

Civil War & Civil Peace: Libertarian Aragon 1936-37

Graham Kelsey

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extent to which militants of the CNT regional confederation had succeeded in establishing a truly extensive trade union network. At the National Congress of the CNT, held in Zaragoza at the beginning of May 1936, over one hundred Aragonese towns and villages were represented and several more though not represented already possessed anarcho-syndicalist trade union groups, (2) while at the start of the ensuing month the number of CNT trade unions in the region had clearly surpassed two hundred. (3) At the same time the number of strikes in the region increased dramatically. In the province of Zaragoza alone more strikes were declared in the five months to July than in the twelve months of any other year and an enormous majority took place in the small towns and villages of rural Zaragoza. (4)

That so many strikes should have been called illustrated not only the increased militancy of the working class, most notably in the countryside, but also that once more the Republic was failing to take any real steps to introduce much needed reforms. Speaking at a meeting of striking workers in the small Pyrenean centre of Benasque in

the opening days of July, Francisco Munoz, regional secretary of the CNT in Aragon, affirmed that the Popular Front government elected in February with their votes had most definitely failed them. How, he had continued, there were only two courses open: either the descent to a fascism brought in to consolidate the disintegrating fabric of the capitalist state, or a social revolution which would finally put the workers 'in first place'. (5) He could hardly have surmised that within just two weeks the truth of his remarks would be fully borne out.

a) Military revolt and civilian reaction

The military insurrection, which was to plunge Spain into nearly three years of civil war, began in Spanish Morocco during the afternoon of 17 July and finally erupted in Zaragoza on 19 July. (6) Before dawn on that Sunday morning small forces of Civil and Assault Guards, (7) reinforced by a handful of trusted civilians, slipped onto the streets of the Aragonese capital to occupy certain strategic points. From the headquarters in Zaragoza of the

military garrison of the Fifth Region, General Miguel Cabanellas declared martial law and overthrew civilian authority; the republican Civil Governor was replaced by the Commander of the Civil Guard, an appointment fully epitomising the new state of affairs in the city. (8)

For the insurgents Zaragoza was to be of vital importance. Geographically, it guarded the Ebro valley and the hinterland of Castille, the heart of the rebellion in the first moments and the base from which the march on Madrid was to be mounted. Psychologically, the knowledge of its fall had a considerable effect on the rising's opponents, who found it difficult to accept that the bastion of anarchosyndicalism had been lost; within the CNT itself the city's recovery became almost an obsession with some militants. (9) There were also other important considerations. In the arsenal at Zaragoza lay some 40,000 guns; at Pamplona General Mola, with several thousand Carlist volunteers, had only 1,200. (10) Finally, in the opening moments of the struggle the capture of the Aragonese capital, together with that of first Sevilla and then Oviedo, all considered equally

improbable, helped to offset the failure of the military rebels to take any of the principal industrial centres of the country, namely Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao or Valencia.

The domination of a handful of key positions in the centre of Zaragoza during the first few hours did not necessarily consign the city irrevocably to the insurgent camp. The response of the city's Popular Front parties and trade union groups, however, almost certainly did. To reverse the occupation of Zaragoza a rapid and forceful response was imperative. Instead, while republican politicians seemed to ignore the situation (11) and socialists gave no clear lead, the anarchosyndicalists also failed to act decisively. At a secret meeting of the local CNT federation in Zaragoza on the very eve of the uprising, militants of the stature of Ejarque, Martinez, Arnal, Aznar, Esteban and Munoz (12) had allowed themselves to be persuaded by the arguments of Miguel Abos (13) into accepting a pacific and restrained strategy. Of the representatives who assembled for the clandestine meeting only a small minority led by Garaita and Chueca (14) had stood out for an immediate call

to arms. (15) Deluded completely as to the intentions of General Cabanellas, Abos, essentially a pacifist, maintained that a non-violent response from the CNT would actually prevent military revolt in Zaragoza. (16) Certainly, it was assumed that with a membership of 30,000 the CNT possessed an adequately strong weapon in reserve. (17) Such an assumption proved, however, to be tragically wrong. When CNT militants in Zaragoza did try to raise the standard of revolt it was to prove impossible to mobilise one thousand, much less thirty. (18) The initiative thrown away by republicans and trade union militants alike on 18 and 19 July fell increasingly into the lap of the military rebels. In the circumstances of the uprising the general strike declared in Zaragoza by the CNT on 19 July, unlike that of April 1934, (19) became a defensive rather than an offensive weapon and, as a result, morale was far more difficult to sustain. The resolve of the UGT, some of whose leaders were never happy with the declaration of a general strike and continued trying to negotiate with the military after 19 July, (20) began to weaken. On 23 July the print workers gave in and returned to work, allowing the first breach to be made in the position of the forces opposed to the insurrection. (21) It was a crucial blow. It encouraged a belief, and of itself allowed the dissemination of a belief among a population completely cut off from news of events in the rest of the peninsula, that the Republican regime was either collapsing or had already collapsed. Still more important was the resumption of railway transport on the 'Norte' line. (22) The first train to move did so on the same day that the print workers returned to work, travelling to Pamplona and establishing communications with Navarra and the upper Ebro valley. (23) On the following day, 24 July, it returned to Zaragoza with the first detachments of Reguetes, (24) who would finally swing the balance of power in capitals like Zaragoza and Huesca where much of the army garrison itself, considered untrustworthy by its officers, had remained confined to barracks, more cut off from events than the civilian populace. (25) Nevertheless, at the end of the first week the general strike continued to be

maintained in every other sector of industrial and commercial life, and this despite unparalleled repression. Already railwaymen of the MZA line, their services militarised, had been executed for refusing to return to work. (26) Slowly, however, the pressure did begin to count. Workers in key sectors were sought out by police and Security Forces. (27) A policy of acorralamiento was introduced: entire districts of the city were surrounded and buildings and streets searched meticulously. (28) Against such an efficient level of persecution and pursuit isolated individuals possessed little chance. At the beginning of the second week a minimal service was re-established on most of the other railway lines, (29) and on 28 July the tram workers' society capitulated. (30) Now, with the force of the general strike beginning to lose its edge, the hopes of the workers in Zaragoza rested with the volunteer militias already advancing into the region from the east. The workers in Zaragoza, however, were not the only ones looking to those militia forces for developments in the regional capital had been mirrored throughout Aragon. (31) Of the six Aragonese garrison towns only one, Barbastro, had not risen in support of the revolt. By 20 July Huesca, Jaca, Calatayud and Teruel were all militarily occupied and the fate of provincial Aragon had been all but decided. (32) Only at Jaca, where three officers and a number of soldiers had been killed in an ambush, had there been any concerted effort to forcefully oppose the rising. (33) Throughout the region Republican defenders, trade unionists and party militants, had been confronted by a well-organised and determined revolt. Unlike Barcelona and certain other centres where defenders of the Republican regime had had the assistance of at least a small number of Assault Guards, police and even occasionally Civil Guards, in Aragon every repressive agency of the state had united almost to a man with the military rebels. The oppressive policies of successive governments and their representatives in Aragon had finally come home to roost. In Zaragoza and most other Aragonese towns the rebels, aware of working class militancy and resolve, after being forced to confront it for five years, (34) acted with a

determination and a conviction which was often lacking in other parts of the peninsula.

