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The Right of Peoples to Determine Themselves

For the Independence of the Riff

Solidaridad Obrera

1936

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Solidaridad Obrera, AIT [*International Workers' Association*],
Voice of the National Confederation of Labour [CNT], Barcelona,
August, 28, 1936

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The latest news from the African continent reveals that a formidable unrest is brewing. An honest rebellion against the fascist forces is noted. Acts of protest are being expressed everywhere and are occurring with a rare spontaneity.

The soul of the Muslims is at a full boil. The African soil again relives great days. It will not take much for the ground scorched by a burning sun to transform into a gigantic bonfire of freedom.

Since the expulsion of Ab-Del-Krim, the Moroccan territory has been a haven of peace and tranquility. The leader of the colossal uprising that kept in check two European powers was confined on the island of Réunion with his family and a large harem.

The phenomenon we are witnessing in the Moroccan zone is the logical corollary of the great unease that is manifesting among the faithful of Islam. In Palestine they are maintaining a fight to the death with the Jews and their protectors. The

kingdoms of Arabia, of Iraq and Hedjaz uphold the banner of irredentist claims.

The occasion was favorable for the indigenous of the Riff. The power that subjugated an important area, graciously granted by an agreement between France and Spain, is writhing in a civil war of intense magnitude. Faced with the natives of the country, there exists no army to defend international legality. The text of the agreement has vanished entirely.

General Franco represents the breaking of the treaties established by the powers to share the terrestrial globe. The Rifians have absolutely nothing to do with the ignominious Spain embodied by the military insurgents.

Our internationalist thinking, one hundred percent, induces us to pose the problem of the colonies. We must consider the workers of the Riff as sufficiently capable of dealing with their own lives and wealth.

The struggle against fascism, which at this time has a clear international character, must advise us to try with all our means to foment a healthy atmosphere of rebellion in the communities of the Riff. It is in our interest to prevent the Spanish zone from serving as a sea and air base for our bitterest enemies.

This campaign must be carried out without losing time. We must pay attention to the measures taken by Germany in the last few days. Military service of two years has been decreed, which will be mandatory for all Germans.

It wouldn't be unusual if German and Italian Fascism could rely on some of the positions held by Spanish Fascism. We can't depend on the counterbalance of certain contradictions, because the war glimpses sharper details.

It is necessary that an irredentist spirit be fomented in the sector occupied by Franco. This decision is not at odds with our principles. It's a matter of freedom.

We must be generous and idealist. The Spanish revolution must be a mirror in which the world proletariat contemplates. Our revolution must serve as a template. And we would be counter-revolutionaries if in obtaining freedom for the workers of the [Iberian] Peninsula we were to maintain under siege the Moroccan zone, entrusted years ago to monarchical Spain.

The revolutionary right that will emerge after the completion of the Spanish revolution will grant absolute freedom to the colonies as an essential chapter of the new popular conquests.

We must erase the bloody and muddy past that the Spanish military has charted in the towns and villages of the Riff. We must rectify the barbarism and lechery of the officials who took Morocco for a place of recreation and profit.

Peoples have to determine themselves. The Spanish zone of the Riff must be granted complete independence.