the new trade union structure we call it the Section Commission. Having cleared up that point, we shall also mention that since it is an industry composed of various specialized jobs, the latter are organized into fifteen-member units that elect from within their ranks three delegates to the Section Commission mentioned above; in those cases where the number of workers in a specialized job category is less than fifteen, they may join the nearest group that is most closely related technically to their specialty, or they may officially form their own separate group, always taking into account the fact that wherever the job involves shift work, the corresponding sub-delegates will be named to temporarily replace the original delegates who have to work, to whom they will provide a report concerning the Committee's latest deliberations. Naturally, there is a tendency for those who are designated as delegates to keep abreast of developments in their section in order to contribute to the progress of the latter, as well as to that of the norms of the trade union.

These delegates serve for a maximum term of six months.

Excerpts from a Section constitution

1. Assume responsibility for maintaining the output of the section at pre-revolutionary levels, based on comparative evaluation of production levels achieved by the same number of individuals and working hours.
2. With the agreement of the section, it will be proposed that the Plant and Building Committee should be consulted with regard to whether to increase or decrease production, since this Committee is responsible for the support of workers who have been idled.
3. When a vacant position involving a specialized job must be filled, with the agreement of the Section it is proposed to refer the choice of comrades to the Plant and Building Committee.
4. Since it is also its responsibility to ensure compliance with the internal work rules, it will strive to obtain the cooperation of the workers in coming to work on time, coming to work in a presentable condition, etc.; when, however, a worker engages in systematic efforts to undermine these rules to the detriment of production, or disrupting, with his moral or social defects, the harmony that should prevail in every job, with the agreement of the Section, it is proposed to recommend the dismissal of

the worker to the Plant and Building Committee.

5. When a comrade worker has good reasons for absenting himself from his position, the Section delegate will inform his representative on the Plant and Building Committee.

6. It is the essential obligation of this Commission to oversee the safety of its comrades during the working week, and for this reason it will take such measures as are within its capacities, in order to prevent all kinds of accidents, and will demand, by means of a proposal to the Plant and Building Committee, health facilities, such as a emergency first aid cabinets and personnel trained to use them in those cases where these first aid facilities are located in the work areas.

7. As for hygiene, it must take steps in its Section, in every workplace, to submit requests for the installation of toilet facilities and when the needs of the job in question require it, showers as well, requests that will be transmitted to the Plant and Building Committee.

8. It will try to get all the individuals of its section to pay their union dues every week.

9. The Section will have regular meetings, and will report to the Plant and Building Committee regarding the initiatives suggested at these meetings, and the projects it has carried out for the defense of the worker on the job, so that work will be easier and more pleasant, and at

the same time in order to foster his overall wellbeing.

10. When the Commission cannot resolve the problems it faces by means of its own resources, it will request the aid of the Plant and Building Committee.

11. At the end of each working day it will communicate to its representative on the Plant and Building Committee that its section has produced the requisite output in relation to the hours worked and the number of employees or, if this is not the case, it will explain the difficulties it encountered, as well as the variations in output caused by accidents or illness.

12. These statutes of the Section Committee and its delegates will be posted in the most visible location in the Section.

The Plant and Building Committee

The essential mission of this Committee is to assure harmony between the main types of work carried out in the Plant. In other words, it must oversee the regular functioning of the various components of the complex and delicate mechanism of the industry as a whole: manual, administrative and technical work.

These three forms of activity must be understood perfectly, or else the whole industry will suffer. The Committee must therefore be composed of competent workers from each of these categories. If necessary,

delegates from the two trade union organizations will be added to the Committee. The comrades will be elected during the course of a meeting of the delegates of the different section committees. The election results will be submitted to the approval of the workers meeting in a General Assembly. These positions will have a maximum term of one year, with the right to be re-elected.

The mission of the comrade representing the manual workers

1. It is his mission to intervene, whenever he is capable of doing so, within the building or plant, in order to undertake whatever measures are necessary to resolve problems that affect two or more sections subject to his control (since, if these problems only affect one of the sections, the affected section has complete autonomy to resolve them by itself), and wherever the necessary means to do so are lacking, he is to request them from the Enterprise Committee.
2. He will transmit to the Enterprise Committee all those suggestions made by his sections with regard to filling vacancies for specialized jobs, as well as with regard to the expansion or the reduction of the workforce or measures intended to address infractions of work rules.
3. He will transmit all the communications from the Councils of Industry to his sections.

4. As long as factors outside the control of the worker justify the latter's absence from his post, he will approve all permits granted by the Section Committee for absence from work.

5. On a daily and weekly basis, he will obtain from the Section Committees under his jurisdiction detailed reports on the status of operations during the week, with the quota obtained or the reasons that prevented this goal from being realized.

6. Based on the examination of the reports mentioned above, he will prepare a written summary, specifying what he objects to or challenges in these reports.

7. He will hold a weekly meeting of his respective Section Committees, at which each Section Committee will describe the initiatives it has taken for the purpose of improving the industry and the situation of the worker, as well as the trade union dimension of the organization, which he will then refer to the Enterprise Council.

8. His fulfillment of these duties, as a member of the Plant and Building Committee, does not exempt him from work except when absolutely necessary and when it can be fully justified.

The mission of the comrade administrator

In addition to the duties imposed upon the representative of the manual workers, the

responsibilities of the representative of the administrative workers will also include: daily review and approval, involving the use of a stamp of certification, of the accredited documents of every kind of operation as set forth below:

Receipt and shipment of building or manufacturing materials, orders and supplies requested to meet the needs of the different sections, overall production and a breakdown of its current status according to its various aspects, raw materials in storage for the normal operation of the industry, payments and receipts, employees to hire and pay, current payroll, correspondence received and to be dispatched, increases or decreases in production due to loss or addition of personnel, as well as due to accidents or illness, etc.; every document will be subject to his review, since he will bear full responsibility for any irregularities with regard to these matters.

The mission of the technical comrade

Besides the responsibilities attributed to the representative of the manual workers, it is the duty of the comrade representing the technical workers to monitor the projects undertaken by his section and to determine whether they are directed towards the achievement of improvements of the equipment that

would have a tendency to increase output and reduce human effort at the same time, for the benefit of the collectivity. He is also responsible for reviewing planning, the status of supply chains, and the provision of graphics and statistics depicting comparative figures for production, finished products, the analysis of these products, etc.

In addition to the regular responsibilities of these workers, which they are to carry out without any interference from their counterparts in the other sections, they will hold meetings among themselves for the purpose of an exchange of views concerning the various activities pursued within the building or the factory, and if these three aspects of the factor of production work together in unison in a regular and harmonic fashion, their overall perspective will be the constant improvement of the production process.

The Enterprise Council

If the experience of these three months of constant battle for the revolution in its constructive aspect, within the collectivized industries, has taught us that the workers who compose the Plant and Building Committee must possess indisputable abilities, it suffices to say that the selection of the comrades who are to form the Enterprise Council is an extremely delicate issue that

must be carefully scrutinized. In order to be capable of carrying out the great responsibility that the direction of an industrial enterprise entails, special knowledge of all kinds relating to commercial and industrial techniques is required, in addition to a flair for organization, qualities that cannot be improvised or compensated for by either good intentions or mere devotion and hard work. It requires, like any large business, subordination to goals established in advance, goals that will not be achieved if the rules that must be applied are not followed. For this reason, aware of the responsibility that we take upon ourselves, we shall not overlook the factors of “social reliability and competence”. Our work can only be crowned with success, despite the difficulties that a revolution like ours must face, and we accept as the most precious of prizes the fact that we have participated in the forging of a new Humanity.

We all contribute to the consolidation of our victory by participating in the elections for organizational offices, suggesting structural changes, and taking part in the tasks of direction and execution in their trade union and industrial dimensions. The members of the Building and Plant Committee who have a record of competence and morality, indispensable norms for their election, will be convoked in accordance with the representative rule of

one delegate per organization and per zone. These comrades will designate ten comrades at a regional plenum, five per organization, who will constitute the Enterprise Committee, and their election will be subject to ratification by the workers in their respective organizations. The position of delegate to the Enterprise Council will have a term of two years, subject to confirmation twice a year, and the persons who hold this position are eligible for reelection.

The mission of this Enterprise Council, which, as we shall never tire of repeating, is such a delicate one, is to organize in their various aspects the whole range of activities that take place within an industry, subdividing them into departments and specialties, such as: Production, Administration, Technical Services, Commercial Services, etc. The performance of the industry depends upon the dynamism and vitality that are instilled in these functions.

The Enterprise Council will be in permanent contact with the Building and Plant Committee in order to resolve and to harmonize those problems addressed by the latter to the Enterprise Council, and with the General Council of Industry, to submit to the latter any issue that surpasses its own jurisdiction and falls partly or completely within the purview of the General Council.

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF WATER, GAS AND ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRIES

This General Council of Industries is the unity of the Enterprise Councils and its members must therefore possess a sum of superior qualities that correspond to those of the Enterprise Councils, which is why its composition of eight comrades, four from each trade union organization, will be determined at the same Plenum and by the same means as that of the Enterprise Council.

These positions shall have a term of two years, subject to confirmation twice a year, and those persons who hold these positions are eligible for reelection.

The mission of the General Council of Industries, in close collaboration with the Enterprise Councils, is to monitor at all times and in all its aspects the real situation of the industry, always for the purpose of directing its activities towards the attainment of the closest interpenetration of the unified industries and to achieve the most optimal results.

Its task is especially significant in relation to the varying fortunes of marketing, both domestically and in foreign countries; the determination of the rate of production; the need to create, abolish or modify part of the

industry; studies of tariffs and trade agreements; attempts to assure that materials for industrial consumption are always “domestic”, taking advantage of every opportunity; acquisition of equipment; prepare updates on the current situation of the industries with regard to banking, the stock exchange, loans, etc.; preparing statistics for consumption, utilization of pricing methods intended to prevent competition among the enterprises, to study the progress of similar industries within our country and in other countries, increase production when the necessities of the revolution require it; periodically draft a balance sheet depicting the benefits, both moral and material, that are gained with “unification”, etc., collaborating very closely with the Enterprise Councils in order to facilitate their work.

The comrades chosen to occupy these positions, will comply with the statutes of the organization, and will be responsible to report to the latter on a regular basis.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BARCELONA WATER COMPANY INTO THE WATER SUPPLY WORKERS TRADE UNION

Thursday, January 14, 1937

The power of a trio of national financiers

The “Compañía General de Aguas de Barcelona” and the “Empresa concesionaria de aguas subterráneas del río Llobregat” together controlled, in the times before the Revolution, the “Compañía Española de Gas Lebón”—of which they were majority stockholders—the Málaga Lighting Company, the Murcia Electric Company, and the gas companies of Valencia, Santander, San Sebastián, San Fernando, Cádiz, Chiclana, Puerto de Santa María and Granada.

Almost all the capital of these enterprises belonged to the trio of financiers, Garí-Cambó-Ventosa. According to the balance sheets drafted by the workers of these companies when they confiscated them, the capital that the workers had to administer amounted to 271,382,296.02 pesetas, with an annual profit of 11,705,929.26 pesetas. This favorable balance allows for the implementation of numerous projects by the Workers Trade Union of the Water Supply for the benefit of the people of Barcelona.

Confiscation—The guarantee of good service

After the first few days of the battles in the streets of Barcelona, the workers of the Water Company who had defended their dignity with arms in hand convoked a meeting of the Employees Association of the company, its trade union body. One of the first resolutions adopted at the meeting was to change the name of the Employees Association to the Workers Trade Union, and immediately thereafter the assembly voted, by an overwhelming majority, in favor of a proposal that all the members of the Workers Trade Union should join the CNT.

With regard to Spanish capital, confiscation did not present major difficulties. The Generalitat of Catalonia approved the workers' actions a few days later. The workers guaranteed the continuity of water service from the very start and undertook measures against any possible acts of sabotage. The workers were so thorough in the fulfillment of this pledge that there has not even been one interruption in this important service since the workers assumed responsibility for its operation. Reservoirs, tanks and pipelines are constantly guarded by militiamen who guarantee the normal operation of the water industry.

The Confiscation Committee is responsible for the technical-administrative direction of the water industry. In each section there is a technical committee with one delegate elected by each section.

“Has a resolution been passed on the question of wages?”, we asked the president of the Confiscation Committee.

“We are proceeding with the implementation of the basic terms that we presented to the former owners of the enterprise which they did not accept. The main demands were: a thirty-six hour week and a minimum wage of fourteen pesetas, with equal pay for men and women. The next thing we did was to implement a pension plan and sick pay.”

“And is the thirty-six hour week still in force?”

“The needs of the war have forced us to make some changes. Every section is working a longer week; there are cases of comrades who have worked forty-five hours to replace the comrades who have gone to the front.”

“Does the enterprise still have the same administrative personnel as before the Revolution?”

“We dispensed with the management—paid obscene salaries for which there was never any justification—of

the entire head office of the Compañía Lebón and also of some technical personnel. Today, those who are indispensable remain, and are treated exactly the same as the other comrades.”

“And how are the workers treated?”

“Not only have there been no layoffs but, as a direct consequence of the reduction of the working week, we had to hire new comrades. This allowed us to hire the workers who comprised the category of permanent ‘casual’ laborers, one hundred twenty six workers who constituted the former pool of short-term contract workers for the enterprise. These workers—almost all of whom were construction workers by trade—worked for the enterprise before the Revolution as independent contractors, and were paid 10.80 pesetas per day for a five day week, as they did not work on Saturdays. Now they are members of the Trade Union and are paid 14 pesetas a day.”

The improvements obtained by the people of Barcelona as a result of the new organization

The city of Barcelona has obtained important improvements due to the new orientation that the workers of the CNT have brought to the former Water Company.

We asked the comrades of the Committee a few questions.

“The water rates,” they told us, “have been standardized. Now the standard charge is 0.40 pesetas. Before, there were zones that paid 0.70, 0.80 and even up to 1.50 pesetas.”

“Another advantage has accrued to renters. Now they do not have to pay for water as long as they do not consume more than the minimum set by the Regulations of the Municipal Health Department. If they use more, they are charged for the excess.”

“We no longer charge the customers based on meter readings; now we utilize the concept of amortization. The first resolution we adopted for this purpose consisted in raising the amount that had to be paid monthly for amortization so that, one year later, this amount will be paid off; but today we are studying ways to reduce the monthly payment and, as a result, extend the period of amortization.”

“Before, approximately one hundred forty million liters of water were used each day in Barcelona; now, about one hundred fifty million liters are used. But we have enough pumps, sources of fresh water and other means to double this quantity.”

“The Health Department’s decree will be observed, according to which every resident must use at least two hundred fifty liters of water a day. The resident who has a washing machine will use one hundred extra and those who have bathtubs will use another hundred as well. There are recent cases where households use no more than thirty liters a day and this fact is incompatible with public health standards.”

“The decree has not yet been published in the ‘Official Bulletin’. But it is nonetheless advisable to insist on compliance with it and on informing the public that the reforms we are initiating will respond to the new concept that prevails regarding the question of water.”

The consolidation of the water supply services—The problem of Tarrasa and Sabadell is resolved

“One of the problems we were most eager to resolve was that of the consolidation of the water supply services,” said the comrade we were interviewing. “In order to achieve this we made our experience and our technicians available to all of Catalonia.”

“Have your projects made much progress?”

“We hope to see them attain their goals shortly. Just today a resolution of extraordinary importance has been adopted: we are going to extend the municipal water

service to Tarrasa and Sabadell. This first project of the consolidated service will constitute the fulfillment of the goal for which Tarrasa and Sabadell have striven for many years. Their aspirations to be connected to the municipal water service were always used for electoral intrigues. Every rookie deputy promised to grant the wishes of both towns. These wishes would come true only through the intervention of the workers. This is one more proof of the uselessness of politics.”

“And once the services are consolidated, will the people see improvements?”

“Undoubtedly. The rates will be simplified; residential service will be improved; public swimming pools will be built, etc. As of this date we have delivered 102,515.64 pesetas to the militias. We are not conceited about this; our obligation is to help our brothers and vanity must not be the reason why we do our duty; we only present this information for public consideration so that everyone may have the opportunity to compete with us in this respect. The only thing the bourgeois management knew how to do was stuff its bank accounts. Lebón made three million pesetas a year, which was distributed exclusively among its management.