While the major centres in Aragon remained largely passive in the face of military rebellion some villages made more determined efforts to counter it. In the Cinco Villas, the important grain growing district to the north of Zaragoza, there were fierce confrontations at Sos del Rey Catolico, Sadaba, Uncastillo, Biel, Farasdues, Ejea de los Caballeros and, further to the south in the Ebro valley, at Gallur and Pradilla de Ebro.(35) At Epila, to the west of Zaragoza, members of the CNT had been on the alert since becoming aware of a concentration of Falangists at the Palace of the Duke de Aliaga on 15 July.(36) On 19 July they were able to repel an attempt by armed Falangists to seize control of the village but were themselves forced to retreat when on the following day the same group returned with the support of Civil Guards.(37) Nearby at Terrer, the location of another of the sugar-beet refineries of the Jalon valley, Civil Guards were besieged for several hours in their headquarters before being relieved by a military column from Calatayud.(38)

North of Zaragoza on the road to Huesca there were yet more violent clashes. At Gurrea de Gallego CNT militants stormed the Civil Guard post and killed its four defenders after they had refused to surrender their weapons.(39) They then sabotaged the railway bridge over the nearby river Soton, thus helping to halt all traffic on the line for over a week. For three days the village remained in Loyalist hands but on the morning of 23 July it was attacked by a rebel column from Zaragoza which, though vastly superior in fire-power, was only able to force its way into the village after a seven hour battle.(40) Many of those who were able to flee retreated to the village of Almudebar 20 kilometres away which was positioned on a hillock beside what was to become the strategically vital Huesca to Zaragoza road. There, another stiff rearguard action was fought by villagers and only the introduction of artillery allowed the rebel forces to secure possession of the village.(41) At Gurrea de Gallego the defence of the village had been organised and led by the village mayor. There were other examples of attempted Republican resistance: at

Calatayud the town's mayor attempted to act against the impending revolt, instructing police and Security Guards to detain its known leaders.(42) They, however, reported his demands to officers in charge of the insurrection and the mayor was himself detained. At Jaca Julian Mur, having already struggled in the weeks before the revolt to persuade both national and provincial authorities of its imminence, led the armed opposition to the attempted coup in his own town.(43) At Albalate del Arzobispo in northern Teruel resistance was again led by the local mayor. The village was attacked and overwhelmed by another special military column on 23 July and, as at Gurrea de Gallego, the mayor died defending his village.(44)

Despite these examples there can be little doubt that a notable factor in the extensive success of the military revolt in Aragon was the ambivalent attitude, not to say actual duplicity, of much of local Republican officialdom, and of many local republican groups.(45) This was certainly true of Agustin Carrascosa who had been appointed Civil Governor in Huesca in mid-June. Clearly favouring the military conspirators more than the

existing legally constituted regime, he first frustrated the efforts of Mur at Jaca to stifle the plot, then thwarted the attempts of other republican mayors, such as those of Tardienta and Ayerbe, to organise opposition to the developing uprising,(46) and finally surrendered the governorship without offering even token resistance.(47)

It was not only in the major centres that this Republican ambiguity was apparent. The political campaigning for the February 1936 elections had brought the formation of a circumstantial pact between the unionised working class and the bourgeois political parties of the Popular Front in many provincial villages.(48) In some centres this pact was reactivated on 19 and 20 July (49) but in many villages and small towns the uprising bought a conclusive rupturing of that pact. Frightened more by the prospect of a working class response than by that of the military revolt itself, republican groups in villages like Beceite, Cretas and Velilla de Cinca, and in larger centres such as Calaceite and Tamarite de Litera, looked to establish pacts with the right rather than with the left. (50) Isolated by such

arrangements and already critical expenditure of ammunition. (54) Although Zaragoza by a representative of the regional committee, members of the CNT in lower Teruel decided to withdraw to Gandesa, just across the Catalan border. (51) There, Saturnino Carod of the CNT regional committee, with the assistance of local anarchosyndicalists, had already begun the task of organising the first volunteer column which was to liberate the districts of the Tierra-baja. (52) Within four days of their withdrawal local CNT militants were back in lower Teruel. After a single engagement at Calaceite Civil Guards, no doubt aware of the fall of Caspe, withdrew in the direction of Teruel leaving the volunteers to assume control of the districts of Valderrobres, Alcaniz, and Alcorisa and then the mining basin of Montalban and Utrillas. (53)

While the Carod column was sweeping through lower Teruel another force, the Ortiz column, formed of groups which had left Barcelona on 24 and 25 July and gathered at Caspe, was facing considerable resistance as it tried to force its way along the south side of the Ebro. It had taken eighteen hours to secure Caspe and the fighting had involved a

the river Ebro, the Ortiz column was well to the rear but, more dangerously, his right flank simply melted into the open and desolate terrain of the Sierra de Alcubierre. (60) Pressured by Villalba and the Catalan military adviser to his own column, Perez Farras, and perhaps influenced by the way in which the first aeroplane attacks had caused his men to panic, (61) Durruti acquiesced and for nine fatal days held his advance at Bujaraloz.

It was a fateful decision. At Pina de Ebro the column had probably been no more than two or three days from the outskirts of Zaragoza with little between it and the city. At the same time the military rebels were, at the end of July, coming under fierce pressure at almost every point. (62) Furthermore, the Aragonese capital was still in the throes of a general strike, revolutionary by implication if not in fact; most of its services were broken; and the CNT organisation in the city remained a potent force. Indeed, within days of the revolt, the military leadership in Zaragoza had begun to prepare for an evacuation of the capital. (63) By 4 August, however, when Durruti finally set his column in motion again, though his flanks were no more covered than they had been before, the situation was very different. By then insurgent forces had managed successfully to resist the repeated attacks of anarchist militiamen at Huesca and Almudébar. More particularly, faced by the total destruction of their network in Zaragoza, anarchosyndicalists there had been forced to call off the general strike on that very day. (64)

During the first half of August the momentum generated by the volunteer forces in their first days of action was gradually lost. Although the Durruti column took Gelsa de Ebro and then Pina de Ebro to reach Osera de Ebro by 8 August, (65) it could advance no further, remaining some 30 kilometres short of the Aragonese capital. On its northern flank the situation remained uncertain for some weeks (66) while still further to the north the forces in front of Almudébar and Huesca, the latter held up 7 kilometres short at the village of Sietamo, failed to break through, a story which was repeated on the south side of the Ebro at Belchite. Time, the single most important

advantage of the militias, had finally run out.

b) The collapse and replacement of the Republican regime in Aragon

The gradual stabilisation of the front lines in Aragon during August and September 1936 left the region divided between the two sides in the impending Civil War. Despite the efforts of the volunteer forces only about 55 per cent of Aragon was successfully recovered and because most of the major centres remained in rebel hands the division of the population favoured, nominally at least, the insurgents.(67)

For the military the larger centres, especially the largest of all Zaragoza, were vital on several counts. They were important as centres of the rebellion from which the remainder of the region could be dominated; with the main towns under rebel control the rest of the countryside was almost powerless to resist. They were also important as centres of communication. Control of them was the first step towards ensuring control of the transport network which was the next task of the insurgents. Finally, they were important because in them lay

the rebellion's greatest threat, the possibility of mass civilian opposition. In this respect Zaragoza was particularly important: not only for its size (68), dwarfing every other Aragonese town, but more so because of the known strength of the anarchosyndicalist organisation there. As a result, although the military acted with bludgeoning force against opposition in every town and village it was in the Aragonese capital that the full weight of their repression was truly felt.

The military uprising of July 1936 may have begun and been intended as a simple pronunciamiento on classic nineteenth century lines, repeating the formula adopted by General Primo de Rivera in 1923, (69) but it was clear almost immediately that its character was to be very different from anything that had been experienced thirteen years earlier. Already in the early hours of Sunday 19 July some Republican supporters had been killed at the headquarters of the Urban Police by Civil Guards sent to halt the distribution of the few weapons held there, which had begun in response to the belated orders of the Civil Governor.(70)

More Civil Guards clashed with CNT militants in the vicinity of the Plaza de San Miguel where the latter had gathered near the construction workers' trade union centre.(71)

Once it became evident that the pronunciamiento had failed the character of the military conspiracy changed drastically. Popular opposition to the rebellion was answered by an appeal to a right-wing extremism of the crudest kind. The target of that extremism was not only trade union activists, who were searched out systematically from the working class barrios of the city - San Pablo, Boggiero, San Jose, Arrabal, Torrero and Las Delicias - tortured at police headquarters in the calle Ponzano or worse still at the Falangist headquarters on the Paseo de Ruisenores, and executed in droves, but, also the middle class inteligentsia. Far from being protected by their cultured and bourgeois social status, it was these precise qualities which condemned them. Popular Front and Republican newspapers such as Diario de Aragon and El Pueblo de Huesca were immediately closed down and their directors imprisoned and executed.(72) The Civil

Governors of both Teruel and Zaragoza suffered a similar fate,(73) as did republican mayors from each of the three provincial capitals(74) and hundreds if not thousands of other prominent republican figures who were sometimes executed in squads exactly like the workers.(75) It appeared that General Millan Astray's call 'to put an end to the intelligentsia' had been taken quite seriously by the new controllers of Nationalist Aragon.(76)

For those in danger there was only one option, flight.(77) There was a limit to the number of people who could continue to move covertly about the city as there was a limit to the number of safe residences, particularly when entire districts of the city were surrounded by Security Guards and searched block by block. Those who could fled the capital. The regional committee of the CNT, leaving behind a reduced sub-committee, broke up and agreed to reform in liberated Aragon.(78) On 7 August Francisco Munoz, the secretary, and two others crossed the lines near Tardienta(79) but on the same day Santiago Baranda and Enrique Gracia, the former a veteran of over two decades of

trade union activities and the latter a representative during the preceding five years of CNT committees at local, regional and national levels, were caught in the open countryside to the east of Zaragoza and executed where they stood. (80) The price of failure was very high.

