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**TWO SPEECHES WHICH SIR JOHN
SIMON TRIED TO STOP**

**“WE CONQUER
OR
DIE”**



by
JULIAN GORKIN
M.P.

(Leader of
Spanish Workers' Party)

**Spanish Workers Appeal
TO YOU**

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Why Simon Stopped Gorkin Coming

By FENNER BROCKWAY

THE telephone bell rang. I lifted the receiver. It was Julian Gorkin, the leader of the Spanish Workers' Party—*speaking from the Detention Room of the Police Station at Croydon Airport!* He reported that the immigration officers and police intended to send him back to Paris by the next 'plane.

I got through to the Home Office at once, and into communication with Sir John Simon's principal secretary. He announced that the immigration officers were acting on special instructions and that the expulsion of Gorkin must stand.

I got permission to visit Gorkin, obtained a Spanish interpreter, rushed to Victoria Station by taxi, and taxied again from East Croydon.

The police station is like a lodge at the entrance, but there was a jangle of keys which reminded me of prison days as the police officer unlocked the door of the Detention Room. Within were three Spanish comrades. I knew Gorkin, and we greeted each other affectionately. Then I turned to the second comrade. I had a shock. He had the figure and features and eyes of Joaquin Maurin, the executed workers' leader. He was Maurin's brother, Manuel. The third was another representative of the Workers' Party.

The Detention Room was barely furnished with a small table, three stiff chairs, and a low bed for those who are detained for the night. We had only 40 minutes before the return aeroplane would take Gorkin and his comrades back to Paris, and we had much to do.

GOVERNMENT'S PERMISSION

Gorkin told me that he had been authorised to come to England by the Government of Catalonia and that the British Consul in Barcelona had given him a visa at the request of the Government. I saw the documents confirming this. Gorkin is a member of the Parliament, and his co-leader of the Workers' Party is Minister of Justice.

Nevertheless, when he arrived at Croydon he was treated like a suspected criminal. He was questioned for an hour. His baggage and pockets were searched. The officials even looked in his socks in case anything was hidden there. His letters were read and sealed envelopes were opened. One of his documents was a long letter from me and he was closely questioned about individuals named in it. This letter was taken away for half an hour and doubtless a copy was made.

This was startling treatment for a Member of Parliament representing the democratically-elected Government of another country!

The order excluding Gorkin stated that it was done under Article I, Section I, of the Aliens Orders, 1920. I have looked these up. They are regulations issued in connection with the Aliens Act of 1914, which was placed on the Statute Book to exclude enemy aliens. The Article gives the Home Secretary power to exclude an alien just as he wishes.

The immigration officers, however, had informed Gorkin of the grounds of his exclusion, and they are very interesting. I give them below as reported by Gorkin:—

1. The British Government wished to observe strict neutrality.
2. The Government did not want the Spanish conflict to have repercussions among British workers.
3. The Government did not want the British workers to be stirred up by Gorkin's speeches.

One can make three immediate comments.

NEUTRALITY!

First, the Government is permitting representatives of the Spanish Fascists to enter England. The Marquis de Portago is openly gathering about him at the Dorchester Hotel the nucleus of a Fascist Embassy in anticipation of the fall of Madrid. Marquis de Merry Del Val, who was Spanish Ambassador in London from 1913 until King Alfonso's fall, and is now acting as General Franco's Ambassador at large, travels freely from the Continent to England. **It is only the representatives of the Spanish workers and of the democratically-elected Government in Spain who are excluded.**

Second, it will take much more than the exclusion of Comrade Gorkin to prevent the Spanish conflict from having repercussions on British workers. Even Sir John Simon cannot stop the force of historical events.

Third, Comrade Gorkin's speeches have been read to vast audiences in Norwich and London and have received far more publicity in his absence than in his presence. They are now being reprinted in pamphlet form, and Sir John Simon has given them a fine advertisement.