5. THE COLLECTIVIZATION OF THE BARBERSHOPS UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOR

The barbershops before July 19

On every street, on every corner, one right next to another, are the barbershops, and there are no regulations to restrict this abuse. The situation was made worse by the insolvency of many bold entrepreneurs who opened their shops under the onus of installment payments and thought they could live at the expense of the working class barber, who needs a job and who, hounded by necessity, worked under terrible conditions.

The barbershops that offered shaves at 0.30 pesetas without a tip were the answer to the wishes of the parasites accustomed to living off their fellow men. We shall speak of these persons in a separate section.

A shave for 0.15 pesetas and a haircut for 0.25 pesetas

A cheap mirror, a few towels and a bar of soap for every one hundred customers was the entire inventory of these establishments that called themselves “barbershops”. The work of the barber was carried out without any other remuneration besides a commission of fifty percent for his services. As a result, the impoverished customer (no one else would patronize

these establishments) who came in for a shave, left with eczema, etc., and the barber himself, after having worked without pause and without counting the hours, was left with a daily income of *three* pesetas, which is not even enough to buy bread.

We have seen this variety of barbershop emerge, however, right in the middle of the Fifth District, we have seen them on busy downtown streets of the city, Nueva de la Rambla, in the Ramblas itself, Cortes, Aribau, Muntaner, etc. Not featuring shaves for 0.15 pesetas, but for 0.30 pesetas, without a tip. These barbershops have the same payment methods and working conditions as the others: the payment of commissions by percentage and similar sanitary conditions for the customer. This method of payment of his workers was very advantageous for the owner, and, quite recently, we have seen barbershops organized and operating on the same basis charging 0.40 and 0.50 pesetas.

The “better” barbershops

With regard to these barbershops we shall only discuss wages and hours, since the service was perfect.

Forty pesetas and twenty-five centimos for nine hours of work every day, was the weekly wage of the comrade barber who was fortunate enough to have a job. Over

three hundred barbers were unemployed and large numbers of others made no more than twelve pesetas a week, all earned on one Saturday of work.

The strike last May, in which the eight-hour day was won along with a weekly wage of sixty pesetas, plus ten percent of the receipts, allowed the barber to earn a weekly wage of sixty-eight to seventy pesetas.

However, since the cost of these new working conditions and wages was paid for by a rise in the price of the barbershops' services, this gave the employers the excuse, due to the decrease in the number of customers, to cut back on the work week and even reduce it to three days a week.

As a result, the strike that was won in May caused the worker to have only three days of work with a wage of thirty-six pesetas. And then, amidst such poverty and the crisis of our profession, came July 19.

The collectivization of the barbershops

When, last August, the Generalitat decreed the forty-hour week and a fifteen percent increase in wages, the employers were dealt a mortal blow.

A mortal blow, because the decree put an end to so much exploitation and to the pigsties of the barbershops that charged 0.15 and 0.30 pesetas.

The workers resolutely grappled with the problem of the barbershops in order to study the whole affair from a practical point of view and to solve the problem on the basis of an understanding of its cause. After fifteen days of study and discussion, a general assembly resolved to proceed to confiscate the barbershops and organize them by zones. This project was carried out with such determination that, after four weeks, we controlled all the barbershops of the city and its neighborhoods.

Our organization

There were too many barbershops; the economic situation of our industry required the immediate closing of many of them. Nine hundred were closed, with a monthly savings of eight hundred thousand pesetas in rent payments.

Today we have no more than two hundred forty barbershops in all. Nor are they all of the most modern kind, but rather those that are most advantageously located. The building itself presents no problem, since the appurtenances of the barbershops that were closed

were used to replace those of the antiquated or dilapidated establishments.

At the present time all the barbers have jobs; none are unemployed. Better yet, we have provided jobs for some three hundred fifty comrades who are refugees; these comrades have taken the places of those who have gone to fight at the front.

In the two hundred forty barbershops that still exist, work is carried out from eight in the morning to nine at night without interruption. Each barber works for six and a half hours, with two shifts over the thirteen-hour day, the day shift and the evening shift.

We have provided jobs for all barbers and a more complete service for the public. Each barbershop has two delegates, one for the day shift and one for the evening shift, who represent the collective and seek to improve service. They deliver daily reports to our central offices, and on Saturday they collect the weekly wages of the comrades of their barbershops, who are paid that evening.

Our wages

This new structure allowed us to pay all the barbers without exception sixty pesetas a week during the first few weeks of collectivization; now we pay them seventy-

five pesetas a week. We said all of them without exception because there are presently no unemployed workers in our trade union. When we refer to barbershop workers, we include under this common rubric the former owners and widows of owners of barbershops. The former owner is considered as just another comrade and as such he works and enjoys the same pay as the others. The widows of the former owners are also paid seventy-five pesetas for the services they render within our organization.

Our goals

We seek to improve our barbershops and establish laboratories to discover chemical products that will benefit the public. We also seek to improve the situation of our comrades, because up until recently we have not been able to live. Today we have a total of three thousand one hundred members; this figure includes the former owners and widows of former owners who, as we have said, are considered to be comrades.

Collectivization has put into our hands establishments with a total value of some four million five hundred thousand pesetas, which we know we must manage for the good of the collective and for the benefit of a more just and equal society. If the former owners were to seek to re-open their old barbershops, this would prove to be

totally impossible; many of them have nothing left but the walls and others only the name and the fact that their doors are still open to the public, since they are under new management.

This is the information that was provided to us at the offices of the Barbers Trade Union, located at Number 44 Carmen Street, the building that was once the headquarters of the ill-fated Lliga Catalana.

These offices have organized the barbers with great skill and competence; in them, most promising activities are underway in this new revolutionary era, under the aegis of the CNT.

EXCERPT FROM THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY COMRADE
JUAN PAPIOL, OF THE BARBERS TRADE UNION,
BROADCAST LIVE OVER RADIO E.C.N. 1—CNT-FAI

“Our industry had 1,100 establishments; and precisely because of this vast number, all of us were mired in the darkest miseries. One thousand one hundred establishments that represented 1,100 rent payments and so many other expenses such as lighting, which exacted an excessively heavy contribution from this industry. At the same time, we were the victims of all the suppliers of the materials indispensable for our industry, for which we always paid more than a three hundred

percent markup. Naturally, this excessive number of establishments led to fierce competition, which had a repercussion not only to the detriment of the bourgeoisie, but also to that of the working class of this industry which was in no position to make economic demands; for the industry, due to its overdevelopment, did not yield enough economic profit.”

“After earning our meager weekly wage, we were obliged to spend about 100 pesetas on the tools of our trade, and then continue to spend about 1.50 pesetas a month on them, since the suppliers and the brokers, or some other middleman, have us at their mercy. Ours was a completely devalued industry, in which the bourgeoisie itself was completely incapacitated with regard to everything that had to do with the economic order. With regard to things relating to the moral order, its insolvency was unmatched. Therefore, given the form in which our economic and moral order had developed, the only solution was to collectivize all the tools and elements of labor for the equal benefit of those who worked in this industry; it must be pointed out, as well, that there are about a hundred owners, real exploiters, modern slave-drivers, who by means of their unbridled greed extract a profit of three hundred fifty to four hundred pesetas a week.”

“In agreement with the comrades of the National Confederation of Labor, we make the following proposal: reduce the number of barbershops from 1,100 to 200, which would save 100,000 pesetas a month in rent, plus 30,000 pesetas for lighting and a considerable reduction in the amount paid for property taxes. Collectivizing our industry would thus save approximately 150,000 pesetas each month due to the reduction of these costs. These 150,000 pesetas can be used to improve the conditions of the barbershop workers, and can not only resolve their desperate economic situation, but at the same time will provide us with a solution for one of the most important and difficult problems of our time: that of unemployment, which we have definitively and consistently resolved. There are no unemployed workers in our trade union; in the category of the barbershop workers there is not even one single worker idled due to a lack of work.”

“The 235 barbershops that remain employ all the barbers who are working as well as those who, due to a lack of work, are struggling in the grips of the tentacles of deadly poverty. Like every great project, ours, due to its ambitious scope, will inevitably come up against obstacles that naturally arise in such cases.”

“First of all, the organization of a supply system for the delivery of barbers equipment and materials, which is something that cannot be accomplished in twenty-four hours, but which can be improvised in order to buy time to design the perfect administrative system that must regulate our social, economic and moral life. We shall also have to face those who are unwilling, those who due to a lack of consciousness and social education and a lack of economic knowledge, as well as a deficiency of idealist spirit, were reluctant to identify themselves with us in this new system of labor that we have just established. In accordance with our basic principles, with the final goal of the National Confederation of Labor that consists in the suppression of the owning class, we have expropriated, in the most authentic way, the employers of our industry.”

“We have paid absolutely no indemnities; we have only recognized the right of all the owners to work. By incorporating them into the new system of labor, all that remains is the man, whose right to life we acknowledge.”

“The product of labor is divided with absolute equality. There are no categories among us; we all earn the same wages. In the moral order, as well, we all have the same rights and the same duties. This project was carried through by the majority of the workers. Despite some

difficulties, the collective labor is being consolidated, and is highlighted by the most brilliant successes and the most hard-fought victories.”

“In the common labor of production, we have increased the weekly wage by 40 percent. In the moral order, the relations between all the workers have reached such an elevated level that one is capable of conceiving the hope that in such a short period of time the reality of our anarchist ideal has penetrated the hearts of all the workers.”

7. AGRICULTURE

The Resolutions of the Plenary Assembly of the Agricultural Workers of Catalonia—Statutes of the Section of Collective Labor of the Trade Union of Valls—The organizational plan for the agricultural, livestock and industrial wealth of Sollana

RESOLUTIONS OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE
AGRICULTURAL WORKERS OF CATALONIA

The Presentation, which provided a detailed study of the different characteristics that distinguish Catalonian agriculture, as well as a profound analysis of the psychology of the peasants of the region, allows us to summarize the following orientations, in the hope that

they will serve or be capable of serving as a guide for the planning of the path that we must follow and that will lead us to the achievement of total collectivization of the land, a goal that is anchored in the principles of the CNT.

The characteristics of Catalanian minifundism originate in the spirit of independence that is so deeply rooted in our peasants, who, guided by their zeal to break free of wage slavery or the usury implied by sharecropping or leasing, embody this yearning in one idea and one goal: LAND! Their greatest aspiration was to own land.

And just like someone who is love-struck, burdened with passion mixed with ancestral egoism, the peasant engages in a frantic race to win or obtain his goal; he spares no effort, he works day and night, continuously and without rest, along with his entire family; he does not eat enough, he destroys his health and it can be said that he lives worse than his own beasts of burden.

Faced with this level of self-abnegation and sacrifice, we understand that if we were to attempt to carry out the immediate compulsory collectivization of all the land, even the land that has been acquired by these martyrs of hard work and of self-abnegation, we would come up against a series of obstacles that would obstruct the normal progress towards our goal.

The small landowner is so bound to the scrap of land that he has managed to acquire, that it represents to him a fragment of his own life, and we are convinced that he looks with suspicion on all those whom he believes are trying to snatch it from him, even if it was for the purpose of improving his well-being.

And there is a series of reasons that justify his attitude of mistrust, because the peasant has learned from experience that so many people have promised to lighten his burdens but have done nothing but miserably deceive him in order to make a profit at his expense. The politicians have contributed to the formation of this egoistic mentality, one that is more typical of a petty bourgeois than of a proletarian, and to the moral condition of absolute mistrust suffered by the rural worker.

And for all the reasons set forth above, the Commission permits itself to propose to the Plenum, for its approval, the following resolution:

1. As we proceed to carry out the collectivization of the land, in order to prevent the small landowners from harboring any suspicions at all regarding our emancipatory action, and therefore in order to prevent them from becoming enemies, hindrances or saboteurs

of our work, we shall respect in principle the rights of the small landowners, insofar as they cultivate only so much land as they can work themselves, subject to the condition that their cultivation does not obstruct or hinder the due development of the groups engaged in collectivization projects.

We are convinced that what we might be able to achieve by means of compulsion, we shall be able to obtain instead by the example provided by the collectivization of the land, by its transformation of the structure of cultivation, by means of the use of machinery, chemistry and technology, which with less effort will produce greater output and consequently will also give a new life to the worker, one that is more dignified, thus elevating the moral and intellectual condition of the peasants.

2. All the confiscated lands will be controlled and administered by the Trade Union, and as the Trade Union cultivates them collectively, this will have a direct beneficial repercussion on the trade unions and then on all the workers in general.

3. The Trade Union will also exercise control over all the production, as well as over the acquisition of materials, of the small landowners.

4. By means of the permanent contact with the other trade unions that the collectivized nuclei must maintain,

the collectives will seek to match the peasants with available work, so that if one area has too many hands, they can be sent to work where land is abundant but hands are scarce, thereby putting into practice the principle of equality among the workers.

5. The Trade Unions of each town will seek to uphold and impose in their respective jurisdictions, seeking likewise to make them accepted by the other peasants of the town, the libertarian norms that serve as guides for the Trade Unions of the CNT, and will for this purpose submit to the following stipulations:

A) If there is a possibility of carrying out collectivization in a town, without any risk of encountering the problems we have mentioned above, they should proceed to do so immediately and totally.

B) If the majority of the peasants in the locality do not agree to join a collective, or if there are some who do not share this opinion, the Trade Unions will respect the right of the small landowners to cultivate the soil in accordance with the terms set forth above, and the Trade Unions will proceed to confiscate the large estates and the other property of the rebel elements, which will also be collectivized.

C) The Trade Unions are authorized, if the requirements of their towns render it advisable, to permit, for the

shortest possible time that would be needed to prepare for the definitive establishment of collectivization, the small tenant farmers to cultivate their parcels in the same manner as stipulated for the small landowners, with the provision that these lands are always susceptible to being collectivized as soon as possible.

To complete the liberation of the peasants, collectivized farms will be established, where they will have at their disposal all the advantages that modern livestock breeding makes available to such bold experiments. Also, the electrification, urbanization and modernization of the sanitary facilities of the most isolated rural collectives; irrigation, grading and drainage systems; in short, a multitude of improvements that, contributing the greatest possibilities for success to all the new installations, will be the most exciting stimulus to lead the peasants, convincing them by the force of example, toward the most noble aspirations expressed in the principles of the CNT.

To conclude this report and in order to present a faithful interpretation of the broad-based federalism that the Confederation always advocates, we believe it would be fitting for this Presentation to proclaim the most extensive freedom for each peasant locality, with regard

to the method employed and the time frame required to implement the resolutions set forth above.

STATUTES OF THE SECTION OF COLLECTIVE LABOR OF THE TRADE UNION OF VALLS

Article 1. In order to safeguard the general interest of the workers and to facilitate the progress of agricultural labor in common, which is so hard to apply to a land that is as thoroughly divided into small parcels as this one is, and for many other general reasons, this Section of Collective Labor is hereby created.

Article 2. These statutes will be valid for one agricultural year, from November 1 to October 31; after the latter date, or before that date if it is considered to be advisable, these statutes will be submitted for review to the General Assembly in order to ratify them or change any parts thereof that the General Assembly considers must be changed.

Article 3. Collective labor will commence on all confiscated lands (where such lands are not worked already by tenant farmers), in those that shall be incorporated into the collectives because they are not being cultivated, and in all those that the workers contribute when they join the Section.

Article 4. All peasants, upon joining the Section, must carry out an inventory of all the tools, carts, animals and

land they are contributing, noting whether this property is rented or owned by them. This inventory will be rendered in duplicate; the original for the prospective member and the copy for the Trade Union Committee.

Article 5. Once the year's crops have been harvested, any partner who wants to leave the collective will be given everything listed in the inventory made upon his joining the collective. This means that collective labor will be absolutely voluntary.

Article 6. The land will be worked by brigades. Depending on the characteristics of the agricultural labor assigned to each group, each brigade will be composed of a certain number of workers, animals and carts.

Article 7. Each brigade will have a delegate, and these delegates will compose the Committee that will be responsible for planning the collective labor. Any modifications in the work routine will have to be made with the consent of the majority of the members of the Section.

Article 8. This Section will establish a minimum and maximum family wage. The minimum wages will be set as follows:

First Category: Partners without children, or minor siblings, 32 pesetas a week, including sick time.

Second Category: Partners who have a child or minor sibling, 36 pesetas a week.

Third Category: Those who have more than one child or more than one minor sibling, 39 pesetas a week.