As each refugee escaped so the tally of dead rose. At the end of September 1936 the Madrid College of Lawyers, in no sense a revolutionary or sensationalist body, published an extensive report on the inhuman attitudes prevalent in the nationalist zone. Even such a conservative study put the number of dead in Zaragoza, two months after the military uprising, at 2,000. (81) Yet by the first half of October less official statistics were registering 7,000 dead, (82) rising to over 10,000 by March of the following year. (83) By the start of 1937 estimates had surpassed 15,000. (84) Almost certainly no definitive figure will ever be available but today, nearly fifty years later, occasional glimpses of the true extent of the killings are provided and all tend to suggest that the unofficial figures quoted above were not so very far wrong. (85) One

possible yardstick for a serious estimate were the figures gleaned from the judicial records of the central district of San Pablo. These showed that, officially, in one district, the number of deaths recorded during the five and a half months from 18 July 1936 to the end of the year was 3,290 of which 2,133 were the specific result of execution by firearms. (86) Another sign has been the recent discovery of large trenches within the Torrero cemetery filled with hundreds of unidentified corpses, the bodies of those who had been executed. (87)

It was not only in Zaragoza that innumerable executions took place. In Huesca and Teruel the situation, aggravated by the very close proximity of the front lines, was little different while throughout occupied Aragon every town and village had its tale of atrocities, of tens or even hundreds of killings. (88) In Nationalist Aragon arrest and execution erased the Republican state.

At the same time much of the apparatus of the Republican regime in Loyalist Aragon was being annulled, but there the nature of the change was to be very different. During the opening days of the uprising

much of the region had fallen to the insurgents. Civil Guards and police had joined the revolt and had helped to subvert much of Aragon before the arrival of the first volunteer militias. The result was that where areas were liberated coercive bodies of the state had ceased to exist.

Yet this was not all. In many cases the municipal authorities on 19 July 1936 were those which had been elected under the aegis of the monarchy on 12 April 1931. Many, far from being supporters of the Popular Front, were not even allied to the cause of the Republic and were all but openly in favour of the military insurgents. Of few officials who did not immediately associate themselves with the revolt as from the other, the handful who represented the true spirit of Republican Spain, men such as the village mayors of Gurrea de Gallego and Albalate del Arzobispo, few survived the first days of the insurrection when their villages were overwhelmed by rebel columns. As Gaston Leval was to note in the following year:

"The melting away of the Republican state was even more

Esquerra party.(93) same process would halt and eventually eradicate the far greater revolutionary advances that had been and were still being effected there. It was to protect the new and hard-won liberties of the rural communities that the CNT regional committee, acting in concert with Buenaventura Durruti, who had become the foremost leader of the various militia columns in Aragon, organised an assembly of village delegates and trade union representatives of the region at Bujaraloz on 6 October 1936.(97) At that conference, attended also by representatives of the militia columns, the Aragonese CNT regional secretary, Francisco Munoz, outlined plans for the formation of a special regional committee which would ensure that the region was ready and able:

The stabilisation of the front lines and the gradual decline in the level of euphoria which had characterised the opening days of the uprising brought problems for partially liberated Aragon. In neighbouring Cataluna, whence most volunteer forces had set out, revolutionary change, although still evident as many foreign observers noted,(95) was in fact already under serious attack; those groups which were essentially a part of the old political framework of Republican Spain - the socialists but more especially the bourgeoisie of the republican and, increasingly, the communist parties(96) - had begun to reconstruct the bureaucratic processes without which they could not exist and which would eventually strangle the incipient revolutionary changes. With the prospect of these same parties establishing a presence in Aragon there was a very real danger that the

"to organise itself in this revolutionary hour and re-establish its personality among the other Iberian peoples, in preparation for the great federation of the future."(98)

Such a concept was entirely in keeping with the federalist principles of the anarchosyndicalist movement and, as Munoz stressed, 'fitted in perfectly with the plan

formulated at the national CNT declaration of the plenum' held just three weeks earlier.(99) That meeting had agreed to press for the formation of a National Defence Committee which would link together a series of such regional bodies, exactly after the character of the one now proposed at Bujaraloz.(100)

Despite the opposition of Catalan interests, manifested in part at the Bujaraloz assembly in the comments of two column leaders, Gregorio Jover and Antonio Ortiz, nearly all the Aragonese delegates, encouraged by Durruti, were in favour of the proposals for a regional council.(101) The achievement has been well synthesised by an historian of the CNT:

"That which the libertarians did not dare do, it is to say take all the power, was attempted by the Aragonese libertarians, despite the war which ravaged the countryside, despite the continual presence of important contingents of the POUM, the PSUC and Catalan forces, despite the Madrid government and, finally, despite the CNT itself."(102)

The foundation of the Regional Defence Council was a formal sign of revolutionary change in Aragon and a

determination of the region's anarchosyndicalists to defend that change. (103) However, as Cesar M. Lorenzo has suggested, it was not only Catalan interests which were opposed to the new council. The initial response of the national CNT committee, which had not kept abreast of developments in Aragon, was apparently one of scarcely concealed anger. (104) That committee, led first by Horacio Martinez Prieto and Mariano Rodriguez Vazquez, (105) had begun to edge ever more insistently towards a position of open political groups which now constituted the government of Republican Spain. Such a development inevitably brought it into conflict with those reduced areas of opinion remaining opposed to the political collaboration, still aspired to revolutionary social and economic change. The failure of the national leadership of the CNT to seize the revolutionary opportunity left both Aragon and its anarchosyndicalist militants doubly isolated. Their regional defence council had to maintain its libertarian character before that sector of

opinion which had encouraged its formation but, separated from the national government, the anarcho-syndicalist network, it had also to seek some sort of relationship with other forces of Loyalist Spain. As a result, at the end of October, the new council decided to send a delegation first to Barcelona and then to Madrid to negotiate directly with Republican leaders. (106)

In Barcelona, the attitude of Lluís Companys, the Catalan President, was one of unconcealed enmity. He called to the council an absurdity and complained of the damage it would do to the country's international image, its republican prestige and, above all, to Catalonia, to which region, he asserted, Aragon owed everything. (107) His response underlined the extent to which early revolutionary advances in Barcelona and Catalonia had already been reversed. (108)

In Madrid, however, where the delegation arrived at the start of November, the socialist Largo Caballero, (109) who had become premier at the end of September, was far more amenable. (110)

Faced with the apparently imminent fall of the Spanish capital and trying at that

moment to encourage CNT representatives to join his Republic's President, Manuel Azana, (111) appeared ready to acknowledge the new Aragonese council provided delegates of other Popular Front groups were given places, an arrangement already accepted by delegates at the Bujaraloz assembly a month earlier. (112) On 25 December 1936 the

Consejo Reginal de Defensa de Aragon was officially recognised by government decree. (113) There were now to be twelve councillors, six of the CNT, and two each of the republican, socialist and communist groups in Aragon, with the independent syndicalist Benito Pabon acting as secretary. (114) Four weeks later, on 19 January 1937, Joaquin Ascaso, already designated president of the new council, was recognised as the official representative of the government in Aragon. (115)

The administrative structure of the pre-war Republic had officially ceased to exist in Loyalist Aragon.

c) Libertarian Aragon; the experience of collectivisation.

Writing extensively on the collectivist movement in Spain

during the period of the Civil War, Frank Mintz noted that, with the region of Rioja, those areas of Teruel, Huesca and Zaragoza marked by 'les tentatives frustrees anterieures' were completely occupied by the insurgents. (116) He could not have been further from the truth. In fact it was precisely those areas which had been most important in December 1933 - the lower Cinca valley, the 'Litera' of eastern Huesca and the districts of Alcaniz, Calanda, Alcorisa and Valderrobres in lower Teruel - which were now, in seeking to create a new pattern of economic and social organisation, to form the basis of libertarian Aragon.

