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Against Collaboration

Anonymous

12 July 1937

We have always held an anti-collaborationist position. This is because we have always believed, in accordance with our principles, that it is impossible to carry out revolutionary work from the seat of power. No matter how sincere the individual who arrives there, they will end up the instrument and plaything of the powerful classes.

History demonstrates this clearly. Parties born with truly revolutionary tendencies and committed to struggle, have attempted to conquer power only to find themselves conquered by it, becoming one more petit-bourgeois or even dictatorial party.

McDonald in England, Vandervelde in Belgium, Largo Caballero and Prieto in Spain, are all clear proof of the above, as is Leon Blum in France. The socialist party has been converted into a petit-bourgeois party, often more reactionary and conservative than the parties that openly declare their bourgeois character.

Meanwhile, all the world knows that the 'statists' in Russia have imposed a most dreadful dictatorship, passing laws that restrict the right to think, speak and act without Stalin's prior approval. Trotsky is forced into exile, while individuals from

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the first rank of Bolshevism's history are shot for thinking differently to the dictator.

With all this in mind, it is no surprise that we oppose the collaboration of the CNT with any government. For all the effort of will that our ministers might bring to the task, no revolutionary work will result from it.

The experience of six months of collaboration has confirmed this position. Our representatives in power have not been able to prevent, and have even taken part in, the passing of a series of decrees that are detrimental to the cause of the revolution.

We have a palpable example of this at the moment when we are suffering the consequences of legislation passed by the Ministry of Justice. The FAI is effectively excluded from popular tribunals, and many of our comrades are currently in prison because prosecutors and judges are able to use the new laws to keep them locked up.

It is beyond the scope of the present article to mention here all of the decrees passed by our ex-minister García Oliver, we need only mention as an example that the illegal ownership of arms or explosives carries with it a sentence of up to twenty years.

We believe, of course, that our comrade elaborated this ruling in good faith, and naively believed that it would be used to prosecute fascists. But it is a painful fact that it is now applied with the full vigour of the law against our comrades.

Let us stop kidding ourselves. We, who have been apolitical all our lives, who have been enemies of power, cannot, must not, seek power for ourselves, unless we want to become something like the Marxists. If our comrade García Oliver wanted to, he could confirm that there are bourgeois countries – republics in the Americas, Nordic countries, and others – where there are more benign, humane, and, if not revolutionary then at least less reactionary, laws than those that he has come up with. Let the comrade, and any other comrade who seeks a re-

turn to government, take note. Government cannot bring us anything but disappointment and the weakening of our organisation. This is why we reaffirm our position and repeat:

Confederal comrades, let us return to what we were before. Anarchist comrades, stop seeking positions of power. Our place is in the unions, in the street, in the affinity groups, together with the people, in the factories and centres of production. This is where effective and revolutionary work can be done.