When Comrade Gorkin had completed the story of his reception at Croydon, we got to work on his speeches. He dictated his Norwich message. Before he could dictate his London speech a police officer came in and warned us that the plane would be leaving in five minutes.

I arranged for Comrade Gorkin to post the speech to an unsuspected address by air mail from Paris, and on Monday morning it was in our hands.

We were escorted to the aerodrome by police officers, who kept back the pressmen and press photographers who wished to interview and "shoot" our Spanish comrades. As they entered the 'plane we gave them the watchword of solidarity and raised our clenched fists in the anti-Fascist salute. The last I saw of Comrade Gorkin and his comrades was a crowded window in the 'plane with their clenched fists raised in response.

We Fight Fascism at the Front and Build Socialism Behind the Front

By JULIAN GORKIN

(Speech read at Norwich, October 25th.)

TO THE WORKERS OF NORWICH, COMRADES.—
I lament very much that the difficulties presented by the British Government have not allowed me to greet the British workers in the name of the Spanish workers and to thank the British workers for the proofs of solidarity which they have given from the beginning of the war caused by the Fascist rebellion in Spain.

We especially thank the I.L.P. for the great efforts which it has made on our behalf. These efforts have been recognised not only by our own Party but by all sections of the working class in Catalonia and throughout the whole of Spain.

I hope that some day I will be able to come to England. I can assure you that every British worker who will come to Spain will be received as a brother by us.

The Spanish workers are living through events not only of the greatest significance to Spain but to Europe and the world. These events are indeed among the greatest of contemporary world happenings. The working class of Spain is writing with its blood the red story of a titanic struggle against unchained reaction.

The war in Spain is not a conflict merely between the Spanish working class and the Spanish capitalist class. **It is a war between the International Working Class and the International Capitalist Class.** This is shown by the way in which the most

brutal forms of Capitalism, embodied in the Fascist régimes of Italy and Germany, have assisted the Spanish Fascists.

If the Fascists in Spain had not been supported by the money, the aeroplanes, the bombs, the machine guns and the tanks of Italy and of Germany, if Fascist Portugal had not been in effect a "shadow"-headquarters of the Spanish Fascists, the rebellion of the reactionary generals and their trained troops of the Foreign Legion and Morocco would have been defeated within a few weeks. The Spanish workers are fighting the combined forces of International Fascism.

The Fascist Powers have been most open in their support of the reactionaries in Spain, but even those Capitalist Powers which have claimed to be neutral have in fact been supporting the Spanish Fascists. Against all the rules of international law, they have blockaded the elected Spanish Government and denied it the materials required to suppress the rebellion.

In many ways they have done more than that. We have more than once had to complain of the sympathy which the British authorities at Gibraltar have shown to the Fascists. We have known that a determined word from Britain could have stopped Portuguese assistance to the Fascists, because Portugal is economically and politically dependent upon Great Britain.

I am compelled to interpret the refusal of the British Government to allow me to visit England and to address the meetings which had been arranged for me at Norwich and London as an indication that its sympathy is against the duly elected Government of Catalonia and against the Spanish workers.

I was authorised to come to Britain by the Government of Catalonia on an official mission. The Government informed the British Consul in Barcelona of this and he gave me a visa to come to Britain. I am an elected member of Parliament and my Party is represented in the Government. I intended to come to this country, therefore, as a democratically-appointed representative of the Spanish workers and of the Government which they had elected in Catalonia.

The British Government, although it claims to be on the side of democracy, declines to admit a representative of the democratically-elected Workers' Government of Catalonia, whilst it welcomes representatives of the Fascist Governments of Italy and Germany, which have destroyed democracy in their own countries and are now helping an effort to establish a Fascist dictatorship in Spain.

I dwell on this, not because it is important in the midst of the great events in Spain, but because it is significant of the more important happenings. It illustrates how the forces of Capitalism everywhere are against the Spanish workers and emphasises the need for the

workers everywhere to show their solidarity with the workers in Spain.

