

Edwin Cortes

A Synopsis of the Class Struggle in Spain

First Published: Libertad / December 1987

Transcription, Editing and Markup: Paul Saba and Sam Richards. Copyright: This work is in the Public Domain under the Creative Commons Common Deed. You can freely copy, distribute and display this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works. Please credit the Encyclopedia of Anti-Revisionism On-Line as your source, include the url to this work, and note any of the transcribers, editors & proofreaders above.

[EROL Note: The author described as a Puerto Rican P.O.W was a militant of FLAN Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional, arrested in 1980 linked to more than 100 bombings or attempted bombings since 1974 in their attempt to achieve independence for Puerto Rico. Released in 1999]

It has been a fascinating and moving experience for me to become familiar with the revolutionary struggle for socialism in Spain. This movement is important in that it is a unique and highly developed class struggle in Western Europe which threatens the fascist/monopolist oligarchies and the NATO alliance.

The Spanish State is a fascist dictatorship imposed by Franco and sustained today by Felipe Gonzalez as a representative of the revisionist/reformist Socialist Workers Party. In Spain, all the wealth is concentrated in the hands of the oligarchy. The peasants were forced to abandon their lands and move to the urban industrial areas, creating an increase in class consciousness among the workers and popular masses.

The workers are confronted with an unprecedented economic crisis, continued instability, exploitation and increased repression by a militarized police apparatus. Many workers, miners, students, peasants, etc. have been killed, seriously injured, tortured and/or incarcerated during the course of this struggle.

In response to this situation, a strong workers and mass movement, as well as an urban clandestine guerrilla struggle, has developed and grown quantitatively and qualitatively. It provides us with a refreshing revolutionary lesson in class warfare. It has independently adopted, in accordance with its own economic and political reality, the combination of mass agitation/mobilization and the strategy of prolonged People's War.

At the forefront of this struggle is the Spanish Communist Party (reconstituted), PCE(r), a Marxist/Leninist clandestine party which directs and organizes the workers and other oppressed classes for the seizure of power via the revolutionary road. The party openly advocates armed struggle and provides cadres for the October 1st Anti-Fascist

Resistance Group, GRAPO, a Marxist Leninist armed clandestine formation. The GRAPO represents the continuity of the anti-fascist armed struggle initiated during the insurrection of Asturia in 1934, and a response to the fascist violence of today.

On September 27, 1975, in an attempt to destroy the mass movement, five Spanish patriots were assassinated. Four days later on October 1st, with the fascist forces intent on celebrating these assassinations, four policemen were killed in a courageous act of revolutionary war by armed commandos of the GRAPO, hence their name.

Due to the fascist and dictatorial nature of the Spanish State, no legal revolutionary organizations are allowed to function. But the PCE(r) and GRAPO have survived this permanent state of war and represent a force to be reckoned with. They have exposed and defeated all revisionist/ reformist schemes to deviate the revolution. The politics of non-capitulation have given rise to militant workers' strikes, sabotage, the kidnapping of factory bosses to obtain workers' demands, civil disobedience, electoral boycotts and continued armed actions.

The most vivid expression of this militancy took place on March 12, 1987, when workers of the Reinosa Steel Factory went on strike to protest the announced dismissal of 463 workers. In the ensuing confrontation between special units of the Civil Guard and workers, the workers disarmed 30 Civil Guardsmen and 15 were held prisoners until they were exchanged for photo identification cards taken from members of the factory committee. The so-called Socialist Workers Party and the Civil Guard immediately responded by establishing a state of siege at Reinosa with tanks, armoured personnel carriers and mobilization of troops. In order to terrorize the people into submission, searches of houses, hospitals, stores and churches were conducted. Many people were brutally beaten, detained and one worker was killed.

Another example is the combative spirit of women in Puerto Real, who demonstrate every week in support of workers' demands for jobs and social change. In spite of police violence, the demonstrations continue.

As a result of increased mass and armed resistance the Spanish government, following the worldwide counter-insurgency strategy of US imperialism and using NATO as a springboard, has developed a special anti-terrorist unit and laws to destroy this revolution. The laws directed against the militants of the armed organizations and the outlawed Spanish Communist Party, PCE(r) apply with equal force to workers who set up barricades, defiant students, etc. Under the guise of combatting terrorism, citizens are rounded up, entire communities are put under military siege and many are incarcerated for being sympathetic to the PCE(r) and GRAPO.

The real socialists are the hundreds of courageous men and women incarcerated in Spanish extermination camps (prisons); Herrera de la Mancha, Caraban-chel, Acebuche, Ocalia, etc. under the most inhumane conditions imaginable.

The prisoners are subjected to twenty-four hour isolation, beatings, torture, 20 minute family visits, restrictions on correspondence and books, constant vigilance and harassment. Even under these horrendous conditions, the political prisoners of the PCE(r) and GRAPO maintain a spirit of struggle and resistance. They have initiated hunger strikes protesting the conditions of confinement and Juan Jose Crespo-Galende even sacrificed his life. Collectively, they have written various theoretical works while in prison which advance Marxist/Leninist and Maoist thought; such as Problems in the Construction of Communism, Texts for Discussion Among the Revolutionary European Movement and Philosophical Problems of Modern Science, among others. These works and their example nourish the workers' movement.

It is in this context that 18 political prisoners were recently transferred to various prisons throughout Spain. This is an attempt to destroy the growing solidarity movement in the streets and the unified resistance movement within the prison. These patriots continue the revolutionary tradition of the Spanish working and popular masses. They are representatives of the people's consciousness in arms.

As revolutionary Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, New Afrikans, Native Americans, etc., it is our internationalist duty to unconditionally support the struggle for socialism in Spain and amnesty for all political prisoners. We can break the isolation of this movement by writing to the prisoners, sending letters of protest to the Spanish government, subscribing to the publications Amnesty, Area Critica, Resistance (PCE(r)) and by purchasing books written by the prisoners.