The military rebellion had brought a new administrative structure to Loyalist Aragon but it was not only in that field that society was to see radical change. The return of anarcho-syndicalist militants to villages like Alcorisa in Teruel brought more than the mere formation of defence committees. Four days later an assembly of the whole village was called to discuss the agricultural situation. The result was the setting up of twenty-three teams, each with a delegate responsible to a

central administrative body which was to coordinate every aspect of local agriculture. As Gaston Leval noted: "[libertarian communism] was born there very simply, as everywhere else, almost without an awareness of the extent and the significance of the task being undertaken." (117)

Libertarian communism and agrarian collectivisation were not economic terms or social principles enforced upon a hostile population by special teams of urban anarchists, but a pattern of existence and a means of rural organisation adapted from agricultural experience by rural anarchists and adopted by local committees as the single most sensible alternative to the part-feudal, part-capitalist mode of organisation which had just collapsed. In many cases the collectivist movement developed within a few days of the military revolt. At Alcampel, the village in eastern Huesca which had been one of those to support the revolutionary outbreak of December 1933, an assembly was organised in the main square on 27 July. There, inspired and encouraged by local CNT members, the entire village discussed plans for the

organisation of an agrarian collective. Within two days the collective had begun functioning and within three over half the village, some 250 families, had joined.(118) It was a similar story at Alcorisa and Calanda on the other side of the Ebro valley. At the latter the collective was constituted as soon as the town was reoccupied and within four weeks the number of families enrolled had reached almost 400, again over half the village.(119) The village collectives did not, however, always originate in such a completely independent fashion. In the districts of Albalate de Cinca and Valderrobres it was the local committees of the CNT which undertook the tasks of agrarian reorganisation. In the latter an assembly of village delegates was organised as early as 9 August to discuss 'the coordination of the collective movement to which they all aspired', and a three-man commission nominated to monitor and orientate all developments in the district.(120) At Albalate de Cinca a meeting of representatives from twenty-one villages of the district was held on 22 August. There, delegates led by Justo Val Franco and Manuel Lozano, both

noted leaders of the CNT in the Cinca valley from the start of the Republican period,(121) debated 'the means and the manner of structuring a new economy, natural and proletarian'.(122) These, however, were still early days and even in such strongly libertarian areas CNT militants were careful not to push on too quickly or too forcefully. Agriculture in Aragon had been traditionally smallholder-based and the villagers, so often with insufficient land for themselves, much less for their children, had a great attachment to their own possessions. As a former member of the Aragonese CNT regional committee was later to note, 'I knew only too well how a peasant clings to his plot of land'.(123) It was a factor which was borne in mind at many of the villages. At Albalate de Cinca the assembly had unanimously agreed a seven-point programme which detailed plans for the reorganisation of agriculture in the district according to the system of collectivisation.(124) Yet, although a correspondent writing in Solidaridad Obrera saw this as signifying the introduction of libertarian

communism as laid out by the CNT national congress three months earlier in Zaragoza, it actually heralded no such thing.(125) It was not more than a stage on the way for considerable attention was paid to those villagers who were not prepared, as yet, to join any communal experiment. With respect to the village assembly at Alcampel, a militant present was later to note:

"We enjoyed great sympathy but, when it's a question of the private interests of individuals, one must move with care." (126)

The assembly at Albarate de Cinca clearly accepted the rights of the 'individualistas', as they were termed, to remain outside any collective, (127) but that right was to be strictly controlled. No one was to be allowed to utilise the labour of another for the cultivation of his privately owned land unless they were members of the same family, and no land could remain idle and unproductive without being promptly forfeited. (128)

Perhaps not everywhere was the movement to collectivise either so democratic or so unanimous as in the districts previously mentioned. In the village of Alloza in Teruel

Angel Navarro, the former leader of village defence committee, told Ronald Fraser, 'they came and told us that other villages were collectivised and that they wanted everyone to be equal'. 'They' were CNT representatives from outside the village, probably from Alcorisa 20 kilometres away. The witness added that but for their intervention and the fear of retribution if no action were taken the collective would not have been formed. Yet he also noted that the CNT group had also stressed that no one was to be maltreated. Certainly the decision on whether to join or not was left entirely in the hands of the villagers though committee members apparently did not feel that they enjoyed the same option. (129) CNT militants such as those referred to above were responding to two powerful influences. First, and that which is most commonly emphasised, was the attraction of the revolutionary situation with which they were suddenly faced. The long awaited moment appeared to have arrived and for some village revolutionaries nothing was to be allowed to oppose the realisation of a libertarian communist society. However, a

second and very important stimulus was that the villages of Aragon were not very far from the front lines. The thousands of militiamen who voluntarily manned those lines were totally dependent upon an organised and intensive production of foodstuffs, particularly grain, which, with the wheatlands of northern Spain in Nationalist hands, was to remain a vital commodity. (130)

To organise the provisioning of the front line militia forces as rapidly and as equitably as possible was to be more than merely an aim in itself. One of the most common corollaries of war in a capitalist system is the development of such social and economic evils as black-marketeering, profiteering and, as a consequence, arbitrarily imposed shortages and serious inflation. The villages from which large numbers of volunteers had joined the columns had immediately organised the despatch of supplies to the front. These villages, however, were a minority, chiefly those with strong anarchosyndicalist traditions. Evidently the situation had to be regularised, particularly as

the initial insurrection had begun to assume all the characteristics of a prolonged military confrontation. Agricultural collectivisation there-fore, became both a way of ensuring the equal contribution of all villages to the burden posed by the conflict and also a way of making it impossible for those who possessed the means or the inclination to profit from the exigencies placed upon the regional economy by the presence of civil war. It was not just a libertarian theory; it was also the only easy to ensure the maximum agricultural production with the minimum economic corruption. Proof of this fact was to be forthcoming when the system was destroyed in the second half of 1937. (131) The military insurrection had come at a critical moment in the agricultural calendar. Throughout lower Aragon there were fields of grain ready for harvesting. At such a time farmers could ill-afford a number of hours but in many villages a week had been lost as the uprising remained precariously balanced. At the assembly in Albalate de Cinca the opening clause of the programme agreed upon had required everyone in the

district, independent farmers and collectivists alike, to contribute equally to the war effort, (132) thereby emphasising one of the most important considerations in the period immediately following the rebellion. On 11 August the urgency of the situation was taken up by Durruti who issued a special decree from his headquarters at Bujaraloz: "That, considering the harvest as something sacred for the interests of the working people, the tasks of collection must be realised without the slightest loss of time." (133)

The increasing importance of food supplies as the front lines gained greater permanence was more than sufficient to ensure the encouragement of agricultural collectives in many villages close to the front.

Collectivisation, however, was encouraged by a further factor. A considerable amount of land was owned by men who had either fled or who, being absent in mid-July - the period of the long summer vacation - had been unable or had preferred not to return to their lands. Immediately expropriation became not so much a revolutionary principle as an economic necessity and one which put a large quantity

of land into the hands of the newly established village defence committees. At the same time much of the agricultural machinery belonged to the same absentee proprietors. This too had to be expropriated by the local village committees and was to become a significant part of the property of each collective when it came to be established. (134)

In the opening weeks of the civil war a large percentage of the volunteers who formed the militia forces were Catalan anarchosyndicalists, many of them from the traditional CNT stronghold of Barcelona. The impression of their presence in Aragon, as much as the impact of their revolutionary commanders, individuals like Gregorio Jover, Antonio Ortiz, Ricardo Sanz and Durruti himself, has been responsible in part for the familiar picture of uncontrollable and enforced revolution. (135)

Behind men like Durruti and the urban anarchosyndicalist volunteers have been seen the numerical weight of the Catalan CNT and the spectre of revolutionary extremism.