I find that outside Spain there is a fear of the final result of our conflict with Fascism. There is anxiety because the Fascist forces are advancing on Madrid. **I say with confidence that we are still certain of our ultimate victory.**

Madrid has not fallen yet. The danger to Madrid has been a want of war material, but we have recently developed armament manufacture in Barcelona which is producing considerable supplies. **We believe that this may change the whole position within a few weeks.**

But by this I do not mean that we can win without a prolonged and costly struggle unless the blockade against us is raised and unless we are permitted the right of all recognised Governments to buy arms in our time of need.

There has been much talk of the sacred cause of democracy. The time has now come for the so-called democratic nations to allow us to resist the threat of a Fascist dictatorship by permitting us to buy the arms and the aeroplanes which we require.

But I wish to emphasise that the struggle in Spain has now become more than a struggle for capitalist political democracy against Fascism. When the Fascist revolt began we had liberal Governments whose weak and timid policies allowed the development of the Military-Fascist Conspiracy. Even after the Fascist rebellion commenced, the weakness of these Governments permitted it to gain its initial successes.

It was the working class who took immediate action. They could not meet the Fascist generals and their regiments with arms because they had no arms, but everywhere the working-class organisations declared a general strike and by this means prevented the Fascists from gaining an immediate victory over the greater part of the country. Then, after a delay of some days, the Government gave the workers arms, and it has been the Workers' Militia, organised by the workers' Parties and the Trades Unions, which have borne the brunt of the struggle against the Fascist forces everywhere. They have fought with primitive arms and often without arms against generals and officers trained in military technique and equipped with the most modern weapons of destruction. **It is this heroism of the workers, functioning through their organisations, which has prevented a national Fascist victory and which is destined to defeat the Fascists.**

Nor have the workers been content with carrying on the fight against Capitalism and Fascism on the military fronts. **Conscious of their power and destiny, they have taken the offensive and won their victories on the economic front.**

Throughout Catalonia, an area larger than your Scotland, there is now Workers' Power not only in the Government but on the land and in the factories and workshops. The peasants

have taken possession of the land and their right to do so has been recognised by a decree of the Government. The villages are now under the control of Councils representing the Peasants' Unions.

In Barcelona, the largest town in Spain and its industrial capital, and in the other cities of Catalonia, the workers have taken possession of the factories, the workshops, the railways, the trams, the banks, the public services and the hospitals, and all are controlled and managed by committees representing the workers' Trade Unions.

In Capitalist society war is always an occasion for profiteering.

There is no profiteering in Catalonia because the workers control industry and the wealth which their labour produces. The Capitalist directors have either fled or been dismissed. No longer does the wealth which the workers create pass away from them in profit or interest.

Despite the difficulties caused by the war the wages of the workers have been increased by one-third. The workers' control of the banks has meant that speculation has been stopped. Throughout the economic system the workers feel that they are serving each other and the common cause against Fascism as much as do the workers who are serving in the militia at the front.

This co-operative spirit has resulted in an increase of production by one-third, despite the withdrawal of large numbers of workers for service in the militia. **The workers now feel that the workshops and factories belong to themselves and that their labour is service for themselves and not for the profit of Capitalists.** They are therefore working willingly and enthusiastically, knowing that everything they produce assists in providing their own needs and the needs of the struggle against Fascism.

This development means that when we have defeated the Fascist forces in Spain we cannot revert to the system of Capitalist Liberalism which preceded the struggle. Indeed, there is no-one in Spain who thinks we can. **Side by side we are fighting Fascism at the front and building Socialism behind the front.** We are laying the foundations of a new social order which will find expression in a new form of government. That form of government will represent the workers, the peasants and the workers' militia, who are proving the only real power in defeating Fascism.

The struggle in Spain is an example of the struggle which all workers must pass through. It may be by different methods and in different circumstances, but the issues will be the same. **The menace of Fascism, which is an expression of Capitalism with its back to the wall, can only be overcome through action by the working class and by the winning of workers' power and the use of that power to dispossess the Capitalist class and establish Socialism.**

We welcome the signs of an awakening of the whole international working-class movement to a realisation of the significance of the Spanish struggle. There have been sections of the working class, like the I.L.P., which have understood from the first and which have done all in their power to give us assistance. Now we see that this realisation is coming to all sections of the working-class movement, and we take hope from this.