In those cases involving very large families or persons who are disabled and unable to work, the Committee will examine each case, and will be required to obtain the consent of the Section Assembly for its decision. In addition to this weekly wage, firewood will be provided to the partners.

The maximum wage will be defined as the standard wage established by the workers organizations. If the latter have not established a standard wage, the maximum wage will be understood to be 8 pesetas a day.

Article 9. In order to become a partner of this Section, one need only be a member of the Trade Union (Agricultural Branch). No member of the Trade Union may be denied the right to join this Section, as long as he or she meets the following requirements:

- a) The applicant must be at least 14 years of age.
- b) The applicant must deliver to the Section all the land, carts and tools that he possesses.
- c) No applicant will be admitted to the Section if a

member of his immediate family refuses to work in the collective.

Article 10. In case of the death of a partner, the other members of his or her family will continue to be paid the weekly wage of the decedent until the crops are harvested. After the harvest, the family will choose either to surrender the land the decedent contributed to the collective, or work that land on their own private account.

Article 11. Partners between the ages of 14 and 16 will earn half the established weekly wage. From 16 to 18, three quarters, and the full wage from 18 to 60. From 60 to 65, three quarters; and from 65 on, half. In case they do not qualify for disability pay, the difference will be made up for once every four months.

Article 12. The Section will also have an Administrative Committee formed in the same manner as the Collective Labor Planning Committee, with one delegate from each brigade; and depending on the kind of work it does, it may have a Secretary for administering the Section's records.

Article 13. Each Section will also have a brigade of gardeners, whose mission will consist of maintaining a vegetable stand in the Market Plaza for the population in general as well as the partners; this brigade will seek to

keep the sales prices of the vegetables they sell as low as possible.

Article 14. If, over the course of the first year an animal that has been contributed to the collective has died, if the animal is not replaced by another, a credit will be accounted to the contributor in the amount of half its market price, should the member who contributed the animal not want to continue to participate in the collective. The assessment of the value of the animal will be made with reference to its value at the time of its death.

Article 15. This Section will have a Savings and Loan Bank, where the partners may deposit their savings, upon which they will receive 3 percent interest.

Article 16. The lands that the partners of this Section have assumed control over as day laborers, will continue to be worked on the condition that they must deliver their wages to the Section. In those cases when, after the harvest, they want to withdraw from the collective, they may continue to cultivate these lands on their own private account.

Article 17. Once collective labor has begun, no one will be allowed to join the Section until the commencement of the next agricultural year. The period for signing up to join the Section will be the entire month of October; after the end of October the sign up period will be

terminated, with the exception of those who are fighting at the front, since the latter, regardless of the time of year, will be able to join the Section with full rights in the collective, as long as they comply with these Statutes.

Article 18. All those who want to join with our collective labor, and, having joined our Section, still have some kind of paid job outside the collective, will be allowed to keep their jobs on the condition that they deliver their wages from those jobs to the collective, and will be limited to earning the amount stipulated in these Statutes for their category, with the exception of those militiamen who are serving at the front.

Article 19. If a partner does not work, the General Assembly will pronounce the pertinent sanctions against him. These sanctions can be applied to him only with the agreement of 75 percent of the partners attending the Assembly.

Supplementary Article. If difficulties arise with regard to the implementation of these Statutes, the partners, meeting in a General Assembly, may modify any terms of the Statutes that may constitute hindrances to the progress of the Collective Labor.

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN FOR THE AGRICULTURAL, LIVESTOCK AND INDUSTRIAL WEALTH OF SOLLANA

Chapter One

Article 1. The trade union organizations of the CNT and the UGT of this locality express their commitment to organize production without favoring either one of the trade union organizations and to strictly comply with the accords set forth herein.

Article 2. As of this moment all confiscated land is declared to be socialized, together with all parcels of four acres [20 “hanegadas”] or more, if worked by a single producer, and five and a half acres [30 “hanegadas”] if worked by two or more producers.

Article 3. The comrades who do not want to take part in the collective, if the number of acres they work amounts to four or five and a half acres, depending on how many hands work on them, will have to cultivate the lands they currently possess, and will be barred from enjoying the benefits of the collective as long as they do not join it.

Subsection A) The labor carried out by these independent comrades will be controlled by the Council of Administration along with their products and harvests.

Article 4. An indispensable precondition for joining the collective is the delivery of all the tools, harvests, etc.,

owned by the applicant to the collective; the individual may retain personal possession of only his clothing and objects for personal use.

Subsection A) For the comrades who join the collective, the latter will take into account any money in bank accounts that the comrades reveal, and will record any favorable or negative balances.

Subsection B) The Collective will be responsible for attending to the needs of the disabled, the elderly and the sick family members of the comrades that join it.

Subsection C) The disabled, elderly and sick family members of those who do not join the Collective, will have no right to the care provided by the Collective, and will have to be taken care of by their own families.

Subsection D) The industrial comrades who want to join the Collective, will deliver to the latter all the tools, materials and manufactured goods of their trades, for which the Collective will assume responsibility, and the Collective will assess these tools, etc., and credit the applicant for all the materials that are registered. The independent industrial workers will be controlled by the Council of Administration. All the independent industrial workers will be forbidden to work the land or carry out any other business besides that of their trade, and will also be banned from employing wage workers and assistants who are not members of their families.

Chapter Two

Administration

Article 6.3 For the provisioning of the Collective, the family voucher will be created, with the wage denomination of five pesetas and fifty centimos for a two-person household. Families with more than two members will receive fifty centimos for each member or producer; one peseta fifty centimos for each individual male producer and one peseta for each female producer. Those adults who are not members of a family household will receive, in a two-person household, three pesetas and fifty centimos for every extra member, and for each adult, one peseta extra. If the individual lives alone, he will receive two pesetas.

Article 7. The Council of Administration will create the type of currency that meets the requirements imposed by the circumstances.

Article 8. All the productive members of the families that form the Collective, have the duty to work wherever the Council of Administration appoints them.

Article 9. In order to prevent capital flight from the locality, the vouchers or coupons that are circulated within the Collective will be exchanged for the currency of the State in a quantity established for families that will be fixed by the Council of Administration.

Article 10. The Collective will draft, in a session of the Assembly of collectivists, Statutes in which the rights and duties of every collectivist will be set forth.

Chapter Three

Regarding urban wealth

Article 11. All buildings will become property of the Collective. The independent comrades will have the use of houses that possess just what is necessary for them and their families, depending on the kind of jobs they do. The collectivist comrades will, in the most equitable manner possible, be distributed houses that have passed into the hands of the Collective.

Chapter Four

On industry

Article 12. Industries will be divided or classified by sectors, and these sectors will be subdivided into sections, as follows:

Food: Sections of bakers, slaughterhouse workers, butchers and dairymen.

Construction: Bricklayers and laborers.

Woodworkers: Carpenters, sanders, cabinetmakers and cart-wrights.

Metallurgy: Mechanics, sheet-metal workers, blacksmiths, electricians.

Transport: Drivers, assistant drivers.

Leather: Shoemakers and leatherworkers.

Commercial: Typists, writers and office workers.

Clothing: Tailors, dressmakers, sandal-makers.

Health and Sanitation: Doctors, veterinarians, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, druggists, barbers.

Education and Culture: Teachers of both sexes.

Livestock and Poultry: Shepherds, cowherds and associated occupations.

Chapter Five

Concerning the allocation of labor

Article 13. Labor will be allocated in the following manner: A) the Council of Administration, composed of the general secretary, secretary and office staff. B) The Agricultural Council, composed of various comrades who understand agriculture, who will be responsible for the proper cultivation of the land. C) The Agricultural Laborers will be divided into groups of between 10 and 15 persons, with one group leader, who will be responsible for ensuring that the group's work is carried out in a responsible manner. D) The groups that are responsible for the care of horses will have one or two

group leaders each, depending on how many horses must be tended. E) The Shoemakers, each with a group leader. F) The butchers, with their group leaders. G) Commerce and Supply groups with their group leaders. H) Group leaders for mechanics, blacksmiths and electricians. I) Group leaders for Construction.

Article 14. Supreme authority will be vested in the Council of Administration.

Article 15. The Agricultural Council will be vested with supreme authority with regard to agricultural labor, and the group leaders will receive orders from the Council and be responsible for their execution.

Article 16. The Supply Commission, together with the group leader for the Commerce section, will be responsible for ensuring that the town does not experience any shortages of provisions.

Article 17. The Council of Administration assumes all responsibility for the progress of the Collective in all its aspects.

- 1. We took the liberty of inserting this subheading, in brackets, which did not appear in the previous editions of this work, for the purpose of making the structure of the text more clear. [Note from the Spanish edition of 1977]

- 2. The numbers do not add up, but we cannot ascertain where the error lies [Note from the Spanish edition of 1977].
- 3. The original text of 1937 omits either the entire text of or else fails to include the enumeration for *Article 5*. We believe that, in the latter case, *Article 5* may correspond to the last two sentences of *Subsection D of Article 4* [Note from the Spanish edition of 1977].

Part 3

COLLECTIVE LABOR IN THE PROVINCES OF CATALONIA

1. Tarrasa
2. Gerona
3. Torroella
4. Granollers
5. Esparraguera
6. Villafranca
7. Rubí
8. Vilanova
9. Amposta
10. Arenys de Mar
11. Blanes

1. TARRASA

THE FACTORIES OF TARRASA

Close to the city, the mountain, the cyclopean pile of San Llorenç del Munt, casts its imposing silhouette. On the plain, an army of smokestacks.

In Tarrasa, a town with some forty thousand residents, the manufacturing industry predominates, in which some fourteen thousand workers are employed, eleven

thousand of whom are members of the CNT and the rest affiliated with the UGT.

Almost all the factories are working at full capacity. There are plenty of factories devoted to spinning wool (*acortiments*) and weaving fabrics, which are especially dedicated to working to supply war materiel. A forty-hour workweek is in effect, although when it is necessary to increase production due to the impact of the war, the workers work overtime, Saturdays and Sundays, without pay.

As for the technicians, they work the same number of hours as the other workers. The distinctions and privileges of the different categories of workers have been erased.

In the Manufacturing and Textile Trade Union, fund-drives are frequently held and large quantities of money are sent to the Militias. In addition, this Trade Union has spent a large amount of money for the purpose of acquiring wool that the workers transform into jerseys for the militiamen. When the workers are idled in their usual manufacturing jobs, they report to the Trade Union to be assigned jobs making jerseys for the militiamen.

Almost all the factories are subject to the authority of Control Committees, except the factory known as

“Tarrasa Industrial”, which has been confiscated by workers who are sympathizers of the Confederation.

IN THE *“TARRASA INDUSTRIAL”* FACTORY

Invited by the comrades of the Factory Committee, we visited the numerous departments of this factory devoted to the manufacture of woolens and worsted fabrics, dyeing, pre-treatment of fabrics, threads, finished articles, etc. The wool arrives raw and leaves in the form of finished products.

This factory employs some 340 male and female workers. They work for the most part in war-related industrial production, manufacturing various types of “khaki” cloth, destined for tarps and trench coats. Every day they produce two thousand meters of the former and some one thousand five hundred meters of cloth for the latter.

They work forty hours a week, although when necessary they work overtime without pay.

The manufacturing process proceeds normally from an economic point of view, and even has a tendency to surpass previous levels of production. The workers devote themselves to their jobs with a great deal of enthusiasm. Every month, the factory holds a general meeting of all the workers; this meeting makes all the decisions with regard to the operations of the factory.

As a result of the situation we face, it is unavoidable, as the comrades who accompany us explain, that there should be difficulties with regard to the acquisition of raw materials, and sometimes they must be replaced with similar substitutes.

For their part, the workers of the “*Tarrasa Industrial*” factory send to the Militias five percent of their total wages.

As for the technicians employed in the factory, they willingly collaborate in the collective labor that, now that they are free of the employer’s tutelage, all the workers perform with a common accord.

THE “SUN AND LIFE” COMMUNAL FARM

About two kilometers from the town, in what was previously known as “Can Parellada”, in a huge building that looks like a country mansion or the home of a great lord, the “Sun and Life” communal farm has been established, where the work is done collectively, under the control of the Peasants Trade Union.

Twenty workers are employed on the farm; among them we have met some excellent comrades who, for years now, have cooperated with the greatest interest in the confederal orientation of the local proletariat. They were

employed prior to the revolutionary movement in the manufacturing industry, where besides receiving a higher wage than what they get in their new occupation, they also worked fewer hours and the work was much less exhausting than the work they are doing now.

Understanding the importance of agriculture for the consolidation of the new stage that we are traversing, they did not hesitate to place their intelligence and their enthusiasm as tried and tested militants at the service of agriculture. And now they work from dawn to dusk on the farm's 600 hectares, divided between forest and cultivated land. Because it takes a lot of work to make the land ready for cultivation and sowing, these comrades even work on Sundays. They know that the revolutionary work undertaken with arms in hand on the front lines has no holidays, and they know that they cannot have any holidays either in the revolutionary work that is being carried out in the rearguard with the tools of labor.

The farmland was in poor condition and the work is daunting; yet these inspired workers sow wheat, grow fodder, and till the soil with the help of two magnificent tractors, attempt to extend the area of the irrigated land, manage the woodlands, and tend the stables for the goats and cows.

There are also several other farms in the vicinity of Tarrasa that have been collectivized by the Peasants Trade Union, affiliated with our Trade Union Confederation.

THE “NEW LIFE” NEWSPAPER

In one of the offices of the magnificent local headquarters in a building confiscated by the Local Federation of Trade Unions, the editorial staff of the “New Life” newspaper has been installed, which is now a daily rather than a weekly paper.

We have spent some time in conversation with the comrades of “New Life” who are occupied in the production of this daily newspaper. The paper is distributed in the evening and the comrade editors are preparing the latest edition, proofreading articles, fact-checking, taking great care to present this excellent local newspaper, which is subsidized by the organization, in the best possible way, both with regard to typography as well as with regard to doctrine.

THE WORK OF SOCIALIZATION

Rents have been reduced by fifty percent, and the Construction Industry, which has been socialized, controls the collection of the rents.

The Construction Industry pays wages to all its members, on the condition that if they do not have any work in their usual occupations, they must apply to the Peasants Trade Union so that they may be employed in agricultural work.

The entertainment industry has been totally socialized.

Some difficulties arose during the attempt to socialize the bakeries. Not everyone was happy with the innovations; sometimes, although they tried to arrange things with the best intentions, they set up obstacles to the progress of those whom their reforms were meant to benefit. The situation was finally normalized and today the bakeries are thriving in their new structure.

The buses that serve the urban routes have been confiscated by their employees, who are affiliated with the CNT. When these buses were the property of a capitalist enterprise, the stockholders complained about being saddled with a considerable deficit. Now that the workers are in charge, the enterprise is in the black and the workers are constantly sending money to the Militias.

LIGHT WHERE THERE WAS ONCE DARKNESS

Tarrasa, which is a city of ancient lineage, contains some very old convents and churches. The religious illusion, as in every city, has its zones of influence, whose centers are focused on the churches and the convents, veritable snake pits of obscurantism, where the darkness of ignorance spreads and produces the greatest damage to consciousness. Now the light of freedom and culture has dispelled the sinister impact of religion.

The buildings that were once convents, have now been transformed, opened to the air and to the light they once lacked, into schools.

The most important church in the area is now used as a garage for trucks and all kinds of cars that have been confiscated by the comrades of the CNT.

As for the church of San Pedro, with its Gothic architecture, built between the 12th and the 14th centuries, due to its antiquity and the beautiful architecture of its interior, upheld by elegant columns and arches of masterful harmony, which have preserved it from the destructive effects of the centuries, it is currently being preserved in order to be used as the site of the Regional Museum.

THE FIGHTERS AT THE FRONT

A town such as the one we are now considering, which has a brilliant revolutionary tradition; a city like Tarrasa, which has witnessed the blood of its sons spilled in struggles against government oppression, in conflicts for the emancipation of the proletariat, cannot but send a strong contingent of its sons to the front ranks of the antifascist struggle. And from the first days of the movement more than eight hundred of its men fought courageously, with arms in hand, until the reactionary forces were defeated.

This is how we saw the working class of Tarrasa, in this town that has known how to free itself of parasites, of those who were the most intransigent enemies of the proletariat.