While the Catalan CNT did attempt to exert some influence upon the neighbouring region it was, as has already been

inferred, far from being revolutionary. Indeed, some Aragonese militants came quickly to equate Catalan influence, as well as that emanating from the CNT national committee, with an anti-revolutionary tendency. For one militant this was emphasised most strongly by the words of the Catalan CNT regional secretary, Mariano Rodriguez Vazquez, at an inter-regional meeting in Caspe at the end of August 1936, words which apparently even found support in the Catalan anarchist press. Writing after the meeting Julian Floristan, from the Valderrobres district, decried the attitude of both the regional secretary and the Catalan anarchist daily towards the revolutionary situation in his region:

'Never could we have believed that it would actually be the anarchist daily Tierra y Libertad which would try to douse Aragon with buckets of cold water in the same way as did comrade Marianet [Mariano Rodriguez Vazquez] at the Caspe plenum.' It is significant that the writer chose to continue his article by clarifying the circumstances of the development of the Aragonese collective movement as he had seen it: 'I do not know

whether Aragon is or is not in the correct condition for the implantation of libertarian communism; I do not know if the moment has arrived to finish with every vestige remaining from the previous decrepit system. What I do know is that throughout lower and upper Aragon, and through a personal desire and a unanimous determination, life is being organised communally, amidst the greatest possible liberty, and all this without the slightest mention of 'libertarian communism'.(136)

It was an answer directed as much to revolutionary theorists as to liberal-republican apologists. The words were not those of some political nominee or bureaucratic official far removed from the events in question, but of a village trade union representative who had himself participated in the changes of which he spoke. The words of Floristan, uttered at the start of September 1936, gave the lie to tales of unaccountable groups of men who arrived, created the revolution and then vanished.

By the start of 1937 the collective movement in Aragon had extended considerably. Nevertheless, although in certain areas, notably the

traditional CNT strongholds of eastern Huesca and the 'Tierra-baja' of Teruel, committees existed to coordinate agrarian affairs, regionally there was still no coordinating body. It was not until the middle of February 1937 that, prompted again by the regional CNT committee, delegates from all the region's collectives were summoned to a congress at Caspe to discuss the possible creation of a regional federation of collectives.(137)

Attended by some 500 delegates from 'almost all the villages' of the region and representing nearly 80,000 collectivists in libertarian Aragon,(138) the Caspe congress was not so much a gathering of the representatives from the regions collectives as the convocation of an agrarian parliament. The points debated were not of the theoretical and futuristic kind discussed in Zaragoza in May 1936 but were proposals which would directly affect the life of the region and the existence of a very large majority of its inhabitants. Firstly, there was the issue of the regional federation itself. Such a step posed several problems for Aragonese libertarians. In the preceding six months many

collectives, either on an independent basis or through a district committee, had organised links with Barcelona or other centres where they were able to acquire goods that they needed in exchange for their agricultural produce. Now it was being suggested that these isolated and individualistic operations should be coalesced into a single network with coordination, if not control, vested in a central secretariat. For many this represented the unwelcome introduction of both bureaucracy and centralisation and thus a move away from, rather than towards, the ideals of libertarian communism.

This underlying problem was to be more than sufficient to tie the hands of nearly all those who wished to forge a more cohesive and powerful body out of the collective movement. In the congress they were able to hold sway. Further resolutions agreed upon included several that looked to the development of a far wider economic perspective than that of a simple village collective. One accepted the proposal of a special commission to establish experimental farms and agricultural nurseries in selective areas of the region

to improve vegetable and crop farming techniques and distribution. Another agreed that all farms should set aside a small area for the development and acclimitisation of certain trees and shrubs which would in time help to break up the often barren and desolate Aragonese countryside. (139) However, as organisationally minded anarchosyndicalists had discovered after other such meetings, the acceptance of resolutions in congress did not necessarily mean their implementation outside. There remained, as the secretary of the new federation, Jose Mavilla, (140) was to discover, a latent opposition to the wider implications of a regional federation. (141). Nevertheless, the congress at Caspe had provided a considerable boost to the collective movement in Aragon. Two months later after a follow up conference, attended by delegates from the collectives of Castilla, Levante and Catalonia, an editorial in Solidaridad Obrera noted: 'These companeros of Aragon have taken the revolution very seriously indeed. . . . In Aragon they have decided to follow liberating consequences through to the very limit. In many villages magnificent progress is being made, which is superceding several of the programmes which, prior to 19 July, were so often discussed.' (142) That magnificent progress included an increase of 75 per cent in the membership of the regional federation of collectives which by mid-April had jumped to a little over 140,000. (143) It was a rise to which the anarchist writer and propagandist Gaston Leval, just then completing his tour of the Aragonese collectives, bore witness. Among the examples of the spread of the collectivist movement that he discovered were those of the district of Mas de las Matas in Teruel where eighteen of the nineteen villages were now totally collectivised when in February only Mas de las Matas itself had been; the Angues district in Huesca where the number of collectives had risen from 36 to 70; and the neighbouring district of Barbastro where the number had grown from 31 to 58, both during the same February to April period. (144) The expansion of the collective movement in Aragon, as measured in purely statistical terms, was but one aspect of its success. (145)

Certainly it was an important aspect, registering a satisfaction with the system felt by a large proportion of the rural populace much of which had been generally noted for its opposition to communal organisation and its preference for individualism and self-ownership. Another sign of the system's acceptance was the adherence of members of other trade union and political groups all of which, nationally, maintained a hostile stance towards collectivisation. Several collectives were run jointly by members of the CNT and the UGT while Mintz quotes one example, Allepuz in Teruel, which was run solely by members of the latter. (146) Indeed, the same author has also referred to examples of collectives run by communists, in the villages of Salas Bajas, Fonz and Estadilla, all in the Barbastro district. (147) Several writers have presented examples, furthermore, of the support given to the system by members of the republican parties. The mayor of Tamarite in eastern Huesca, a member of Azana's Izquierda Republicana party, joined the CNT soon after the military rebellion commenced and helped to organise the local collective. (148) At Fraga, Gaston Leval conversed with another member of the same party who had been put in charge of food supplies and distribution for the town's collective. Asked if he would remain in the collective when the war had been won he was non-committal but added, 'what I can say is that now I am for what is being done here'. (149) Leval added that the man then showed him around his section with an enthusiasm which more than matched his own. There were more tangible signs, however, of the success of anarchist dreams in creating a truly democratic, libertarian society in Aragon. As Leval was to note while writing of the village of Andorra in Teruel: 'The fact is that under the system of private property the initiative of one person, however good, more often remains with just the one person, whereas in the collective the new spirit and the new methods very soon encourage everybody to take initiatives.' (150) The village, located on the dry and barren meseta lands of northern Teruel, and with a population in excess of 3,000, (151) had been completely collectivised towards the end

of 1936. (152) Some two hundred of the men were serving at the front while fifty-three more were working a local lignite mine reopened on the villagers' own initiative. (153) In the spring of 1937, nevertheless, the potato acreage had increased by 80 per cent whilst 100,000 lettuces, 20,000 tomatoes and a large number of other vegetables had been grown; all this exceeding anything previously achieved. (154)

As Aragon was an agricultural region and the majority of the collectives were first and foremost agrarian, it was the need for agricultural improvements which was the first consideration for most villages. Everywhere village collectives, through the unifying of small properties, the use of fertilisers (which smallholders had never been able to afford) and the introduction on a small scale of machinery, had succeeded in increasing both the extent of the land under cultivation and its yield. It is interesting to note in this respect that according to official government statistics the 1937 wheat crop in Loyalist Aragon was 20 per cent larger than that of 1936, which had itself been a good year. At

the same time, in neighbouring Cataluna, where agrarian collectivisation had been far less widespread, there was a commensurate drop of 20 per cent. (155) More significantly, in Cataluna the extent of wheat cultivation had diminished by as much as 30 per cent in the province of Lerida and 25 per cent in that of Tarragona, (156) whereas throughout libertarian Aragon land cultivation had increased quite notably despite the dearth of manpower. (157) Finally, and perhaps even more significantly, not only did grain cultivation decrease in Nationalist Aragon, which actually encompassed the most important grain growing areas of the region, but both in 1937 and in 1938 there were successive diminutions in the yield, amounting to 40 per cent over the two years. (158)

The advantages of the collective system and, more especially, the extent of its success in Loyalist Aragon were further displayed in more obviously constructive ways. The collectivisation of entire communities allowed a rationalisation of village activities and consequently a more efficient use of the economic resources available. Instead of carpenters and bricklayers remaining idle

because no wealthy landowner constructed farm installations had any use for their services, they were put to work constructing agricultural improvements and providing the villages with the kind of social amenities which until then they had scarcely been able to imagine. for the breeding of rabbits and chickens while further structures to encourage the development of pig and cattle farming were planned. At the same time workmen had also rebuilt and re-equipped an old flour mill. Projects in the village were valued by a team of foreign technicians sent by the CNT national committee at always been minimal a major initiative was the construction of piggeries, chicken runs and hatcheries and other buildings to encourage an increase in animal husbandry. At the village of Graus in eastern Huesca both Gaston Leval and Alardo Prats were shown the two experimental farms: one, in the process of being built in mid-1937 but already partially operative, was for the breeding of pigs; the other, which was already complete, was for fowl and comprised five two-storey buildings and another seven-part structure. There were geese, ducks, some turkeys and hundreds of chickens which had already produced 1,500 chicks by the time Leval was there in June 1937, while a further 800 were expected. (159)