The struggle in Spain is terrible for our workers, but with the aid of the international working class we know that Fascism will be conquered.

From the heart of the struggle in Spain we greet you as brothers and comrades. Our fight is your fight; it is the fight of the workers of every race and colour. We hope that you will not have reason to be ashamed of the manner in which we are fighting. We give you our pledge that when your turn comes to bear the brunt of the struggle we will be by your side in spirit—**AND IN DEEDS.**

“Unto the End : Conquer or Die”

By JULIAN GORKIN, M.P.

Speech Read at Kingsway Hall, London, October 26th.

TO THE WORKERS OF LONDON, COMRADES.—It is impossible for me to regard as other than arbitrary the action taken by the British Government against me and Joaquin Maurin's brother, who was "accompanying me, in preventing our coming to London after being detained for five hours in the police station at Croydon Airport.

In consequence I am deprived of the fraternal honour of saluting you in person.

At the outbreak of the conflict in Spain (the whole responsibility for which rests with the Fascist militarists), the British Government, in response to the approach of the French Government, said, in effect : "We are hostile to Fascism as we are to Marxism. Since Spain is a country where Fascists and Marxists are occupied in killing each other, let them get on with it. We prefer to remain neutral."

Nevertheless, the British Government is not neutral. The fact that it prevents a representative of the Spanish workers from addressing the British workers is a proof of this and is a plain indication of its indirect pro-Fascist sympathies.

Merely from the legal point of view, praise of which the British Conservatives so fondly sing, the attitude of the British Government is absolutely indefensible.

THE ELECTION

The Spanish Government was formed as a result of an election carried out in the ordinary democratic manner and was responsible to a Parliament constituted in accordance with the will of the electors. This was all done in a perfectly constitutional way. In that Parliament reactionaries had their places, among them Gil Robles, who was primarily responsible for the repression of October, 1934, which cost 4,000 Asturian miners their lives.

In spite of all this, the militarists and Fascists rose against the lawful Government, against Parliament and the Constitution, and dragged Spain into a bloody civil war. Whichever way you look at it, to declare yourself neutral in such circumstances is to side with the rebel Fascists.

British opinion appears to be obstinately determined **not** to grasp the fact that this war in Spain is much more than a Spanish conflict and that it has become an international issue of grave importance.

We know that a well-defined Pact exists between Hitler, Mussolini, Olivevia Salazar, the Portuguese Dictator, and Franco. This Pact is part of the war plans of Italo-German Fascism.

In return for supplies of war materials, Franco has undertaken to hand over the Balearic Islands to Mussolini, the Canaries to Hitler, and has agreed that Spain, Portugal and Morocco—Spanish Morocco, which the Powers, among them Britain and France, ceded to Spain by the Act of Algeciras, should become a base of operation for Italo-German Fascism in the event of the outbreak of a world war.

IF FRANCO WINS

The victory of Franco in Spain means the triumph of Hitler's and Mussolini's plans to the perilous disadvantage of France, Great Britain and Soviet Russia.

The British governing classes, obsessed by their hatred of the Spanish working class, are perhaps incapable of understanding that General Franco's action may plunge the whole of Europe into war and Fascism for the sake of the Imperialist dreams of Hitler and Mussolini ; but working-class opinion and the democratic opinion of Britain are fully aware of this and of the frightful danger of humanity implicit in the triumph of Spanish Fascism .

To be neutral in such circumstances is to commit a crime against the workers, against liberty and against humanity itself.

Hitler and Mussolini, as has been shown over and over again, have not been neutral. Before and after the outbreak of the conflict in Spain, before and after signing the Non-Intervention Pact, they have helped Spanish Fascism. They have not hesitated to help Franco even by going back on their own signatures.