2. GERONA

THE TRACES OF THE PAST

There are towns that do not lose, with the incessant passage of the years, their aspects that are evocative of distant eras; they preserve within them the traces of what they once were. Walk anywhere in Gerona and you will see everywhere the traces of its past: narrow streets, aristocratic mansions that preserve the severity of their times of splendor, old churches, high, thick walls, typical

street corners, typical sights, in short, your imagination will fly towards times past which will never return.

Gerona is a city where the influence of religion has weighed heavily on the consciousness of its population. With its tenacious and incessant proselytizing zeal, the Church had been molding minds, and dominating wills at its whim. And alongside the Church, under the rule of the Archbishop, a caste of powerful and reactionary men had emerged. And so too did a caste of servile elements, with an instinct of reverence towards the rich, towards the magnates of money and religion, that comprised almost the entire middle class, the liberal professions, the shopkeepers, the bureaucrats, the small investors and all those people who, despite the fact that they depend on a wage to live, a wage that is almost always meager, have considered it to be beneath their dignity to be viewed as workers, as among the exploited, and have prostrated themselves before the rich and have been the docile instruments of the reactionary forces.

As the fascist rebellion of July 19 was being prepared, the entire reactionary community of Gerona, counting on the boneheads of sword and braid stationed at the local military garrison, thought that their victory was assured. They soon had to suffer the bitterness of defeat. They did not reckon with the Geronese proletarians, so ready to

risk their lives rather than permit the establishment of fascism. Some armed groups of fascists came into the streets, expecting the unconditional support of the soldiers. As for the workers, their reaction was powerful and strident. The producers took the initiative by courageously shooting at their enemies who, intimidated, chose to flee in disorder. For their part, the soldiers, who were, after all, sons of the working people, refused to shoot, and fraternized with the workers.

The reactionaries, who expected to dominate the town by brutally imposing the yoke of tyranny, were defeated because they forgot that they had to confront the descendants of those people whose exploits are immortalized in the pages of History: the heroic defense of Gerona in the War of Independence, when the Napoleonic hosts attempted to impose their rule on the Geronese people.

THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PROLETARIAT

Gerona has 30,000 inhabitants, more than 6,000 of whom are members of the CNT.

We shall cite the example provided by the workers of the Construction Industry, which has been socialized and is directed by the two labor organizations, the CNT and the UGT. Putting an end to the differences between skilled

and unskilled workers, differences that often represented a humiliation for the unskilled laborers, making the skilled workers their hierarchical superiors, the Industrial Federation has enacted a standard wage. Now, both the skilled and the unskilled workers earn 70 pesetas a week, and are also paid for the days they cannot work because of the rainy season.

The Inter-Regional Federation of the Trade Unions of the Construction Industry has drafted an interesting report and we shall reproduce a few of its paragraphs below:

“The socialization of the entire Construction Industry of the whole former province of Gerona, and its general confiscation, even with regard to current accounts, equipment and goods of every description that are part of the business and industry on the day of confiscation, will be without indemnification. All those workers who, having worked all their lives, and because of their ruinous physical condition, can no longer do any work at all, will be considered to be retired. At the same time, it will be taken into account that when a comrade cannot fulfill the requirements of normal work in his occupation, another occupation that is less physically demanding will be made available to him.”

The various industrial sectors of the region are proceeding towards socialization. Thus, the Transport Industry has been socialized, composed of elements of the CNT and the UGT. The Metal Industry is also in the process of being socialized; the Coal Industry, the Flour Industry and the Food Industry have already been socialized.

We must also mention the excellent projects undertaken by the comrades of the Public Entertainment Industry, who have shown the Municipality that they are ready to work three or four hours a day, without pay, to manufacture war materiel. This Trade Union, socialized by the CNT, contributes 10 percent of its total income to the Municipality. Furthermore, any surplus left over after the paying of the wages of its workers is devoted to the renovation and sanitization of its workplaces, something the bourgeois entrepreneurs had largely overlooked.

The Manufacturing and Textile Industry is controlled by the UGT and the CNT. These workers, as well as those in the two factories that produce chemical products, which are also controlled by the Trade Union Federations, work three days a week.

URBANIZATION PROJECTS

The comrades of the Municipality of Gerona who are responsible for urbanization and other public works, would like to make Gerona one of the most interesting cities of Spain.

The comrades tell us that the Oñar River, which passes through the center of the town, is a hotbed of infectious disease, due to the fact that the polluted water from residential properties flows into it. In order to rectify this situation, that is so harmful to health, the comrades have drafted a proposal to build sewers and a drainage system, by means of which they intend to carry out a magnificent sanitation project.

There is also a plan to build a reservoir in Salt to collect the water of the Ter River. This reservoir would be capable of supplying water for the irrigation of the entire region, thus facilitating the expansion of agriculture.

There is also a plan in the works to construct a Provisions Market with the most up-to-date facilities.

They would also like to demolish the old downtown area of the city, and build in its place a series of apartment blocks like those of Vienna. Each of them would be able to accommodate spacious apartments for 500 families.

CONFISCATIONS AND MUNICIPALIZATIONS

The municipality has confiscated all the housing of the city. As a contribution to the war effort, it has increased the rents in the following proportions: up to 100 pesetas, by 50 percent; from 100 pesetas and up, by 75 percent.

The municipality intends to municipalize Industry and Transport, in order to proceed to full municipal control and regulation, and also intends to introduce the family wage.

Furthermore, the municipality is seeking to regulate the price of food, pending the confiscation of the stores and warehouses, which is slated to be completed shortly.

WORK FOR THE WAR

Besides the war industries located in this town, which we shall refrain from enumerating, Gerona has undertaken serious efforts to contribute to the needs of the fronts.

Gerona and its vicinity have sent some 2,000 men to fight on the battlefields; the entire town was put on war footing during the events that took place at Rosas.¹ The moral integrity of the workers affiliated with the Waiters Section is especially noteworthy. In consideration of the fact that women can perform the work of wait-staff, and that the men have a more

important mission to fulfill, the male waiters went to the front, leaving the women in their place to work in the cafes and restaurants. A large proportion of the employees of the Banks and Stock Exchange also decided to go to the front. Among the workers of the Construction Industry a proposal is being discussed, and has been approved by a majority of them, to send detachments of construction workers to the battle sectors to build fortifications and help the peasants.

The Municipality has organized a large workshop where clothing is manufactured for the needs of the front.

All political-social tendencies in the town also have their corresponding workshops, where clothing is made for the front.

There are approximately 700 refugees in Gerona, who have arrived here from various locations in the war zones.

CULTURAL WORK

We were told about cultural projects that were being planned. One project involves the construction of a kind of city school, composed of nine groups provided with everything they would need to meet the requirements of modern pedagogy. School cafeterias will also be built.

The budget for such an important initiative amounts to a total of two million pesetas.

Gerona possesses a municipal library, and in addition to this library, the Municipality plans to establish another library in the social club that once served the bourgeoisie. The Municipality plans to provide it with a large number of books and intends to call it the "People's Library".

Various newspapers are published in Gerona. There is the "Front", published by the Socialists; "L'Espurna", published by the POUM; and "Autonomista", published by the Republicans. We were told that the CNT intends to publish a local newspaper.

SOME PRIESTS WHO ARE DEMOLISHING THE CHURCHES

Geronese clericalism once flourished on its many pesetas. Proof of this is the fact that the residence of the Bishop and the Cathedral are together worth 36 million pesetas. The "ministers of God" did not wait for the kingdom of heaven to live the good life. They made the best of this vale of tears.... And so sure were they of victory, that they did not even bother to safely hide their millions.

The times changed, and the more than fifty men who, in their black vestments, had lived off the income of their churches, today follow the old maxim, “they shall earn their bread by the sweat of their brows”, and work in overalls and rope sandals. They are laboring with picks and shovels destroying the churches. With their destructive labors they are contributing to the construction of a new world, free of the woeful routine of religion.

And those who once preached celibacy are beginning to take notice of women. It is said that some of the Church fathers were unfair to women, and many of the men who were priests want to get married or live with women. They have become more good-natured and, forgetting the Christian precept, “keep the holy days sacred”, they work even on Sundays, working for the needs of the war. This is a redemption that has never been heard of before!

3. TORROELLA

WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED BY WILL-POWER

Leaving Gerona, the highway, narrow and straight, bordered by trees, crosses between small villages of adobe houses, in each case crowded together around an old church, which is today deserted and useless. The

automobile can go more slowly now and we may observe the countryside. We pass by the silhouettes, bent over the furrowed ground of the farms, of the men and women who are patiently working, and the sadness that characterizes the traditional peasant of the old style who, alone on "his" land, toils to extract the surplus product that must provide his sustenance. Compare the labor of these poor folk, so sad and so slow, with the enthusiasm, with the cheerfulness, with the vigor and the surge of optimism that sweeps over the peasants who collectively work the land, brothers in labor, together in the everyday struggle for survival.

Throughout these areas, in these little villages, they still think as they did before the Revolution concerning almost every aspect of social life. Little by little the light will be shed on the minds of their denizens; little by little stubborn Ampurdán, saturated with anxieties about progress, will cease to be influenced by these humble little villages, just as Torroella de Montgrí has freed itself of such influences.

We arrived in Torroella around dusk, and the town square, surrounded by the typical arcades, was partially obscured by shadows. Torroella has many large mansions of an aristocratic type; they belonged to proud magnates who lived in them during the summer seasons. All these

homes have been confiscated and today perform the social function that their former owners could never have imagined.

We have spoken with the comrades, young people for the most part, enthusiastic and dynamic. Before the fascist uprising hardly anyone knew what the Confederation stood for. There were some comrades who sympathized with the ideals embodied by our organization, but without the direct influence of the latter this sympathy remained a mere vague feeling. Once the revolutionary movement began, the comrades of Torroella made the greatest efforts to bring the town onboard with the new circumstances. And they can be pleased with having achieved their goals.

The entire working class joined the CNT, and exercising all means that were compatible with the process of emancipatory action, this town, which has about five thousand six hundred inhabitants, can serve as a model for others which, having benefited from the presence of not a few militants for many years, were expected to achieve so much more than they did. With enough will-power praiseworthy goals can be achieved. This has been proven by these comrades in Torroella de Montgrí.

THE BRICKLAYERS COLLECTIVE

In order to speak with the comrades of the Construction Industry we had to go to their headquarters, which is located in the building that previously hosted the Banco de Palafrugell.

“One of the reforms implemented in our profession,” the comrades told us, “was the standardization of wages. By this means we eliminated the obnoxious difference between the wages of the unskilled laborer and the skilled laborer. With the exception of the apprentices, all the workers are now paid 55 pesetas a week, and we intend to introduce the family wage.”

The forty-hour workweek has been introduced, Saturday afternoons and Sundays being set aside for work on fortifications. Those who were previously contractors, currently work under the same conditions as the other workers.

Employing the requisite foresight, the collective, having calculated the expenditures on wages, devotes part of its surplus for payment of wages for those days when rain prevents the workers from performing their regular jobs.

In addition, these comrades also display solidarity, one of the greatest attributes of the human being. When a

worker is ill he is paid his full wage, just like the others. We should also mention the regulation concerning those workers of the industry who, because of their advanced age, can no longer work. This regulation stipulates that they should receive the same wage as those who can still work.

We have parted from the comrades of the Construction Industry with a good impression concerning the work they have carried out and that they intend to realize.

THE BAKERS COLLECTIVE

The Bakers Collective is composed of twenty-three individuals. These people were the first in the town to understand the value of collectivized labor. They are so convinced of this that they work with the greatest enthusiasm, intensely, without any fixed working hours.

These comrades have four ovens; they are trying to save enough money to build two new ovens and to concentrate all bread distribution in one location.

Situated in the vanguard of emancipatory activities, they have established the family wage in the following form: for married couples, both the man and the woman are paid thirty pesetas a week. Each minor child of the age of sixteen years or younger is allocated one peseta more

per week. If the family has a second producer, he or she is paid thirty pesetas, and if it has a third producer, this person is paid eighteen pesetas. As for the single person, without a family, the collective assigns him or her a wage of seven pesetas per day.

Once the weekly expenditure on wages is calculated, some one hundred fifty pesetas are set aside, which are saved for the repair of the ovens and for any materials that are needed.

The comrade bakers all work with the greatest enthusiasm, strengthening the bonds of comradery with the equitable pay based on the family wage, which should be implemented among the entire productive class of revolutionary Spain.

THE OTHER COLLECTIVES IN TORROELLA

The barbers, numbering about 24 or 25, have formed a collective. The barbers now all work together in a magnificent building renovated for their purposes. The building is very spacious, with as many conveniences as the customers could wish.

Public entertainment is also collectivized. Various events are held to raise money for the Militias, and five percent of the receipts are devoted to charity. The famous folk

group “Els Montgrins” belongs to this Section; it has been performing for fifty years, and is so successful that it has made the Ampurdanese melodies of the typical *sardanas* [a type of Catalonian dance and music—Translator’s note] famous not just throughout Spain but also all over the world.

Transport and its associated trades are also collectivized, and wages have been standardized. These comrades have sent fourteen motorcycles and seven sedans to the front. For the transport of travelers in the everyday bus service with nearby towns, since the industry was collectivized it has acquired two magnificent buses.

The four tailoring shops have been consolidated into one shop, where some sixty men and women are employed. In order to receive their wages when there is not enough work, they have agreed to work two more hours on those days when there is work.

Among the peasants who live in the township, some are now working collectively. It is hoped that in a short time all of them will decide to work collectively, having noticed the advantages that accrue to those who work in common.

The dressmakers, who were previously divided among fifteen or twenty workshops now work together in one workshop, and these pleasant women enjoy the freedom that they did not possess before, happily laughing, singing and talking together.

THE MUNICIPALITY AND ITS ACTIVITIES

In Torroella de Montgrí the Municipality was structured, at the time of our visit, in the following manner: five representatives of the CNT, one from the FAI, one from the “rabassaires”, two from the POUM and two from the Esquerra.

The two palaces that once belonged to the Marqués de Robert have been confiscated. The impressive pastures that were once owned by the Marqués de Camps were also seized.

We must not overlook the labor of education; for this purpose several private homes have been renovated.

The Libertarian Youth and the Trade Union have two public libraries, enriched with the wealth of the books found in the mansions of the rich people of the area. These books, which represent a cultural treasure-trove, are now appropriated by the people, for all those who feel the noble desire for knowledge, unlike before, when

they only served the purposes of luxury on the bookshelves of the libraries of the aristocrats, the property of men who were more interested in luxury and ostentation than in culture.

POPULAR SYMPATHY FOR THE CAUSE OF EMANCIPATION

The example of hard work set by the proletariat of Torroella can only arouse sympathy. "That is why," a comrade tells us, "not only the workers, but also even the middle class, those people who always kept their distance from the proletariat, look with favor on our achievements."

From the very first days of the military rebellion a good number of the sons of the town have been fighting on the fronts.

And understanding the need to be prepared against the barbarous enemy, the inhabitants of this pleasant little town spend their Sundays building fortifications and roads.

Furthermore, there are about forty refugees in Torroella, who are tended with the greatest solicitude, and who are happy to have found the hospitality of other homes to supply what the brutality of the fascists forced them to abandon.

4. GRANOLLERS

THE PROBLEM OF PROVISIONS

The market of Granollers is traditionally famous throughout all of Catalonia. This town in the region of Vallés is one of the most lively and affluent market towns due to its traffic in poultry and livestock. At its weekly market the middlemen once swarmed, who, exercising their cleverness in this kind of transaction, departed enriched at the expense of the peasants who had no choice but to resort to these middlemen to sell their wares. As we know, commerce has relied upon a whole series of individuals who, bargaining between the seller and the buyer, have made a killing. The comrades who took control of local provisioning have abolished the middlemen, thereby preventing the abuses and the speculation that used to be the sorry norm.

In a town of such commercial importance as Granollers, it is understandable that one of the primary concerns of those who assumed responsibility for administering the Municipality was the problem of provisioning the town. And judging by the detailed explanations provided to us by the comrades in charge of this task, it is well on the way to being solved in a most exemplary fashion.

Everything that involves the market is subject to regular control. This prevents abuses. A spacious building has been renovated for the sale of all the goods that enter the weekly market for poultry, cattle, etc. The peasants only have to go to the Supply Council, and the Council handles the business of sales in a normal and fair way. The volume of sales is now forty percent higher than before, and prices have actually fallen, especially for poultry and certain food products such as sugar.