In a region where meat consumption among the mass of the poorer smallholders had always been minimal a major initiative was the construction of piggeries, chicken runs and hatcheries and other buildings to encourage an increase in animal husbandry. At the village of Graus in eastern Huesca both Gaston Leval and Alardo Prats were shown the two experimental farms: one, in the process of being built in mid-1937 but already partially operative, was for the breeding of pigs; the other, which was already complete, was for fowl and comprised five two-storey buildings and another seven-part structure. There were geese, ducks, some turkeys and hundreds of chickens which had already produced 1,500 chicks by the time Leval was there in June 1937, while a further 800 were expected. (159) The same town was also responsible for the refurbishing of an old and insalubrious hospital. From other specialised workmen had

constructed farm installations for the breeding of rabbits and chickens while further structures to encourage the development of pig and cattle farming were planned. At the same time workmen had also rebuilt and re-equipped an old flour mill. Projects in the village were valued by a team of foreign technicians sent by the CNT national committee at some 9,000,000 pesetas although everything had been done with purely local resources. (160) It was, however, not only in the strictly economic sphere that construction projects made possible dramatic improvements in the standard of municipal facilities. Hospitals, homes and schools all now became top priorities. In the town of Fraga an old people's home was organised. When Leval visited it in the spring of 1937 there were thirty-two inmates in residence. He described it as possessing small dormitories and a large dining room and added that 'the whole place was kept spick and span and reflected the warmth and cordiality of the welcome.' (161)

enlarged to a capacity of one hundred and fitted with running water and other improvements. (162)

Perhaps the most outstanding hospital, however, and one of the region's prize projects, was that constructed at Binefar. The district of Binefar, or the Litera, in eastern Huesca was probably the most successfully and most thoroughly collectivised area of Aragon. In what had been a centre of anarchosindicalist influence since the 1910s, CNT militants from Binefar, Binaced, Alcampel and other villages had quickly helped to organise collectives throughout the district in August and September 1936. The hospital was to epitomise the considerable success of the libertarian experiment in eastern Huesca. Constructed by local workers and financed entirely from the district's own resources the hospital, which was already operational by the summer of 1937, possessed an ultra-violet ray machine, a pathology laboratory and special wings for the treatment of venereal disease, the study of preventive medicine, and gynaecology. (163)

Another hospital constructed by Aragonese libertarians was

that at Barbastro. Forty years later it was remembered as having been: 'a magnificent and well-equipped hospital, Republican and what is worse, anarchist, as was everything which functioned in this zone'. (164)

As with the hospital at Binefar, that at Barbastro was completely destroyed by the Nationalists, intent on erasing every vestige of the democratic society created in Aragon. For forty years, until the 'Francoist' town council was overturned by popular demonstrations in 1977, such a facility remained no more than a memory. (165)

Whereas hospitals and old people's homes had to be the domain of larger communities such as Barbastro, Fraga and Binefar, one field where every village was able to demonstrate its desire and determination to effect progress was education. Schools, an important aspect of the Republican platform in 1931 and 1936, had been, for much of rural Spain, another of its failures. Even at such villages as Andorra, where a new building had been completed in the first half of 1936, local politics had blocked its use. (166)

Once formed, the local collective had

immediately opened the building and provided education for all the children. At nearby Alloza the schoolmaster, who had clearly been no friend of the collective, nevertheless accepted that in education there had been a marked improvement. Everything required for the children had been obtained by the collective which had shown 'a great concern about education', insisting rigorously upon the school leaving age of fourteen despite, the schoolmaster implied, the opposition of several parents who expected their children to work alongside them during certain of the agricultural seasons. (167)

These were poor villages where opposition could have been and, in the latter case, was experienced. In more favourable circumstances the improvements in education were even more noteworthy. At Mas de las Matas Ronald Fraser has again noted 'a characteristic concern with education occupied the collectivists'. He quoted a female teacher as saying that 'she had never known anything like it. Previously it had been impossible to get funds for education'. Now the collective's committee met once a week with the teachers and

insisted that the school should want for nothing. (168)

At Calanda the collectivists had established a Grupo Escolar Ferrer Guardia in an old convent which catered for more than 1,200 pupils. (169)

The village had previously enjoyed the services of eight teachers but, thanks to the efforts of the collective's committee an extra ten had been brought in. (170)

At Monzon a specialised 'School for Libertarian Militants' was established by Felix Carrasquer, the libertarian schoolmaster from Albalate de Cinca, which was intended to provide some much needed administrators for the many new collectives. (171)

Finally, at Graus, both Leval and Prats reported on the founding of a 'School of Fine Arts', again on the initiative of a single teacher, which taught children during the daytime and then workers from the collective in the evenings. (172)

It was a part of the great enthusiasm generated by the libertarian experiment that not a single moment should be lost.

Throughout the collectives people were often working harder and longer than before. The large percentage of the active male population which had gone to man the front lines

meant that women and older people were needed to assist with much of the work.(173) Many writers found that contrary to this being resented people were ready and willing to work extra hours and that, as at Graus, pensions were actually looked upon as something of an insult, older workers demanding the right to give their labour as everyone else.(174) This was a reflection of the 'moral superiority' of the new libertarian society which, in the opinion of Dr Jose Maria Pueyo at Albalate de Cinca, one of several doctors who had voluntarily given up a social position and an economic status to become just one more collectivist, afforded the greatest possible amount of social justice'.(175) A similar opinion was voiced at Mas de las Matas by a wealthy landowner who told a socialist opponent of the collective system that he had joined 'because this is the most human system there is'.(176)

achievements. There was one aspect of the situation in 1937 with which the region could not cope alone. As Adolfo Arnal, one of the leading voices of the Aragonese CNT before and after the rebellion and a member of the regional defence council, told a meeting of CNT district representatives in March 1937:

'We cannot act federally because we do not possess the means indispensable for the conduct of the war. Our inferiority in these respects makes us dependent upon the politics of Valencia and Madrid'.(177)

Implicit in his words was the fact that political compromise could neither be ignored nor entirely evaded. It was a bitter pill for anarchists to swallow and many refused to swallow it. For them the regional defence council had been established not to collaborate with the political entities of the old regime but to organise the creation of a new regime in Aragon. As they saw the council become more and more concerned with relations with the politicians so opposition to it grew.(178)

The collectivist experiment, however, could not exist by itself; it had to relate to the political and geographic circumstances of Aragon. While the war might have assisted the development of collectivisation it also undermined its regional authority was the sole

barrier between the possibilities of an independently organised libertarian Aragon and the region's reabsorption within a corrupt, ill-organised political state. Starved of munitions by the central government, which was actively using its control of finances to contain and stifle radical change throughout Loyalist Spain regardless of its consequences, anarchosyndicalist leaders in Aragon desperately needed the fullest support of the regional movement, as well as that of the national leadership. The tragedy was that that support was to be lacking from both quarters. The pursuit of increasing participation by the national committee left libertarian Aragon isolated from the bulk of the anarchosyndicalist movement as the last substantial part of the revolutionary gains made in July and August 1936. This isolation, moreover, forced the regional defence council into a situation of political compromise which progressively separated it from its regional support.

The resulting disorientation within the Aragonese anarchosyndicalist movement was clearly in evidence at certain of the meetings of the regional CNT during the first six months of 1937. At one meeting of district CNT delegates, in March 1937, Miguel Chueca, Adolfo Arnal and Evaristo Vinuales, all notable pre-1936 militants of the organisation,(179) struggled in vain to convince members of the need for a greater degree of support for the regional defence council.(180) Instead, as councillors of that body, they found themselves faced by a level of hostility so great that only the threatened resignation of the entire CNT regional committee staved off a censure vote which actually called for the suppression of the council.(181)

Ironically, that suppression was not long in coming. Without the complete support of the anarchosyndicalist movement, both within the region and without, the fate of the collective experiment in Aragon was inevitable. The May Days in Barcelona, particularly the attitude of the CNT national committee to those events,(182) and the resulting fall of the government of Largo Caballero, exposing the political naivete of national anarchosyndicalist leaders, condemned the libertarian

experiment in Aragon.

d) Overthrow and collapse.

