

Plunderbunds Eye the Spanish Earth

Why have Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany been willing to chance setting off a new world war over the issue of intervention in the Spanish civil struggle? Why have the imperialist-democratic allies, Britain and France, aided by their stooges, the United States and Soviet Russia, been opposing the Spanish Nationalist-Fascist coalition with the farce of non-intervention while behind the scenes they carry on negotiations with the enemies of the Spanish Socialist-Democratic coalition, the Burgos government of the Spanish Fascists?

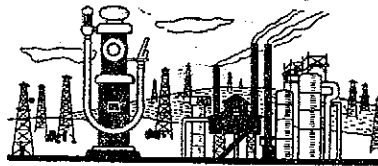
The answer is to be found hidden in the riches in the Spanish earth, lure for the plunderbunds of the world. To the Spaniard, the land question is primarily the agrarian question, for until the counter-revolution started three-quarters of the people depended directly on agriculture for their livelihoods. But that was because the Spanish people, ridden by monopoly and all but corrupted by it, had never exploited the natural resources of their country to any great extent.

Spain is probably richer in natural resources than any country in western Europe, and the monopolists in whose service the diplomats of the Fascist and "Democratic" plunderbunds toil well know it. Thus Britain has been willing to sabotage the struggle of the Spanish Republicans—who have not yet seemed to realize how much internal aid they could obtain if they adopted progressive capitalism as their philosophy—in return for an understanding about mineral holdings on the Iberian peninsula with the Fascist barbarians. Thus Italy has been willing to risk national bankruptcy and international anarchy to get a grab at the prizes. Spokesmen for monopolistic interests in Germany, France and "peaceful" Holland crowd them.

The whole north country, scene of the fiercest fighting, holds rich iron deposits in juxtaposition with coal. North of Portugal there are also tin deposits. Near the eastern half of the Franco-Spanish border are potash resources. Abundant iron de-

posits occur north of Valencia and in the southeastern coastal hills.

In the South, General Queipo de Llano, who up to now has been active only in talking a good fight over the Seville radio, hurled his men and fighting machines against the Republicans for three months to open up the area to further exploitation. Many mines resumed normal operations, one of the largest being the French-capitalized coal shaft, and the Spanish Fascists planned construction of new ones. Besides the coal and iron, there are rich deposits of lead, copper and mercury in the section.



No Plans for Poor

Potatoes, the staple food for many poor families, are too plentiful, therefore too cheap. Poor families will be made happier to know that the AAA will overcome this condition of plenty by paying farmers fifteen cents a bushel for feeding these potatoes to pigs. Will the poor families, thus deprived of their staple spuds, be able to obtain pork at prices within their wage? Hardly. The government will see to it that the excess of livestock will be reduced, under the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act. That is the act; the tragic-comedy is entitled "Planned Economy."

The Real Murderer

An Ohio woman is convicted of murder. She killed four old men "for their money." She is a wicked woman, and no doubt mentally unbalanced. But does not "for their money" suggest a cause for her wickedness, a reason for her unbalanced condition? Was poverty the real criminal. Read "The Crime of Poverty," by Henry George.

The Almaden mercury mines are of special interest to Italy; if fully exploited, they are said to be rich enough to smash the Italian mercury cartel. Aragon's lignite deposits, estimated at 20,000,000 tons, west of Huesca, have equal interest for Germany and France, for the mineral is valuable in the manufacture of synthetic motor fuel. Thus they also have special interest for Britain, the Netherlands and the United States, to the oil rings of which synthetic fuel is a threat.

British interests own the rich Rio Tinto copper mines. Valuable tungsten and vanadium deposits occur along the Portuguese border. In various of the mountain ranges which wrinkle the Spanish earth are stores of silver, zinc, salt, molybdenum, sulphure graphite pyrites. And Spanish Morocco, on which Il Duce Mussolini has his envious eye, holds manganese and lead as well as iron. All this is apart from Spain's value as a source of food supplies in time of war and from certain other agricultural resources, such as the Terez wine area in which British interests are dominant.

Mussolini and Hitler talk of ridding Europe of "Bolshevism"; Chamberlain and Chautemps prate of saving "democracy"; but all are cooperating to keep the people of Spain from making good their claims to the ores stored in Iberian mountains. For the national and intra-national industrial monopolies in whose interest these figureheads act must control the resource deposits on which their cartels are built—not to exploit them fully for general benefit but to sabotage efficient exploitation—or see these structures collapse like houses of cards. That they come so close to reaching an understanding among themselves should not be surprising; their common interest in opposing the equal rights of all men to the Spanish earth is so much more important than their individual interest in shoving one another out of the trough.

—W. L.

See: "Protection or Free Trade," p. 297.