STUPID AND CRIMINAL

To be neutral in the face of these facts is not only criminal—it is stupid. We may expect Governments to be criminal and stupid, but not so the working class. They represent the future and the cause of freedom for humanity which is so gravely endangered at this moment.

British comrades, British brothers, we need your help—the strength of your fraternal assistance. You cannot allow Fascism to murder us with impunity.

We must protect ourselves, save ourselves, and in so doing save all workers from the horrible Fascist nightmare. To achieve this we **must** have adequate arms and money with which to get them. Send it. Make your collections for the brave Spanish militia who are so heroically fighting on all fronts.

According to the reactionary Press our case is lost and Madrid is about to fall into Franco's hands. But Madrid will defend herself with heroism. Her fall is not quite such a simple matter as the international reactionary Press appears to think.

All the workers of Spain, surely the workers of all countries, stand side-by-side with the workers of Madrid at this moment. **The problem is not one of men, not one of fighting courage. We are overflowing with men of courage. It is a problem of war material.**

With munitions, with aeroplanes, tanks and guns to confront the aeroplanes, tanks and guns supplied to Franco by Hitler and Mussolini, we can drive out the Fascists from the Madrid front and speedily capture Oviedo, Huesca and Teruel. **We shall, in a word, defeat Spanish Fascism.**

Then, in co-operation with the workers of all countries and strengthened by our victory, we shall go forward unitedly to annihilate European Fascism, whose threatening shadow hangs over working humanity. For this great purpose—to win our civil war and to prevent Imperialist war—we ask for arms.

WE DEMAND

We know, comrades, that you stand with us. We know that your solidarity and your spirit cannot fail us. Of that you have already given us many proofs.

But the gravity of the situation compels us to be exacting. We beg of you, nay, we fraternally **demand** of you, new and ever greater proofs of international working-class solidarity.

Workers of Britain! Workers of all political sections in Britain! Comrades—brothers! Our Party, the Workers' Party of Marxist Unity, has dedicated itself under this banner: "Unto the end—conquer or die!"

Already, some of our heroic comrades have died. Maurin, our General Secretary. Vidal, the Secretary of our Youth Organisation. And many, many others.

IF IT IS NECESSARY THAT WE SHOULD ALL DIE TO GAIN THE VICTORY, THEN DIE WE WILL.

"TO CONQUER OR TO DIE." IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO HAVE THE AWFUL RESPONSIBILITY OF SEEING YOUR SOCIALIST COMRADES DIE, HELP US TO CONQUER.

WORKERS, COMRADES, BROTHERS—HELP US! HELP US AGAINST FASCISM, HELP US AGAINST WAR, HELP US FOR THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKERS.

What You Should Do To Obey Gorkin's **Demand**

1. Raise Money for SPANISH WORKERS' FUND (I.L.P., 35, St. Bride Street, E.C.4).
2. Take part in United Working-class Agitation for Lifting the Embargo on Arms for the Spanish Workers and their Governments.
3. Urge the appointment of Workers' Vigilance Committees at works, railway yards, aerodromes and docks to stop goods being sent to Spanish Fascists.
4. Prepare your fellow workers for action to resist any move by the British Government (a) to give open support to the Spanish Fascists or (b) to prevent Soviet Russia or the workers of France from giving assistance to the Spanish workers.
5. Arouse support among your fellow-workers on your job, in your Trade Union branch, in your Co-op., etc., by selling this pamphlet and "IN SPAIN NOW" by John McNair, and "SPOTLIGHT ON SPAIN" by Jack Huntz (12 for 9d., post free).
6. Get direct news from Spain by reading "THE SPANISH REVOLUTION," the weekly bulletin of the Spanish Workers' Party (1s. 10d. for eight weeks, post free), and the "NEW LEADER" (2s. 6d. for twenty weeks, post free).

*The literature mentioned above can be had from the Socialist Bookshop,
35, St. Bride Street, London, E.C.4.*

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