Throughout the twelve month life of the collectivist experiment the front line positions in Aragon had changed but little.(183) Although those lines were often weakly held and indeterminate,(184) the militias had possessed neither the firepower, the munitions, nor the organisational back-up in supplies to capitalise. Furthermore, military strategy had caused, and was to continue to cause, excessive attention to be paid to the assault of heavily fortified and well-defended strongpoints. By contrast, although anarchist militants like Maximo Franco and Pascual Alda (185) made forays into the Nationalist rearguard to rescue refugees,(186) such actions never became a part of offensive military strategy as they arguably should have done.(187)

From a purely conventional military point of view, however, the crucial factor affecting the war effort in Aragon was undoubtedly the lack of war material. Until the arrival of Enrique Lister's forces at the start of August

1937 tanks were completely unknown and superior arms like sub-machine guns almost so. George Orwell, who spent several months in the front lines immediately to the north-east of Zaragoza, made perfectly plain the dreadful quality and great vintage of the weapons he and his fellow volunteers had to use as well as the paucity of even these.(188) It was in part to counter this blockade of the north-eastern fronts that four representatives of the CNT had joined the central government at the start of November 1936(189) and the delegation from the recently formed regional defence council in Aragon had travelled to Madrid.

With the second administration of Largo Caballero it appeared that government had passed finally into working class hands, representatives of the bourgeois republican groups being left in a clear minority.(190) That situation, however, was not to last. By the spring of 1937 the influence of the Communist Party had grown enormously. From a minority group of just fourteen deputies in the victorious Popular Front coalition of February 1936, the party had, through the

importance of Russian military aid, the arrival of thousands of foreign communists, the weakness and internal dissension of other groups and its own cunning use of propaganda and positions of power and influence both within the army and the state, become the single strongest political force in the country. Its position of strength was emphasised in May 1937 when its two solitary delegates in the cabinet were able to bring about the fall of Largo Caballero.(191)

As the fallen administration had been, at least nominally, trade union dominated, uniting the forces which had initially constituted the principal opposition to the military insurrection, so its successor led by Juan Negrin, once a moderate socialist of the Prieto group, reintroduced the political entities which had been largely submerged by that uprising. Moreover, as the administration of Largo Caballero had presided over and to a certain extent legalised the revolutionary changes implemented in the aftermath of the military revolt, so that of Negrin set out to reverse those changes, re-establishing the central and centralising power of a bourgeois government.

Within a month of taking office it had moved to silence the independent marxists of the POUM.(192) Within a month too, Azana, still the Republic's President, had begun to pester the new premier to act against the quasi-independent libertarian regime in Aragon.(193) Little could be done to attack the regional defence council in Aragon itself. This was due in the first place to the weakness of the non-libertarian sectors of Aragonese opinion. The republicans, although still evident at a municipal level, had largely vanished as a coherent political force. A similar fate had befallen the political wing of the socialist movement while the communists, though strident in their propaganda, remained completely insignificant in their degree of actual support.(194) Furthermore, the socialist trade union organisation, the UGT, had collapsed into several disparate groups subdivided provincially and syndically: some in favour of collectivisation, some against; some controlled by genuine socialists, but many under the influence of communists. Secondly, it was due to the way in which political and economic

power in Aragon had been confronted and compelled to decentralised and thus withdraw.(195) The restrained diminished in the aftermath of response of the regional the military revolt. This council thwarted what had deprived political groups which clearly been an attempt to thrived on a system of produce a situation of outright centralised organisation and confrontation between it and power of any direct and easy central government. That means of undermining the effort, however, as also the position of the regional organisation at the start of defence council, despite the July of a special meeting of fact that power on that council all Popular Front groups in was evenly distributed between Aragon which emphasised their the libertarian and full support of the regional non-libertarian elements. defence council, was in

Outside Aragon, however, the task of undermining the position of the regional council was rather simpler. The decline of the strength and influence of the CNT in the wake of the May Days paved the way for a direct and open attack upon the libertarian position in Aragon. The failure of the CNT leadership to protect its position, or even subsequently to defend its members, in Cataluna convinced opponents that little would be done to help an institution which had been established independently of and contrary to national CNT opinion. At the end of June 1937 a column of Security Guards from Lerida marched into the lower valley of eastern Huesca, wreaking havoc in a number of villages before being

confronted and compelled to withdraw.(195) The restrained response of the regional council thwarted what had clearly been an attempt to produce a situation of outright confrontation between it and central government. That effort, however, as also the organisation at the start of July of a special meeting of all Popular Front groups in Aragon which emphasised their full support of the regional defence council, was in vain.(196) Four weeks later after the latter document had been signed the first detachments of the troops detailed by the Defence Minister, Prieto, to effect the reduction of libertarian Aragon, those of the 11th Division under the communist Enrique Lister, began moving into the region.(197) Late on the evening of 10 August 1937 the central government published its decree dissolving the Consejo Regional de Defensa de Aragon. That night the troops of the 11th Division, supported by elements of the 27th, 30th and 43rd Divisions,(198) began the subjugation of the region. Against these forces the villagers of rural Aragon were defenceless.(199) The troops were able to sweep through the

'it required a great deal of care to ensure that in liquidating a bad experiment we did not go to the other extreme. But that was what happened.' (218)

More telling still, perhaps, were the words of Jose Silva, yet another communist sympathiser from the ranks of the republicans; Silva was Secretary-General of the Institute of Agrarian Reform in 1937 and wrote his comments at the end of that year, within weeks of the events he was assessing.

'When the government of the Republic dissolved the Council of Aragon the Governor-General tried to allay the profound uneasiness in the hearts of the peasant masses by dissolving the collectives. Such a measure was a very grave mistake which produced tremendous disorganisation in the countryside.' (219)

The situation was such that, according to the same source, 'within days' agricultural work had been 'suspended almost entirely'. By the time of the next seeding, even though the circumstances had improved enormously, a quarter of the fields had not been prepared.

The consequences, as much for Loyalist Spain as for

organising supplies for the front line. (223) Inevitably in relation to libertarian Aragon it is virtually impossible to encounter statistics. One is left, first, with isolated figures like those given to Gaston Leval by the collectivists at Binefar which showed that they were supplying the Huesca fronts with between thirty and forty tons of food every week, had donated 340 tons of food to the Madrid front in a single special consignment, and in one day had presented three of the volunteer columns at the front with 36,000 pesetas worth of olive oil; (224) secondly, with the knowledge that agricultural production in collectivised Aragon expanded considerably, and this in contrast with other parts of Loyalist Spain; and thirdly, with the undeniable fact that the Aragonese rearguard, besides raising the living standards of its inhabitants, had maintained some 450 kilometres of front line for a year when the strongest and most able members of the rural communities were precisely those who manned the fronts and were thus unable to assist with agricultural tasks.

After the invasion of Lister, as the finish with a caciquismo which still exists in many

villages in what, in certain districts, amounted to an orgy of destruction. (200) The ostensible reason for the entry of Lister's well-armed and supported troops into Aragon was the organisation of a new Loyalist offensive. At the beginning of April 1937, after five months of deadlock on the Madrid fronts, the Nationalist had turned their attention to the northern enclave of Asturias, Santander and Vizcaya which had been conquered thereafter at a steadily increasing pace. With anarchosyndicalist control in Aragon displaced the Republican leadership finally agreed to mount a major offensive on the north-eastern fronts, for so long ignored, as a last effort to relieve pressure on the northern enclave. (201) Yet tactically and strategically the offensive was ill-planned and ill-executed. Tactically it was ill-planned because the war in the north had already been lost. (202) Strategically it was ill-executed because, yet again, instead of leaving isolated strongholds to be reduced at a later stage of the campaign, it was precisely against such positions that