Given the circumstances we currently face, the comrades of the Supply Council have shown us how the free market, such as it previously functioned, was incapable of realizing its full potential. Hence the necessity for rigorous control measures applied to the market, for it is only by this means that its smooth functioning can be assured. The profits obtained from the renowned market of Granollers, which, incidentally, are so beneficial for local trade, are delivered to the Municipality, which assumes responsibility for distributing them for the needs of the war. The Supply department has also been able, due to its decision to abolish middlemen, to more effectively supply the hospitals and sanitariums of Catalonia than before.

There are, however, also some problems that still must be overcome. So, for example, there is a busy traffic in

contraband foods; this involves those who, eager to corner the market on certain goods, later sell them at a higher price to individual buyers. It is hoped that this problem can be resolved by the committees.

The comrades of the Supply Council have also informed us of the need to limit consumption during the war. Consumption must be subject to rationing, they tell us, so that there is no waste. They have told us about the necessity of the “family card”, created by the Supply Council. On its cover we read the following words: “Comrade: this card has been designed to ensure that everyone receives what is necessary to live. So that no one can ever hoard basic necessities, which other comrades at the front and in the cities need. Do not let anything go to waste! Remember that what we have in excess may be needed by others!”

AN ARTISTIC TREASURE

The comrade Albarranch, a painter who is highly educated and possesses vast erudition in the field of art, invited us to visit the Museum and Archive of Vallès. Before we entered he told us: “This is not a museum, but a warehouse.” This is because, due to the revolutionary movement, numerous confiscations have taken place throughout the entire region of Vallès. Requisitions were

carried out in a large number of opulent villas, and a great quantity of art objects has been seized; especially with regard to paintings, there is a veritable treasure trove, including canvases by the most famous artists, such as Rubens, Teniers, Andrea del Sarto, Ribera, Tiziano, Zurbarán, Velázquez, Greco, Rembrandt, Murillo and other moderns such as Martí Alsina, Ramón Casas, etc.

Rather than a museum, it is a warehouse; leaning against the walls, filling up every space in the building, paintings, display cabinets, furniture, etc., are accumulated. We were told that it is estimated that fourteen million pesetas worth of artworks are stored in this museum.

Naturally, given the enormous quantity of works of art that are piled up here, their value cannot be precisely assessed. It will be necessary for the Municipality to renovate one or two more buildings so that visitors can view these artworks.

One of the comrades told us an anecdote that is revealing of the stupidity of many of the “nouveau riche” and the confusion of some comrades who have carried out searches of the homes of people who were capable of satisfying their whims, thanks to their vast fortunes, to acquire works of art of great value. Several comrades

went to a certain mansion owned by a rebel sympathizer; they carried out a search and found a magnificent painting by Murillo, which, due to its religious theme, without paying any attention to the delicacy of detail expressed by the great artist, they tore into pieces as they removed it from its frame. In the same house, sheltered in a glass cabinet, there was an ordinary plaster cast sculpture of the Virgin. The owners of the house in question seemed to attribute a great value to this image, since they displayed it in such a luxurious glass case. The comrades assigned to search the house also thought the plaster cast statue was of great value, since they gave the most respectful treatment to this insipid plaster image, after having torn up a masterpiece.

Fortunately, cases such as the one mentioned above are extremely rare, since the producers, although themselves uneducated with regard to the monetary value of things also know that they should respect and appreciate things that reflect incontestable merit, things that the powerful accumulated for themselves.

LOCAL ECONOMIC CAPACITY

Granollers has some 18,000 inhabitants, and our own Confederation is the predominant social organization.

There are 18 factories which belong to the manufacturing and textile industries. These factories are under the control of the workers, who work for three days a week and are paid for four.

The peasants belong to the “Rabassaires”, but we have been able to observe that they have a distinct sympathy for the National Confederation of Labor; they may choose to join it in the not so distant future.

The construction industry and the other trades are socialized.

The barbershops have been socialized. There are approximately one hundred barbers and hairstylists. All of them are very scrupulous about the distribution and effective control of the money they obtain for their services. We were told about a certain individual who, taking advantage of the trust of the others, kept some of the money he made which, just like all the other comrades of the profession, he was supposed to deposit in the common fund. After having been reprimanded once already for certain infractions, in view of his recidivism, his union card was taken away from him, and he was expelled from the organization. Actions carried out by individual workers that are prejudicial to the collective cannot be tolerated.

We were told that the construction section is considering submitting a proposal to the Municipality with regard to the advisability of confiscating the town's housing, since this would constitute a source of income for municipal operations.

During the first days of the revolution, the Waiters Trade Union confiscated a splendid building that had formerly belonged to a well-known fascist. They established a People's Dining Room in it, where approximately one thousand persons received free meals every day. At the present time, these comrades, whose Trade Union is affiliated with the CNT, are feeding about three hundred persons. The Waiters Trade Union has about sixty members, and it is collectivized. What they receive in payment from the collective enterprise is distributed equally among the members.

And we shall conclude this section by noting that the Confederation has more than 5,000 members in this town.

SUPPORTING THE REVOLUTION

More than 400 men have left Granollers to fight fascism with arms in hand.

The Construction section has sent some 130 individuals to the front to build fortifications.

We should also note, as an example of mutual aid, the fact that some thirty of the town's bricklayers have gone to Ascó to help the peasants with the olive harvest.

For their part, the Militia Band, affiliated with the CNT and composed of 65 musicians, is at the disposal of the entire regional organization for the performance of benefit concerts. They attend all the festivals organized in the town to raise money for the Militias.

In consideration of the fact that there is no working class unemployment in the town and also in view of the fact that with regard to the educational field the greatest activity is underway to train the children as they should be trained, we may emphasize that Granollers has been one of the most active towns in the new stage of social restructuring that is in progress.

5. ESPARRAGUERA

From the highway, rising from Martorell, the huddle of houses of Esparraguera stand against the background, on the edge of the horizon, of the imposing mass of Montserrat that penetrates the blue sky with the sharp peaks of its high crests.

The town has about 5,800 inhabitants, and about 2,600 of them are members of the CNT.

Most of the town's workers are employed in the manufacturing industry. Two factories are devoted to the spinning of cotton thread, the production of fabrics and finished clothing, corduroy, velvet, etc.

One of the factories is that of Juan Montaner y Font, which employs some 160 workers. The other is the renowned Manufacturas Sedó, controlled by the CNT, the most important factory of its kind in all of Catalonia. It has 1,800 employees.

After Industry, the most important sector is the Peasants Section, which is also affiliated with the Confederation. Once the movement began, the peasants enacted the forty-hour workweek, with a fifteen percent increase in wages. Later, they understood that we are not in a situation in which we can reduce the length of the working week, but quite the contrary: we must increase it as much as possible. At the present time there is no fixed workweek, they just work as much as they can. They have confiscated the largest properties in the municipality and work in good conditions, since there is an abundance of water for irrigation. They produce a large quantity of vegetables, and harvest abundant crops

of grapes and olives. The latter are used both for local consumption and export.

The bakers have formed a collective, as have the woodworkers. The barbershop workers also plan to form a collective in the near future.

A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT *MANUFACTURAS SEDÓ—CNT*
We shall take the time for a detailed summary of the emancipatory struggles of the workers of the Sedó plant; the tenacious action of the factory workers against the suffocating power of an employer with a feudal concept of society; to relate a full account of the injustices committed by the employer of such a large factory would be a truly arduous task.

He was an old-fashioned, conservative bourgeois in the old style, with an antiquated view of what labor represents. For him, the working class was born for the sole purpose of serving the powerful. The workers had to be docile and submissive to the designs of the master.

On one occasion he, who like most reactionaries was an ardent Catholic, claimed that God had given the workers eyes so that they could see what they were doing at work but never for the purpose of looking face to face with the “master”; never for the purpose of seeking justice with angry gestures.

And because he was afraid that some day his workers would make him pay dearly for his despotism over them, he maintained a squad of the Guardia Civil in his factory. Thus, when extremely justified indignation overwhelmed the spirits of the workers, the Guardia in their shiny tricorne hats pointed their Mausers at the hearts of the unarmed workers, ready to shoot murderous lead. Besides the Guardia Civil, the Sedó factory also had its own vigilante squad, composed of a variety of bloodhound that sniffed out the trade union activities of the workers of the town, always ready to nip in the bud any attempt to harm the interests of the master and lord.

THE SEDÓ FACTORY TODAY

Accompanied by the comrades who are members of the Factory Committee, we visited the spacious workshops and offices of this important factory, which has an iron foundry, an important metallurgical workshop, with a boiler manufacturing department and carpentry shop, all established in the best technical conditions for the purpose of manufacturing the looms and other machines required for the factory's operations. Furthermore, it channels the waters of the Llobregat River through powerful turbines that can provide the motor force that the factory needs, with an output of up to three thousand five hundred horsepower.

This factory also has, on its compound, a residential area with housing for 260 families. The powerful manufacturers built groups of houses within the precinct of their plant, for the purpose of exercising greater surveillance and control over the workers. They founded cooperatives and even recreation centers, so that contact with the outside world would not mitigate the servility of their family of producers. They tried to enclose the entire course of the lives of the workers within the factory compound.

Now the factory no longer reflects the administrative rigidity that once characterized it. Confiscated by the workers, the latter work in Manufacturas Sedó in an environment of comradery. The situation of the war imposes some restrictions on the production process. Problems with regard to foreign currency prevent the acquisition of the required amounts of cotton, a raw material that is primarily obtained from Argentina. This is why the factory is only working a three-day week.

As for the technicians, they have cooperated effectively in the plant's economic progress. The comrades of the Committee told us that it is unfortunate that, as a result of the circumstances of the war, production cannot be increased, since, in view of the characteristics of the factory, it could potentially be raised very high, for during

normal operations, working a forty-eight hour week, an average of one hundred ten thousand meters of corduroy and two hundred thousand meters of canvas were produced, products that are primarily destined for the markets of South America, Holland, Egypt and Turkey. The factory currently has stockpiled in its warehouses, awaiting shipment, goods valued in the millions of pesetas.

Besides the production of thread and cloth, Manufacturas Sedó also produces 5,000 kilos of calcium carbide per day; and when the flow of water from the Llobregat is high, it can double this output.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENTS

Before July 19, there were about seventy families in Esparraguera who, due to a lack of work, were forced to undergo privation, hunger and despair. Currently, thanks to the spirit of solidarity of the town, liberated from all bourgeois exploitation, the breadwinners of these families have been able to get jobs in one or another local industry. And today, the problem of unemployment has been completely overcome.

As for housing, there are now about 120 confiscated homes. The Municipality is planning to proceed to confiscate all housing. When it does so, the Municipality

will collect the rent, and thus obtain a source of income to utilize for public works and for all those projects that are of vital interest to the town.

Before the movement began, there was a building in the town that was to be dedicated as a public library. It was under construction, but the months went by and the work proceeded very slowly. Now, this building, of magnificent proportions, will soon be opened as a library, where young and old may immerse themselves in the cultural essence contained in its vast quantity of carefully selected volumes.

The Municipality is also deliberating with regard to a plan to expand educational services, and increase the number of schools.

In the matter of sanitation and health, the Municipality of Esparraguera is planning to build a large sanitarium on the country estate of Julio Alcalde, a well-known rebel who fled to France once the revolutionary events began.

SINCERITY AND DISINTERESTEDNESS

When the Generalitat, after the July events in Barcelona, passed a law mandating a fifteen percent increase in wages, in Esparraguera the view prevailed that such an edict was not advisable. It was claimed that in a

revolutionary period restrictions rather than pay increases, which would necessarily have a deleterious effect on the economy, were necessary.

There is a compulsory war tax, adjusted to the economic capacity of each family. This tax varies from five to one hundred pesetas a week. And for those who work forty hours a week in their respective trades, five percent is deducted from their pay to send to the Militias.

From the very beginning of the movement, on the part of the comrades and the townsfolk in general, there has been an atmosphere of peace, and the outbreak of passions that could lead to regrettable results has been avoided.

The comrades who have oriented their activities in harmony with the organization seek at all times to suppress those morbid influences that lead to demoralization, which could create a corrupt attitude, one that is antithetical to the revolutionary morality that tends to transform consciousness; the revolutionary morality that dignifies the human personality. So they have sought to uproot vices; to isolate anything obnoxious that remains of the moral order of the bourgeois regime. Vices, regardless of their type, adulterate the conduct of individuals, making them

descend into the abyss of degradation. This is what, with their healthy opinions, the comrades of Esparraguera have sought to avoid.

A PRIEST AND SOME MONKS WHO WERE CAPABLE OF EMBRACING DIGNITY

In the first days of the revolution, the people, understanding the retrograde and reactionary nature of religion, burned the church. Of the three priests who once lived in the town, two made haste to flee far away, but one, certainly the youngest of the three, remained in the town, hiding in a house. He was discovered by the comrades; then he told them about the pressure his family put on him that finally led him to take up the career of a man of the cloth.

Currently, stripped of his black vestments, symbolic of obscurantism, the former priest is employed in the Department of War and is one of the most active and enthusiastic comrades working for the revolutionary cause.

In the residential colony in the Sedó compound there were some monks who were employed as teachers, teaching the religious instruction that has been so harmful for human progress. Another monk worked as a doctor's assistant in the Sedó infirmary.

Now, having put aside their monkish cowls, the first two monks are working in the Municipal Hospital; and the other monk at Sedó is still working as an assistant in the factory infirmary. Experiencing the new reality, which was so different from what they imagined it would be like, they never tire of saying that they prefer their current condition. In the face and every aspect of these individuals who used to be monks in the Sedó plant, we have noted a youthful spirit and a feminine grace; signs that we hope will be accompanied by a clear understanding of what the revolution represents for everyone. An understanding that will be translated into enthusiastic collaboration, forgetting the past.

6. VILAFRANCA DEL PANADÈS

We drove our car along a new highway; we went around another small hill, and left behind us the huddled houses of some village, the white silhouette of a country house along the road; and to the right, left, and on every side, the symmetrical lines of sight seemed to go on forever. We are in the Panadès, the region that is so famous for its vineyards, where the most famous wines of Spain and the world are made.

Villafranca is the most important town in the region, where the wine industry and commerce are highly developed.

The town has many export businesses, which are controlled by the workers employed in them. Wine is the main source of wealth here and the essential basis for trade. The comrades of the Supply Committee tell us that many commercial transactions have been carried out with France, consisting in the exchange of products.

Besides agriculture and trade, the town does not have any manufacturing industry of importance. It contains a factory that makes finished cloth goods, and a few metal workshops that have been collectivized, as has the entire transport system. There is also a factory that makes sharp blades for cutting machines, which is under the control of its workers. The surrounding district has a few mines, which once produced a high-grade aluminum ore. These mines, years before the revolutionary movement, were exploited for a while; later, due to the neglect of the business that owned them, they were largely abandoned. Now the Municipality is planning to reopen them and attempt to squeeze the greatest output from them. The bricklayers are also working in a collective.

We must point out that all the work carried out to organize the collectives was inspired by the comrades of the CNT, which has about 2,500 members in this town.

With regard to agriculture the area contains a large number of “rabassaires”. In various towns of the region, the peasants, grasping the promise of the collectives, and understanding that it would be a mistake to oppose them, are collectivizing their properties.

We wish we had enough space to devote an extensive study to review what we have seen in order to give the reader more information pertaining to the interesting explanations of the local comrades. We may only provide a rapid summary of our observations.

In the building housing the town’s train station, we admire the large library containing more than two thousand volumes on viticulture, published in Spanish, French, English and Italian editions. The library also contains the major Spanish and foreign magazines, to which the library subscribes.

We visited the school laboratories; in the wine cellars, where the casks are stored and subjected to the necessary experiments to provide them with the sought-after quality. We spent some time in these well-equipped laboratories, where, under the guidance of expert

personnel, the wine is analyzed and all the tests are carried out that are required by the science of winemaking.

THE CULTURAL WORK OF THE MUNICIPALITY

Although the Municipality has initiated many projects, one of which involves the implementation of a complete census of urban property in order to study the most suitable way to municipalize housing, it nevertheless has not overlooked cultural work.

In the former cavalry barracks, there is now a magnificent school. The school will have 24 classrooms, and already 16 of them are ready for the students.

