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Pierre van Paassen
Interview with Buenaventura Durruti
1936

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In 1936, after the liberation of Aragon from Franco's forces, leading Spanish anarchist Buenaventura Durruti was interviewed by Pierre van Paasen of the Toronto Star. In this interview he gives his views on Fascism, government and social revolution despite the fact that his remarks have only been reported in English - and were never actually written down by him in his native Spanish - they are worth repeating here.

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"For us", said Durruti, "it is a matter of crushing Fascism once and for all. Yes; and in spite of the Government".

"No government in the world fights Fascism to the death. When the bourgeoisie sees power slipping from its grasp, it has recourse to Fascism to maintain itself. The Liberal Government of Spain could have rendered the Fascist elements powerless long ago. Instead it compromised and dallied. Even now at this moment, there are men in this Government who want to go easy on the rebels."

And here Durruti laughed. "You can never tell, you know, the present Government might yet need these rebellious forces to crush the workers' movement . . ."

"We know what we want. To us it means nothing that there is a Soviet Union somewhere in the world, for the sake of whose peace and tranquillity the workers of Germany and China were sacrificed to Fascist barbarians by Stalin. We want revolution here in Spain, right now, not maybe after the next European war. We are giving Hitler and Mussolini far more worry with our revolution than the whole Red Army of Russia.

We are setting an example to the German and Italian working class on how to deal with Fascism.”

”I do not expect any help for a libertarian revolution from any Government in the world. . . . We expect no help, not even from our own Government, in the last analysis.”

”But”, interjected van Paasen, ”You will be sitting on a pile of ruins.”

Durruti answered: ”We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall. We will know how to accommodate ourselves for a time. For, you must not forget, we can also build. It is we the workers who built these palaces and cities here in Spain and in America and everywhere. We, the workers, can build others to take their place. And better ones! We are not in the least afraid of ruins. We are going to inherit the earth; there is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world here, in our hearts. That world is growing this minute.”