Besides 96 refugees from the Paloma nursing home in Madrid, Villafranca has also accepted 120 children from Madrid. The Municipality has made sure that these children do not go without schooling. It must be noted that they are very content in their new home and some of them are even starting to learn to speak Catalan.

For pleasure and instruction, Sunday afternoons are set aside for free movies for the schoolchildren.

An *Ateneo* ["Peoples Cultural Center" —Translator's note] has been established in the town in the former Agricultural Center of Panadés, a place that was much-

frequented by the local potentates, who, when the revolution began, ran away like rabbits. Plans are underway to teach adult education classes in this *Ateneo*, which promise to be attended by people of both sexes. A plan is in the works to establish a school of agriculture in the Puigreig villa, which is now municipalized, which will be of major interest for the region.

A MIRACLE FACTORY

Victor Hugo has called attention to the decline of religion. He said that in Holland, the scales that were once used to weigh the unfortunates who were accused of witchcraft by the Church are now used to weigh cheese. In Villafranca, there can be no doubt that religion has encountered a terrible defeat here, as well; thus, the local church has been turned into a warehouse, where diverse commodities are stored.

On the outskirts of the town there is an old peasant house called the "Molí d'en Rovira". They say that a woman named María Ràfols was born there, one of those poor hysterical women who are exploited by priests, friars and monks. It was said that this María Ràfols was a saint, with the power to perform miracles. No one ever witnessed these miracles, not even the most gullible and foolish folk.

The clergy of the region understood that they could exploit the memory of the unhappy Ràfols, who died in a cell in the local convent. They intended to build a magnificent building next to the house where the “saint” was born, in order to compete with their counterparts at Lourdes.

The Revolution put an end to their plans, and this famous “miracle factory”, the magnificent building, said to cost about five million pesetas, is still unfinished. Now that the Municipality has confiscated the building, its best rooms that are already completed are being considered for renovation as the site of a hospital or sanitarium; here a number of monks once lived, who fled, leaving behind their clothing and personal belongings.

7. RUBÍ

THE EFFORTS OF THE PEASANTS

This town has some 8,000 inhabitants, and all of the workers in the town are members of the Confederation. It is an essentially agricultural area, although it does have about a dozen factories engaged in the manufacture of finished and semi-finished fabrics.

Here, as everywhere else, it is the peasants of the countryside who especially demonstrated their faith in

the advent of the new social structure born from the Revolution. It is the peasant comrades, members of the CNT, who are in the vanguard of the work of renewal that must be carried out in agriculture. Without a petty and grasping mentality, without abject bourgeois egoism, and without getting mixed up in any political scheming, these 180 farmers who have formed a collective work incessantly, and have pooled together their respective small properties, united in labor.

Our farmer comrades of the CNT deserve praise for their tenacious will. They knew how to rise to the occasion; they did not cling to old routines, to the stale egoisms in contradiction of the revolutionary spirit. It is to be hoped that they can convince their counterparts in Rubí who are socially backward, and get them to merge their labor with that of the Agricultural Collective.

The Agricultural Collective of Rubí was formed at the beginning of September. With the lands that the members contributed, together with those that had been confiscated, they had many hectares of land, divided between forest and arable. They make charcoal in the forest and also use the latter as a source of timber. They are currently planning to initiate a reforestation program in their woodlot.

There is no fixed workweek. They work as long as they have to work, even on Sundays. They are paid the same wages as before the Revolution. In order to obtain the funds they need, they have been borrowing against the liquid assets of the individual owners who joined the collective, and have collected 50,000 pesetas in this manner. To this figure must be added the income from various miscellaneous market sales: wine, lumber, charcoal, etc.

Seven large landed estates have been confiscated, one of which is cultivated in conjunction with the peasants of Papiol and another with those of Sant Quirze. They work in common, and intend to share the product equally. In some rural buildings, controlled by the Collective, they have pigs. They have a tractor for working the fields, a threshing machine and 37 animals, horses, mules, asses, etc.

We spent some time in discussion in the magnificent headquarters of the Collective, which previously belonged to a rebel who owned a construction firm, with the comrades who compose the administrative staff of the Collective. They told us that they are planning to introduce the family wage. As for the upcoming harvest, they expect it will be splendid, since in the Collective

alone, much more land is cultivated now that was previously farmed in the entire town.

A collective wine warehouse has been established for the wine that has been confiscated and for all the harvested crops contributed by all the members of the Collective. Eight tons of wheat, four of oats and two of barley have been sown, and there are eighteen tons of potatoes that are ready to be planted.

The Revolution has excellent supporters among the peasants of the Collective.

THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Among the factories in the town, eight have been collectivized and the others are in the process of collectivization, and are already operating under workers control. The workers in these factories work only three days a week.

An interesting resolution was passed by the workers of the collectivized factory "*Textil Activa*" (CNT) that was confiscated by its workers after the revolutionary movement. This factory produces cotton clothing for the Militias. In view of the abnormal situation we are now facing, in which sacrifices are necessary, they adopted the measure of reducing their wages by an average of 15

or 16 pesetas per week. They did this in order to set an example for other localities where there are workers who, instead of making a voluntary sacrifice, are paid for more days than they actually work.

There are two lace factories that—judging from what we were told by the comrades—will be shut down. Labor should not be undertaken that does not respond to the needs of the moment.

We spoke with the comrades of the *Fábrica Colectiva Brazo y Cerebro* [“Collective Factory of Arm and Brain” — Translator’s note], devoted to general haberdashery. Forty-two people work there, along with the person who was once the owner of the factory. They devote ten percent of their wages to support the needs of the Municipality. They told us that they lack raw materials and that now the Collective works for the war.

It is of interest to note the opinion expressed by the Local Federation of Trade Unions. They think that, besides the Administrative Council that every factory possesses, a Local Council should also be formed that unites all the Administrative Councils and where the payments and receipts that affect the Manufacturing sector of the town should be managed.

A LITTLE CHAT WITH THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

The Construction Industry is composed of 180 individuals. It is collectivized, and the former owners of the construction companies work alongside their former employees.

Wages have been standardized, and a study is currently underway to introduce the standard wage. They told us that they are not seeking to make money. If they increase the number of the projects they are working on, it is for the benefit of the collective.

The construction workers work Saturdays and Sundays when necessary.

Inspired by excellent proposals, they lend their assistance to the peasant comrades, since agriculture plays a preponderant role in the local economy. They want to carry out building projects in collaboration with the farmers.

THE PLANS OF THE MUNICIPALITY

The Municipality has major plans that will be of great benefit to the town. Most of these plans were conceived by the comrades of the Confederation, who always have a predisposition to push the work of renewal forward.

An Accident Insurance Plan will be created for the workers. The money that previously was sent to the major insurance companies will now remain in the locality.

A building will also be renovated for use as a health clinic and hospital.

With regard to projects that affect mutual aid, the members of the Construction Industry have offered to work without pay. As for the building materials, the town will devote the income from one day per week from its assets to cover these construction expenses.

The total quantity contributed each year to the insurance fund—we were told by the comrades—amounts to approximately 400,000 pesetas, and this money will undoubtedly be put to better use by using it for the needs of the locality.

On the initiative of the Municipality schools are being built. A magnificent building is being constructed where, comfortably cared for, the children will receive a conscientious education.

The Municipality also intends to build a Health Center and a Maternity Clinic.

The workers have agreed to donate 10 percent of their wages for supporting the needs of the municipality. Since we are undergoing a period of crisis and the workers are working reduced hours, this amount will certainly be reduced. The Municipality is studying other means to generate revenues, and it is for this purpose that it has produced a special card for a municipal census. On this basis it will levy a tax that is tailored to the resources of each person. Thus, everyone will make their contribution to the war effort and will help the 182 combatants from the town fighting on the fronts of Madrid and Saragossa.

We must also mention that a study is underway on the collectivization of retail stores and on the establishment of a rationing card and the creation of a central office for distribution.

OTHER COLLECTIVES

The pharmacies have been collectivized. There were three pharmacies in Rubí; two have been closed, and the remaining one is open to the public twenty-four hours a day.

It is possible that, in order to bring the Municipal Insurance Plan to fruition, the medical services of the town will also be municipalized, and at the same time a laboratory will be established in the town, where

medicines can be manufactured that can replace the expensive medicines that are shipped from other locations. It must be pointed out that the decision to municipalize the pharmacies was made by the CNT.

Collectivization has also been carried out in the Metal Industry. Five small workshops have been merged into one, where, in an atmosphere of equality, the workers labor alongside those who used to be their employers, who, demonstrating clear awareness of the new structure that social life needs, are content to earn a wage and work just like the others.

In the headquarters of the Local Federation of Trade Unions, located in a magnificent building that was previously occupied by the local Landowners Association, we bid farewell to the comrades of this small town, whose labor can serve as an example. And once again we drew the conclusion that the social importance of a town is strictly related to the creative will of its trade union militants.

8. VILANOVA I LA GELTRÚ

Every town we visit has its own particular characteristics that distinguish it from the other towns. In Vilanova i la Geltrú, a city of some twenty thousand inhabitants,

municipal life has been influenced to the greatest possible extent by the federalist principle.

The Municipal Council is composed of the following comrades: 7 from the National Confederation of Labor; 6 from the “Esquerra”; 3 from the POUM; 4 from the PSU; and 2 from the “Rabassaires”. There is neither a mayor nor a president. The comrades who assume the administrative functions are members of the various pertinent commissions for the normal functioning of municipal life. Each session of the municipal council elects a president, in order to facilitate discussion. It should be noted that resolutions are not adopted by majority vote, but every question is debated until there is total unanimity. Due to these federalist rules, implemented since the very beginning of the movement, it has been possible to establish an atmosphere of harmony in the town that has made it possible for the town’s affairs to proceed smoothly.

In agreement with the comrades of Vilanova, we think that it is in the municipal structure that the most equitable form of governance must be found. Thus, there is no president in the Municipality, a position that always confers an aura of superiority to the person who exercises it. As for the deliberations, there can be no doubt that abiding by majority vote would lead to

discontent. It is preferable to reach agreement by way of discussion, making use of all the adequate arguments.

FEDERALISM IN ACTION: A VISIT TO THE PIRELLI FACTORY

We can only provide a glimpse of the new projects underway in Vilanova i la Geltrú; but we cannot omit an extensive discussion of what we saw during our visit to the Pirelli factory. We could provide a detailed report just on the technical conditions that prevail there. We shall leave this subject for another occasion, and we shall content ourselves now with providing some information that we have been able to obtain, thanks to the friendly dedication of the comrades who manage the factory.

The factory employs 1,500 persons of both sexes, and has been confiscated by the workers.

The despotic spirit that characterized the management had led to many conflicts. Once the Revolution broke out, the foreigners—Italians—who staffed the management positions fled from our country.

Now the factory, run by its workers, with the effective aid of the technicians, who have known how to comport themselves with dignity, fulfilling their duty, functions normally. Aware of the importance of hygiene in industrial labor, they have provided the various

departments of the factory with means to meet the needs of the wellbeing of the workers.

Wages have been standardized. The workers work 40 hours a week; however, understanding that they must intensify production, they have decided to work 48 hours for the same wage as before.

To get an idea of the importance of the Pirelli factory, we shall catalog a list of some of the articles that are produced there. The factory produces some 300 kilometers of electrical cord every day; 4 kilometers of high-tension power cables; and between 30 and 36 chassis for traction vehicles. It produces 4 kilometers of flexible hoses for irrigation and viticulture every day. It produces some three thousand pairs of rubber boots every day. It also manufactures some 200 square meters of rubber flooring for hospitals per day. It also produces various articles relating to health care and other products.

AGRICULTURAL WORK

There are some 250 peasant householders in the locality; the Trade Union is divided into four groups or sections: sharecroppers, day laborers, tenant farmers and small landowners. The Central Committee of the Trade Union of Agricultural Workers is composed of one delegate

from each of these sections. This organization has a somewhat independent character, since it contains elements that belong to the “Union of Rabassaires”, to the CNT and to the UGT.

At the present time the production of the local countryside cannot meet the needs of the town, but it is hoped that within the next year there will be enough to not only satisfy its needs but also to set aside some for export.

A collective has been created by our organization that possesses the following machinery: four tractors, one threshing machine, four reapers and one binder; in addition, it has fifteen animals for plowing, with their corresponding plows. The Collective has confiscated 44 farms that belonged to rebel landowners. We must point out that some landowners voluntarily surrendered their lands to the Collective. The members of the Collective do not have fixed working hours and have interesting plans that are in the process of implementation; one of them involves creating a collective farm devoted to intensive aviculture and livestock raising.

Due to its agricultural importance, we should mention the Foix Reservoir, which contains the waters of the Foix River and the slopes of the nearby mountains. It has a

capacity of eight million cubic meters. Plans are underway to irrigate the entire district of Vilanova as well as Culleras and Ribas del Panadès with the water from this reservoir.

THE FISHERMEN

The Fishing and Associated Industry, CNT, has some three hundred members. Prior to the Revolution there were two unions, one of which was controlled by the employers and the other by the state.

The town and its environs have fourteen boats of the kind known as "*bous*", with eight-man crews; seven boats manned by between sixteen and eighteen crewmen, and some forty miscellaneous boats manned by two or three fishermen each. Some of these boats are collectivized, and the rest are under workers control. A plan is being drafted to collectivize all of them. The fishermen intend to create a mobile library.

CEMENTOS GRIFFI

This factory, which was confiscated by its workers, has some 120 employees, members of the CNT and the UGT.

They work forty hours a week, although all of them intend to work longer hours. At present they cannot produce at maximum output, due to the lack of coal.

They are also having problems, the comrades told us, honoring debts contracted by rebel elements.

Normal production is between nine and ten train cars full of cement per day; white Portland cement, super-cement, natural white Portland for tiles, waterproof stucco, etc.

Problems involved with changing demand led to a decline in output. A plan is currently under consideration to introduce improvements in the manufacturing process. The workers in the plant devote 7 percent of their wages to the Militias.

ACTS OF SOLIDARITY

There are several people's kitchens in the town, controlled by the CNT. During the first days of the Revolution, some five hundred persons were served meals at these kitchens; currently, about two hundred eat there and are served diligently. These kitchens attract those who are most in need, for, although there are no unemployed men in Vilanova, there are some three hundred women who are out of work, due to the crisis in the textile industry, and many women who were employed as domestic servants in the homes of the bourgeoisie have quit their jobs.

The town hosts some six hundred refugees from Madrid and more are expected.

The workers of the town contribute 5 percent of their wages to support the Militias. They also contribute to special fund drives for the Militias.

Vilanova i la Geltrú has sent a good number of individuals to the front, more than two hundred of whom are members of the CNT and the FAI.

OTHER MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS

Besides the industries we have mentioned, and the Construction Industry, which is also controlled by the workers, other economic sectors are relatively insignificant.

The Municipality can rely on taxes levied on the enterprises amounting to 7% of the weekly wages of the employees. For the same purpose, a partial confiscation of capital has been approved.

The Municipality has a Culture Commission, which is planning to increase the number of schools and presently has enough buildings to use for this purpose, beginning with two schools that belonged to religious congregations.

A Municipal School of Music will be formed, which will provide unparalleled facilities. All the pianos of the town have been requisitioned for this school.

The Municipality of Vilanova i la Geltrú is showing how, on the basis of good will and hard work, interesting projects can be undertaken for the progress of a whole town.

9. AMPOSTA

ON THE BANKS OF THE EBRO

On the right bank of the river is the town, composed for the most part of the humble homes of peasants, worn by the passage of time.

Wide and impressive, after flowing nine hundred twenty eight kilometers, the most important river in Spain, born from the springs of Fontibre (Santander), issues into the blue waters of "Mare Nostrum".

Just past the town, the Ebro is more than three hundred meters wide. The land stretches in an unbroken plane for as far as the eye can see. A small hamlet breaks the monotony of the journey, the ribbons of some canals scoring the land.

Amposta is a town of ten thousand inhabitants, and its economy is based on agriculture. It is known for its rice, and produces more rice than any other part of Catalonia.

In the last rice harvest of the year, which takes place in September, thirty-six million kilos of rice are harvested. It must be kept in mind that for every one hundred kilos of raw rice, about sixty kilos of white rice can be processed.

The land, collectivized by the workers, will produce better yields, thanks to the improved conditions in which they will be cultivated.

And, irrigated by the fertile waters of the Ebro, the rice paddies will extend to their fullest expanse, offering their wealth to the hard-working and free town of Amposta.

DAILY LABOR

There are some one thousand two hundred farmers in the area of Amposta. In order to increase the output of the farms, they have uprooted some old olive and locust trees to expand the irrigated lands.

We should mention the Poultry Farm, run by the peasants according to the most modern methods. This farm is valued at about two hundred thousand pesetas. By the end of this year, once the buildings of the farm are completed, they will raise some five thousand chicks, and

next year, with the incubators that are being installed, they will be able to produce up to two thousand chicks per week.

Besides the work of aviculture, the peasants are also engaged in the collectivization of another large farm, where they will work raising cows, pigs and sheep; they already have some seventy milk cows there, whose output will allow for the operation of a dairy with all the modern appurtenances.

The collective is perfectly able to fulfill its task, since it already has fourteen tractors, fifteen threshing machines and seventy horses.

The land has been municipalized and those who wish to remain outside the Agricultural Collective and desire to obtain some parcels that they can farm on their own account, must submit a request to the Municipality, which will permit them to do so as long as they do not resort to the odious practice of hiring wage labor, the infamous vestige of the past slavery that has survived up until our time.

The Construction Industry is collectivized, and its section has a tile factory and a limekiln. Public entertainment and several other trades have also been collectivized.

THE CULTURAL IMPULSE

With respect to education, Amposta was once quite backward. We need only say that at the present time the town has 38 schools, having established 15 schools since the beginning of the insurrectional movement. Because school is compulsory, one does not see in Amposta what we saw in other towns, where the little children wander about the streets, immersed in ignorance and exposed to all kinds of trouble.

In order to create the new schools the Municipality used buildings confiscated for the purpose. It has adequate materials, without having to request anything from the Generalitat.

Seeking to put an end to illiteracy, which characterized the old Municipalities, the Municipality has instituted six special classes for adults.

The Municipality shall also soon create a School for Arts and Trades, and a School Cafeteria.

The Municipality has a library, which will be expanded to satisfy the cultural appetites of the people.

Several conferences have been held concerning the educational program and a choir and a theater are planned, for the purpose of developing in the children

the taste for art. For this work special teachers are available.

SUPPORTING THE REVOLUTION

More than three hundred residents of Amposta are fighting at the front and the Municipality has defrayed the cost of all their equipment and everything they need.

The town of Amposta has also contributed considerable direct financial assistance to the Militias, and up to the present date it has sent more than five hundred thousand pesetas to the Militias.

Having arrived from the evacuated regions, 162 people have been given refuge by Amposta, which has provided for all their needs.

A war tax has been imposed, which yields more than three thousand pesetas a week.

PROVISIONING THE TOWN

At the same time that the town endeavored to send volunteers to the various battlefronts, it also sought—comrade Reverter, a model of anarchist activity and understanding, told us—to obtain provisions for its population. There have been no shortages in Amposta,

thanks to the trade in rice. There are many tons of this nutritional food in storage in Amposta.

A family rationing coupon has been instituted for basic goods, which provides for three days' needs.

The Consumers Cooperative has been established in the church. It is curious to observe how the various parts of the church are used for this purpose. A large part of the population obtains its provisions in this Cooperative, which sells between eleven and twelve thousand pesetas worth of commodities each week.

There are about forty-five families that, due to their advanced age or because of ill-health, cannot earn their sustenance by means of their own labor. The Municipality has done everything necessary to see to it that they do not lack anything.

To summarize: the provisioning of the town is assured. "We only experience a scarcity", we were told by the secretary of the Municipality, "of wine and alcohol, and this is because we have an interest in seeing to it that as little as possible of those things enters Amposta."

URBANIZATION PROJECTS

The Municipality seeks to carry out significant improvements, such as demolishing some dilapidated

shacks near the entrance to the town, completing the sewage system and expanding water service.

Amposta has a water purification plant that is among the finest and the largest in all of Spain. The water, which comes from the Ebro, and serves the needs of the town, is purified by means of liquid chlorine.

Thanks to the sanitation program, epidemics like the fevers and illnesses that used to wreak havoc among the workers have been eliminated.

Attending to the needs of the town, a hospital has been established. Part of the building housing the hospital contains a health clinic. Now, anyone who wishes can go to the hospital.

Finally, a sanitarium has been constructed, outside of the town, to care for those with tuberculosis.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE PLANS OF THE MUNICIPALITY

Although the Confederation is predominant in Amposta, the CNT and the UGT are both represented on the Municipal Council, and the most perfect harmony prevails. Let us hope that the same good relations prevail everywhere!

All urban real property has been municipalized; the income from rents, which have been reduced, is used to defray municipal expenses.

The Municipality has confiscated several saltpans that can yield about five hundred thousand pesetas a year. It is also building a sodium hypochlorite plant.

Every year, many tons of rice leaves go to waste that could be utilized for the manufacture of paper if the Generalitat were to become interested in this initiative.

A plan has been approved to introduce the family wage. Once this measure is implemented, the Municipality will convoke an annual public assembly so that the people may decide how the profits are to be employed, once all expenditures are deducted.

In conclusion, Amposta is one of the most promising towns in revolutionary Catalonia. This is due to the combative spirit of the comrades in general, among whom the members of the Libertarian Youth stand out, a magnificent group of men and women, who are clearing the way to the future for the oppressed.

10. ARENYS DE MAR

TOWNS AND CITIES

We wanted to visit sparsely populated towns as well as densely populated cities. We have constantly observed that in the small towns more significant social programs of a revolutionary type have been implemented than in the more populous cities. Perhaps this is in part due to the fact that a small town is less complicated compared to a city.

What interests us is what has been achieved, or plans that are being considered for implementation. We take into consideration the importance, or the congenial character, of all those initiatives that have been undertaken to establish a new era. This is what we are trying to highlight in our brief reports gathered among the confederal areas, as we visited various towns.

THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Arenys de Mar has about 5,000 inhabitants. Although other groups are represented in the town, the CNT is predominant.

Most of the militants are enthusiastic and optimistic young people. They are contemplating what they can do,

and what they can inspire, in their towns, to bring the maximum number of projects to fruition.

From the very first moments of the revolutionary movement, which did not assume a violent character in this town, the comrades of the CNT carried out the confiscations and devoted themselves to the work that was required by the circumstances, assisted by two or three individuals who, although not members of the Confederation, placed themselves at its disposal. The collectivization of the metal and construction industries was begun. The manufacturing sector, which is the largest employer in the town, will also be collectivized, but the comrades are awaiting the resolutions concerning this industry in general that will apply to all of Catalonia. In the meantime, the factories are administered by the Control Committees established in each plant. The manufacturing workers, due to the current crisis, are working three-day weeks, but are being paid for four days so they can meet their most pressing needs.

In this town, the comrades tell us, there is no unemployment among the working class, since those who did not have jobs before the movement are today working for the Municipality (together with, as is the

case in other towns, diverse elements from other social categories of the population) on public works projects.

THE WAR TAX

The workers of Arenys de Mar, understanding that they have to do their part in the fight against fascism, have a certain number of comrades at the fronts. We must note that the only local organizations that have dispatched elements to the war are the CNT and the FAI. This is quite an eloquent detail that deserves emphasis.

With regard to the economic dimension of the war, the contribution of the workers is fixed according to wage categories.

As for the owners of businesses, they are obliged to pay, as a war tax, a tax on their capital. The property of those who have fled has been confiscated.

Special measures have also been implemented for public entertainment, cafes, etc., which contribute with their pennies to the economic foundations required to prosecute the war. A five centimo surcharge is levied for every customer or for each purchase of food or drink.

THE CULTURAL CAMPAIGN

In a school building belonging to a religious congregation several free schools have been installed, under the pedagogical guidelines of the CENU.

The Libertarian Youth of the town, interested in raising the cultural level of the young people, have tried to find the most attractive way to carry out cultural work. They are sponsoring evening screenings of cultural cinema, and in view of the good results they have obtained they plan to carry on with this project.

Rich people have formed a deplorable idea of the working class. For them, the producers were mentally backward, incapable of feeling admiration for art or for beauty. The workers themselves provided the most overwhelming refutation of this lie by respecting the works of art that were in the possession of the bourgeoisie or the Church, even showing respect for the examples of religious art. Thus, for example, in the church, which is now used as a garage, all the religious articles were burned except for the high altar, a true jewel of baroque art. Today it is amusing to observe in the nave of the church, blackened by vehicle exhaust, towering over a series of automobiles of various types,

the fine detailed filigree of the altar that the “incendiaries” knew they should respect.

LEARNING HOW TO WORK

There were some young people from the town who were students at universities in Barcelona. Since most of them were raised in the lap of luxury, they viewed the workers with a certain degree of contempt. For them, labor was denigrating and the workers were a kind of lower form of life. Then the revolutionary movement arose and these young people, under the guidance of the workers, had to learn how to work. Provided with pick and shovel they were set to work for a few days on work projects near the beach, and are actually apprentices of the master workers. No doubt they love work today. After having developed some calluses on their hands, they will understand that labor dignifies the man who engages in it.

This is how the class conscious proletariat of Arenys de Mar think and work: these workers who, facing the sea, are ready to confront the enemy if necessary, quick to mobilize, as they did on the occasion of the bombardment of Rosas.

11. BLANES

A PLACE THAT USED TO BE A HATEFUL LOCATION OF EXPLOITATION OF THE WORKERS

Just before arriving at the town we encounter the concentration of buildings of the SAFA, a well-known factory producing artificial silk.

When we look at this factory, when we converse with the workers employed in it, we must remind ourselves of all its odious past: the phases of struggle provoked by the management of this factory. SAFA operated with Swiss and French capital, and Romanones and Ventosa y Calvell were also major shareholders in the enterprise. The workers were treated with the most extreme despotism, as if they were servants born to endure every kind of insult and the most outrageous provocations; they were paid paltry wages for the unhealthiest jobs. Many became ill due to their work in the factory, so that the shareholders could see their profits rise.

There were three major strikes at SAFA that demonstrated the rebellious spirit of the proletariat of Blanes, which was not at all prepared, under any conditions, to endure the abuses that the management sought to inflict on it. The first was in 1930; it lasted four

months; the second, in 1933, when the government in power at the time attempted to implement the draconian law of April 8; and the last strike, which took place three years ago, lasted until the fascist uprising. We hardly need to mention the series of abuses, the notorious reprisals directed against the workers, and the insulting actions of the Guardia Civil, who had become the guard dogs of the company.

Now the workers, who number approximately one thousand two hundred, run the factory. They thought about increasing their wages, but, after extensive deliberation, they understood that the time had not yet arrived for this reform and they decided to accept the same wage as before the movement.

Production has declined due to the scarcity of raw materials. The following elements enter into the composition of artificial silk: paper pulp, cellulose, carbonic acid, sulfuric acid, etc. Some of these ingredients come from Norway and Germany. At the present time the factory's technicians, who from the very first stood alongside the workers, are attempting to obtain the cellulose they need by manufacturing it in the plant itself. If this is possible, the price of production will be reduced by twenty or twenty-five percent, and naturally will result in a corresponding increase in the

amount of money available for purchasing other raw materials.

SAFA is the number one producer in Spain of artificial silk. The workers, now that they are liberated from the hated yoke of their employers, work with enthusiasm. The comrades of the Control Committee have spoken to us of some of the reforms they are considering introducing in the plant, so that the work will not be so harmful to the health of the workers. They would also like to renovate the former barracks of the Guardia Civil, located near the factory, for a school for the children of the workers at SAFA and for the children who live in the housing located on the plant compound.

THE NEW ORGANIZATION OF LABOR

In Blanes, the producing class, which is sympathetic towards the postulates of the National Confederation of Labor, is fully capable of rising to the occasion in order to take over the machinery of production.

The town's manufacturing sector is composed of six factories that operate under workers control; and another factory devoted to the fabrication of belts, the most important of its kind in Spain, which is under workers control and which is being considered as a candidate for confiscation.

The Construction Industry has been socialized.

The following sectors have also been socialized:
Transport, Woodworking, Barbershops, Public Services,
Plumbers and an alcohol distillery.

The peasants have a collective farm, where they are planning to add to their herd of livestock, and also to increase the production of vegetables thanks to better irrigation.

The Vall María farm belonged to the magnate named Ribas, who was the executive director of the transport services at the waterfront. After the revolutionary events, the farm has been considerably improved; work is mechanized; the farm has motors, a mill and 28 cows that give a very high yield of milk. The collective farm is in its first stages of exploitation, but these comrades expect to produce great quantities of products.

The fishermen, numbering about sixty, who compose the crews of the fishing boats known as "*bous*", are currently deliberating on how to socialize their industry.

Previously, the owners of the fishing boats kept sixty percent of the value of their catch, and now the fishermen themselves receive this sixty percent, and the rest is given to the owners of the boats. Furthermore, the latter must pay, as a war tax, thirty pesetas a week, and

they must also pay for costs relating to illness and accidents among the workers. Fish is sent to the hospitals regularly.

All those who work in the socialized regime are paid a standard wage. They receive seventy pesetas a week, including the employees of the Municipality.

All socialization in the town of Blanes is the responsibility of the Municipality and the latter collects all monies and taxes and pays all wages and expenses of the socialized enterprises.

CULTURAL WORK

The comrades have not neglected culture. They have done everything within their power to see to it that everything necessary is done to efficiently implement their projects, by creating a new mentality in the schools.

Three buildings, previously used for religious instruction, have been renovated and will be used for their newly assigned role.

For the School of Arts and Trades, the two best buildings in the town have been confiscated. One of them will be devoted to the teaching of music and the other will be for teaching drafting, modeling, painting, electrical trades, chemistry, physics and miscellaneous trades. We

should point out that the technicians of the town have volunteered their disinterested collaboration in this project.

At the site currently occupied by the church, which is slated for demolition, there will be a children's playground.

REVOLUTIONARY SOLIDARITY

The workers devote one day's pay to help pay the costs of the war and in this way some nine thousand pesetas are collected every week.

The workers of the town devote their Saturday afternoons and Sundays to work on the town's fortifications. They are always ready to contribute whatever is necessary to utterly crush fascism. When work is carried out with this kind of determination it is capable of enduring the most difficult ordeals.

The proletariat of Blanes has sent about seventy individuals to fight at the front. In addition, there are about 180 individuals stationed along the shorelines in the coastal defense service.

From the towns of Aragon, Pina and Gelsa, Blanes is host to about 110 children, who are lovingly cared for, now

that they were forced to leave home because of the fascist threat.

THE MUNICIPALITY, THE AXIS OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

We have already pointed out that everything that affects the economy of the town is regulated by the communal fund; when the comrades took over the Municipal fund they reported that it did not contain even one centímo. The honesty of their auditing was verified by the current balance of a surplus of 78,000 pesetas. This is an eloquent testimony of the honesty and probity of those who are working for the Revolution, which contrasts with the spirit of pillage exhibited by those who used to run the Municipalities.

As for working class unemployment, the eternal nightmare of the workers, this problem has been resolved by the Municipality; those without work have been given jobs in the neighboring forests making charcoal.

A tax has been imposed on the wealthiest people in the town.

The comrades of the Supply Committee have shown us that the health and progress of a town depend on its ability to provide for its needs with its own resources.

“As long as we were expecting every kind of assistance from other towns we underwent endless difficulties. Now we provide, by means of the Committee, everything that pertains to this important question and the results are noticeable.”

- 1.A reference to the bombardment of Rosas by the rebel fleet.

Part 4

Libertarian Communism

1. Lécera, an Aragonese town where libertarian communism is a reality
2. Fraga
3. Membrilla

1. LÉCERA, AN ARAGONESE TOWN WHERE LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISM IS A REALITY

*Lécera is a model town—Its characteristics—The understanding of the Revolutionary Committee—The administration and remuneration of labor—Distribution of products—The outpost of Monte Lobo—Belchite, two thousand five hundred meters from us—A talk with Captain Luis Jubert*¹

A MODEL TOWN FOR THE NOBILITY OF ITS SENTIMENTS

Lécera is the largest town in the province of Zaragoza and belongs to the judicial district of Belchite. The latter town is twelve kilometers distant.

Lécera has 2,400 inhabitants and possesses some industry, including a plaster factory. The rest of its

economy is based on agriculture, its most important crops being wheat, grapes, saffron and a smaller quantity of miscellaneous grain crops.

Lécera, which prior to the Revolution was untouched by the confederal movement of the CNT, is a hard-working and sentimental town. Due to its virtues and its understanding, it is certain that it will be the model for many other towns in Aragon.

A CONVERSATION WITH THE TOWN COMMITTEE

Upon arriving in the town, which has now been transformed into a supply base for the Militias, the first thing we did was to look for the offices of the Committee.

We found it in the former Town Hall.

Comrade Pedro Navarro Jarque, a schoolteacher from Lécera, answered our questions.

“The Committee is called the Antifascist Revolutionary Committee, and is composed of seven members, all of whom are also members of the CNT-affiliated Trade Union of Miscellaneous Trades.”

“It has complete freedom of action, and is not under the influence of any political party. We were elected at an

assembly and we represent the unanimous sentiment of the town. We have the same powers as a Municipal Council with respect to the administrative and internal order of the town.”

“There is a local Council of Administration, composed of five comrades who also belong to the CNT-affiliated Trade Union, which is responsible for organizing work in the countryside and in the industries of Lécera.”

“We also elected a Labor delegate who, together with twelve other sub-delegates, is responsible for organizing the collective labor and attending to the needs of the militia column fighting on this front. All of these delegates work, of course, in cooperation with the Revolutionary Committee.”

“Have you collectivized the land?”

“This was a hard and complicated problem. Or more accurately, it still is. We want the men to be convinced of the goodness and benefit of our ideas.”

“We have collectivized the large estates and we have, so far, respected the property of the small landowners. If the circumstances were not so adverse, we are convinced that the small landowners would voluntarily join the collective because the people of Lécera are good

and understanding, as they have demonstrated by voluntarily delivering a large part of their harvest to the common warehouse.”

“At the present time the saffron harvested on all the small privately owned parcels is picked collectively and then stored for consumption and exchange.”

“The small landowners, who previously were hardly capable of earning enough money to buy food, since almost the entire crop they harvested had to be delivered to the big landlords in payment of debts, wanted to hold onto their small plots, but, in a general assembly, the need to combine all the harvests was proposed and this proposal was unanimously approved.”

“We have to respect the views of the people and, without coercion, attract them by means of setting an example.”

The members of the Revolutionary Committee thought we should be acquainted with the work of comrade Manuel Martínez, the sub-delegate for social affairs from the front of Lécera. The town as a whole has much to be grateful for due to his efforts.

“How long has the Committee existed?”

“About three months. On August 25 it was inaugurated, and established as of that date the regime of libertarian communism, and abolished money in the town.”²

“Various products have been exchanged with Tortosa and Reus. Five thousand sheep have been butchered for the militias on this front and the militias have consumed two hundred eighty thousand kilos of wheat. In exchange for these provisions the Supply Committee provides the civilian population with all that it needs.”

“Without the circulation of money, how do the small landowners arrange to meet their needs?”

“We already said that we preach by example. There are neither classes nor categories. For us, the small landowner, who will undoubtedly cease to be one in the near future, is a producer.”

“By means of the sub-delegates of labor, who are also neighborhood delegates, there is full knowledge of all the workers’ needs, and the delegate for Supply that the Revolutionary Committee has posted in the food warehouse, with the help of a ledger, delivers to each family just what it needs. The distribution is carried out in the most equitable manner,” Navarro concluded, “and we still think we can do better in every respect.”

LÉCERA WAS ALWAYS A PROFOUNDLY LIBERAL TOWN

In this little town that is so ideal, for its way of life and self-administration, men of liberal ideas have always lived.

We heard anecdotes and episodes from the last century. Neither the CNT nor the FAI, however, due to the repression directed against them, were able to make the voice of their supporters heard here.

The ideas embodied by our confederal organism were unknown in Lécera up until now.

“Before the criminal fascist revolt,” the comrades told us, “there was one group of the Republican Left and a Socialist group. The CNT was unknown.”

“Today all the other groups have disappeared and all the workers are members of the CNT.”

“We have 512 members, almost all the workers, so it is impossible to form any other Trade Union. There is a great deal of affinity among us and there are no divergences of opinion of any kind.”

With regard to culture the comrades intend to create good schools and libraries.

“Was there a fascist attack in the town?”

“Not in the town, but in the mountains the fighting was intense, especially at Monte Lobo, where the rebels suffered many casualties.”

“During the first few days, all the fascists in the area, faced with the offensive of the forces coming from Albacete, withdrew, with elements of the Municipal Government, for Belchite. The other members of the Municipal Government remained in Lécera and ... the inevitable took place. The people executed their justice. This was not a popularly elected Municipal Government, of course; the old Municipal Government had been deposed on July 19 by the fascists, who replaced its members with the supporters of the rebels.”

AT THE SUPPLY WAREHOUSE

A short distance from the offices of the Revolutionary Committee we found the general Warehouse of Lécera.

This Warehouse occupies a large hall and the interior rooms of a building called the Salón Pompeya, which was formerly a dance hall. The storerooms are full of food, crates of cans of milk, sacks of beans, drums of oil, large piles of boxes of cured meats, etc., and on the upper floor, a large supply of clothing and other military gear. The provisions are abundant.

At the Warehouse office we see comrade Antonio González, from Santa Coloma de Gramanet, who is the general delegate for Supply in Lécerca.

He does everything that is necessary to prevent shortages of any products for the civilian population.

The local towns are not sending anything to the Supply Committee because they had already delivered everything before it was formed. However, they delivered a large quantity of oil, which was placed in storage.

“The Supply Committee,” said comrade González, “is composed of fifteen members, in addition to the general delegate and representative of the Quartermaster’s Corps. All of them are delegates of the Militia centuries, except one who is a delegate from the local Committee.”

“Food,” he added, “as you can see, we have in abundance.”

Besides the issue of basic foodstuffs and clothing, the Committee is not responsible for anything else. It is not at all involved in sanitation or military questions.

2. FRAGA

Another small town, without wealth or comfort. At the junction of the Barcelona-Saragossa-Madrid highway, in

the region of Aragon, on the slope of one of those hills that one finds throughout the region, Fraga, a little town with 9,000 inhabitants, the leading town in one of the provinces of Aragon, gives the impression of a large city of badly cobbled streets and dilapidated old hovels. From these hovels, simple and friendly workers emerge; the streets are full of life, and the town, which is usually so quiet, is today bustling with activity.

Here, too, those who were always exploited, and who used to work incessantly only to die of hunger, these workers of the farms and the workshops, have taken their own destinies into their hands. This was not difficult, for as soon as the first news of the military uprising and the people's reaction reached the town, the few active fascist sympathizers here rapidly disappeared. Others, however, old exploiters linked to the regime, owners of houses and stores, or sympathizers with capitalist exploitation, preferred to remain and accept the new life introduced by the workers of the town.

All the farm workers support the CNT and the FAI. There is no other group in the town, neither political parties nor the UGT, except for a small office of the Esquerra Catalana, which represents the petty bourgeoisie, who number no more than a few dozen. A thousand workers support the CNT, all the workers who take an interest

social questions. One single federation includes all the trade unions. This is the case for one very simple reason. Almost all the inhabitants of Fraga are employed in agricultural work. The rest work in the few workshops that are indispensable for the needs of 9,000 people: a blacksmith's shop, a rope-making shop, a carpentry shop, etc. The few workers employed in these workshops, whose needs and working conditions are so closely bound to the region's agriculture, have now joined the Trade Union of the agricultural workers.

This Trade Union, however, is far from being a mere trade union such as one finds in any capitalist country. It is not just a trade union in the narrow meaning of the word; it is also a collectivized enterprise. All the members of the Trade Union are members of a work collective. The product of their labor is delivered to the Trade Union, which distributes the basic necessities to everyone. Forty percent of all the cultivated land in the district is exploited by this collective. Membership is voluntary, but for those who wish to cultivate their land individually, regardless of the size of their property, they are allowed to exploit the labor of their immediate family members, without the assistance of any other wage workers. An ingenious table sets forth the number of animals that are allowed to these individualist families:

the numbers vary depending on whether the farms in question are located in fertile valleys or stony hillsides. If the parcels in question are wheat fields or fruit orchards and vegetable gardens (the cultivation of figs is particularly important in the region), everything has been arranged in advance so that the distribution should be fair and that everyone should have the same agricultural opportunities.

The family wage is the other aspect of this system of allocation. If everyone performs the same amount of work, the standard of living is likewise the same for all. The products of their own labor: wheat, fruit, olives, etc., are freely available. As for the remainder of their needs, each family receives a weekly quantity that increases in accordance with the number of family members and the number of working adults.

This wage is not received in the form of banknotes from the Bank of Spain, for the simple reason that they would be useless, since they have no value in the monetary circulation of the town. Small cards printed by the Trade Union, representing a nominal value that varies from ten centimos to twenty-five pesetas, serve as consumers vouchers. Only these cards will be accepted by the barber, the rope-maker and the office of distribution of

food products, which is of such great importance in the town.

A traveler who wants to spend the night or stay permanently in Fraga, must go to the Committee to exchange his money issued by the Spanish Republic for local vouchers. And a person who wants to leave Fraga must also go to the Committee, submit the reason for his trip and the amount of money he needs; the Committee will then exchange his local vouchers for Spanish banknotes.

Similarly, if the Committee thereby concentrates in its hands the responsibility for trade with other towns and regions, if it sells the products and buys other goods in accordance with the assets and the needs of the town, not all of its exchanges are carried out on the basis of money. For the most important needs, it is testing a system of direct exchange. The Committee takes a few truckloads of local products, especially wheat, corn and fruit, and sends them to the regions that need them. At their destinations, the Committees or Trade Unions give in exchange for them products they have in abundance, products that Fraga needs.

The Fraga Trade Union therefore operates not only as a corporative working class organization in the framework

of collective labor, but is also the organizer of all the town's supply networks and all of its consumption.

But this local Federation of the CNT has yet other responsibilities. It exercises full control over the administration of the town. In collaboration with the Agricultural Land Allocation Commission, whose activities we have summarized above, another commission has the responsibility of equitably fixing the amount of rents. No one is permitted to possess more than one parcel of real estate or, more generally, to occupy more land than he is entitled to by virtue of the size of his family. The Commission engages in a careful inspection of this allocation in order to obtain the most equitable result. The Trade Union is also responsible for cultural life. A cinema, a theatrical company, and several newly formed orchestras, testify to the efforts of the comrades, effectively supported by the passionate members of the Libertarian Youth, to establish and to provide opportunities for the enjoyment of all the culture that was previously denied to the townsfolk, despite the "Social Republic". An educational group has been formed, that bears the name of the greatest teacher of them all: Francisco Ferrer.

The visitor, welcomed with the comradery and the friendship for which our revolutionary comrades in Spain

are so famous, will continue on his journey, but before allowing him to leave the town, the comrades teach him one of their most recent lessons.

First: once the fascist air force finally made an appearance in the region—still a long way from Fraga—the comrades immediately proceeded to take precautionary measures to guarantee the safety of the inhabitants. Modern bomb shelters have been constructed throughout the town; we note in passing that there are no specialists or technicians, either in this field or any other in Fraga; everything is done by the workers themselves.

Second: these workers, these young people who are so avid for new knowledge, have created a public library. Everyone has contributed their own books, the few volumes that they have managed to acquire with such difficulty over a lifetime of illegal struggles; and they have also added everything that was of value in the libraries of the rich people who fled. Through well-illuminated and pleasant reading rooms the visitor is led, amidst the books, with well-justified satisfaction.

Fraga has provided a good example of how the new life is organized by the trade unions of the revolutionary workers.

3. MEMBRILLA

In the rocky countryside of La Mancha, to the southwest of Ciudad Real, one finds Membrilla. In miserable huts, the poor inhabitants of a poor province; 8,000 people, but the streets are not paved; the town has no newspaper, no cinema, no café, no library. It did, however, contain many churches, which have all been burned.

In 1920 some workers founded a branch Trade Union of the National Confederation of Labor. The militants underwent continuous persecution; the organization was even dissolved during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera.

The re-established Republic reintroduced political freedom, but economic conditions did not improve, and the town was just as poor as before. Five years passed in this way, without anything having changed with regard to the social conditions of the town.

When the military uprising began, on July 19, there were seven Civil Guards and several dozen fascists in Membrilla. The peasant middle class, organized in a Catholic mutual aid society, owed three million pesetas to the banks. On July 22, the big landowners were expropriated, small landholdings were dissolved and all

the land passed into the hands of the community. The small landowners realized that these measures disencumbered them of all their debts and their worries about money.

The communal fund was empty. In private homes, a total of 30,000 pesetas was found, which was requisitioned. All food, clothing, tools, etc., were distributed equitably to the population. Money was abolished, labor collectivized, goods passed into the hands of the community, and consumption was socialized. This was not a socialization of wealth, however, but a socialization of poverty. The enemies of libertarian communism take heed: everything in abundance was distributed freely, while only scarce products were rationed.

Work continued as before. The workshops worked an eight-hour day; in the countryside, the length of the working day varied depending on the season.

The Community Council is composed of fifteen members, ten of whom are members of the CNT and five are affiliated with the Republican Left. Four committees administer the town: one for provisioning (Supplies); one for defense; a third for agriculture; and the fourth for housing. Food and articles of daily use are distributed at four locations. The Supply Commission is responsible for

purchasing raw materials and products that are not manufactured in the district. There are no more retail shops; this is the reign of libertarian communism. The pharmacy is managed by its former owner, whose profits are controlled by the community.

The members of the Commune have unrestricted access to local products; they are distributed as if the Commune was one big family. Many goods have been sent to Madrid, but at the present time the community must ration many products. Three liters of wine are distributed to each person every week. Rent, electricity, water, medical care and medicine are free. Consultations with medical specialists outside the community are paid for by the Committee if they are deemed to be necessary. We were in the offices of the Committee when a woman arrived there who wanted to go to Ciudad Real and see a specialist for her stomach ailment. Without bureaucratic red tape, she immediately received the money for her trip.

Local grain production is only sufficient for nine months of the local consumption needs. Today this proportion is even lower, since a large number of refugees from Andalusia must also be fed. There are three doctors in Membrilla, one of whom is a member of the CNT.

A few weeks after the outbreak of the fascist revolt, the church was requisitioned for billeting soldiers. As a result, the children cannot go to class. In order to remedy this defect to some extent, a school for drafting has been created, thanks to the initiative of one of the comrades; the results, after four months, are impressive.

Consumption vouchers of five and twenty-five centimos permit everyone to buy whatever they want, apart from basic needs, which are distributed for free. Everyone receives fifty centimos per day. A kilo of rice costs one peseta, a kilo of sugar, 2.50 pesetas; a liter of oil, 1.50. Each family has a coupon upon which is annotated the products and articles it has received each month.

The president of the Supply Committee, an old left republican, adjusted quite well to this state of affairs, and contributes all his efforts to the construction of libertarian communism.

A shoemaking workshop employs seven men, twelve women and three children, of the ages of 11, 13 and 14 years respectively. No one is paid a wage and all give the impression of profound wellbeing. The father of the 13-year old child is proud to see his son learning a trade.

The community possesses 3,200,000 liters of wine, with a value of one million pesetas, but it lacks fabric to make

clothing. If it manages to sell the wine, it will buy fabric or equipment to make clothing.

In October 1926, some small landowners formed an organization affiliated with the UGT; it has about 100 members today. The enemies of the new regime join the UGT, especially the former landowners, who want to recover their former private properties.

The Trade Union affiliated with the CNT has 900 members. They do not pay dues, since there is no money.

There was no library in Membrilla. Now, however, the Trade Union has purchased 1,000 pesetas worth of books and is building a public library.

The whole town lives, then, as if it was one big family; the functionaries, delegates, secretaries of the Trade Unions, the elected members of the Municipal Council, all work as fathers of the family. But fathers who are controlled, since neither patronage nor corruption will be tolerated.

Membrilla might be the poorest town in Spain, but it is the most just.

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at: http://www.bsolot.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Souchy_Agust%C3%ADn-Colectivizaciones_La_obra_constructiva_de_la_revoluci%C3%B3n_espa%C3%B1ola.pdf

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- 1.The text of the chapter that follows corresponds with the topics listed in this caption up to “The outpost of Monte Lobo”. We do not know why the other topics are listed, or why the corresponding text is missing from the original edition. [Note of the Spanish edition of 1977]
- 2.The authors clarify the concept of “the abolition of money” in the next chapter, dedicated to the town of Fraga. [Note of the Spanish Edition of 1977]