Loyalist forces were concentrated in the first few days. Two in particular held out: Fuentes de Ebro, against which Lister was to throw his forces in vain day after day while his tanks remained immobile and wasted; (203) and Belchite, the image of which seemed to possess Juan Modesto, the communist in overall command of the offensive at the the front. (204) He compelled his forces, primarily the anarchists of the 25th Division - the old Carod and Ortiz columns - to assault the town, taking it street by street and ruined building by ruined building in a terrible waste of time, life and munitions. Belchite was finally captured on 7 September but by then the offensive had long since ground to a halt: 'a Pyrrhic victory', (205) if victory it was at all. If the effect of the offensive in purely military terms was very slight, this was not the case in social and economic terms: here it was an unmitigated disaster. Ostensibly organised to relieve the pressure on the northern enclave, the plans for an offensive in Aragon involved, in truth, very

different aims. The idea for such an offensive had been particularly appealing to each of the three main groups which constituted the Negrin administration. For the right wing socialists and the republicans it was an ideal opportunity to re-impose the authority of central government over a region which for a year had been separate in all but name. For the communists, furthermore, it was a particularly propitious moment now that the May days in Barcelona and the successful toppling of Largo Caballero had illustrated the weakness and political naivete of CNT leaders. All three groups were firmly agreed on one point: an opposition to all revolutionary change. In July 1937 one region remained the epitome and the last significant example of such change: Aragon. The forces which moved into Aragon at the start of August 1937 were far better equipped and armed than those which, evolving from the volunteer militias of July 1936, had manned the north-eastern fronts for over a year. Instead of antique rifles, a strictly limited number of cartridges, few larger calibre weapons and little or no

artillery, these aptly named 'shock troops' brought with them machine-guns, sub-machine-guns, modern rifles and revolvers with plentiful ammunition, and considerable numbers of tanks. As one ex-militia commander was later to remark:

'We had not realised until then the difference between our Divisions and theirs. Now with rage in our hearts we realised how under-equipped we were'.(206)

That rage was little to the fury kindled by the use of such military material against the rearguard. It was only the intervention of representatives from the CNT national committee and the influence of military commanders at the front, most of them Catalan, which restrained more junior-ranking officers, many of them Aragonese, from leading the anarcho-syndicalist troops out of the line to protect their villagers.(207)

The order to dismantle the Aragonese collectives was officially made by the new Governor-General of Aragon,(208) Jose Ignacio Mantecon, a communist sympathiser from the ranks of the republicans,(209) who had been appointed by the central

government to succeed the President of the dissolved regional defence council, Joaquin Ascaso. Enrique Lister, the commander of the troops which were used to put that order into effect has made it clear, however, that the effective order to attack the collectives came to him directly from the central government. He had been well-briefed as to the real purpose of his presence in Aragon and, five days before his forces went into action, he was given his final instructions directly by the Defence Minister himself:

'[Prieto] told me that...I should act unhesitatingly, without bureaucratic or legal formalities, in whatever way seemed to me to be the best because I had the government behind me unanimously.'(210) Such instructions represented a carte blanche for Lister,(211) his fellow communist officers and his troops, whose attitude was both arrogant and callous. Antonio Rosel, who was arrested by a military patrol in Caspe, recalled that they told him: 'We don't give a damn about anyone or anything here; we're in charge and that's that': this was after he had produced his documents

to show them that he was not only a communist but actually a member of the party's Aragonese regional committee.(212) Clearly, towards collectivists in general and anarchosyndicalists in particular the attitude of the invading forces was hardly likely to be any more friendly. In all some 600 anarchosyndicalists, including several councillors of the regional defence council, members of the CNT, FAI and Libertarian Youth regional committees, and many of those responsible for the organisation of the collectives, were arrested and transferred to points of detention unknown, in many cases only to their communist captors. Some, like the Blanco brothers from Alcampel, were never to return.(213) Many who had been responsible for the well-organised collectives in the districts of Binefar and the Cinca valley were to remain in jail until only hours before the areas of eastern Huesca were overrun by Nationalist forces seven and a half months later.(214) It was the collective farms themselves, however, which suffered the worst damage. In

a report to a meeting of agrarian workers' delegates in Valencia on 22 October 1937 a representative from the Aragonese regional CNT committee affirmed:

'The government has nominated management commissions which have seized the food warehouses and have distributed supplies haphazardly. The land, draught animals and agricultural implements have been returned to the members of fascist families... The harvest has been similarly distributed, as well as the animals raised by the collectives. A large number of collective piggeries, stables, stockyards and barns have been destroyed. In such villages as Bordon and Calaceite even the peasants' seed stocks have been seized.' (215)

Even fellow communists found it difficult to accept the ruthless character of Lister's actions against the collectives. Jose Almudi, a communist leader of the united socialist and communist youth organisations in Aragon, affirmed after the war:

'Lister's measures in Aragon were very harsh. He could have acted with greater discretion. Great ill-feeling

was aroused as a result of his conduct.' (216) Like Almudi, Antonio Rosel, the Communist leader of the Aragonese UGT, (217) was also a determined opponent of the collectivist system in Aragon. Nevertheless, he also later affirmed that Lister had overstepped the mark: 'it required a great deal of care to ensure that in liquidating a bad experiment we did not go to the other extreme. But that was what happened.' (218)

More telling still, perhaps, were the words of Jose Silva, yet another communist sympathiser from the ranks of the republicans; Silva was Secretary-General of the Institute of Agrarian Reform in 1937 and wrote his comments at the end of that year, within weeks of the events he was assessing.

'When the government of the Republic dissolved the Council of Aragon the Governor-General tried to allay the profound uneasiness in the hearts of the peasant masses by dissolving the collectives. Such a measure was a very grave mistake which produced tremendous disorganisation in the countryside.' (219)

The situation was such

that, according to the same source, 'within days' agricultural work had been 'suspended almost entirely'. By the time of the next seeding, even though the circumstances had improved enormously, a quarter of the fields had not been prepared. (220)

The consequences, as much for Loyalist Spain as for Aragon were disastrous. There were approximately 450 kilometres of front line in the region and the forces manning it had been largely ignored by the central government, as much in respect of military materials as of food supplies (221) From the opening days of the conflict when Durruti had issued his decree emphasising the vital importance of the harvest, those at the front had been dependent upon the agrarian produce of the Aragonese rearguard. (222) Many outside observers argued, no doubt correctly, that the organisation of supplies had been irregular. It must be considered very unlikely, however, that supplies were reliably organised on any front; the Aragonese fronts were probably a good deal better than most, thanks to the presence of the regional

authority of the defence council and the economic co-ordination of the regional federation of collectives.

What were evident in Aragon, especially in those districts where the collective system had been quickly and successfully established, were the efforts made to improve agricultural output and the pride taken by village collectivists in organising supplies for the front line.

(223) Inevitably in relation to libertarian Aragon it is virtually impossible to encounter statistics. One is left, first, with isolated figures like those given to Gaston Leval by the collectivists at Binefar which showed that they were supplying the Huesca fronts with between thirty and forty tons of food every week, had donated 340 tons of food to the Madrid front in a single special consignment, and in one day had presented three of the volunteer columns at the front with 36,000 pesetas worth of olive oil; (224) secondly, with the knowledge that agricultural production in collectivised Aragon expanded considerably, and this in contrast with other parts of Loyalist Spain; and thirdly, with the undeniable

fact that the Aragonese village of Alloza by the rearguard, besides raising the reappearance of another living standards of its feature which had been inhabitants, had maintained eliminated for over a year. some 450 kilometres of front Referring to difficulties line for a year when the which had arisen in the strongest and most able village with the olive members of the rural harvest, a correspondent for communities were precisely Vanguardia, the communist those who manned the fronts weekly, noted: and were thus unable to assist 'It is evident that this with agricultural tasks. matter is a symptom which

After the invasion of highlights . . . the need to Lister, as the finish with a caciquismo Secretary-General of the which still exists in many Institute of Agrarian Reform villages.' (227)

Just five months after the overthrow of the village collective by the communists, caciquismo had raised its head once again. The olive crop was the only one to be harvested on a wide scale after the destruction of the collectives and it was evidently a good one, but it was not only at Alloza that there were difficulties. (228)

At Cretas, Encarnita and Renato Simoni found that the food situation was now becoming 'preoccupying'. More specifically, the mortality figures started to rise; the causes were primarily gastric, infections being brought on by the return to a diminished and impoverished diet. (226)

The return to private ownership was marked at the

pockets of the government'. (230)

It is clear that the destruction of the collectives and the presence in the rearguard of considerable numbers of communist-led troops brought a brusque social readjustment. The composition of village councils, reorganised after the government's decree of 4 January 1937, a reorganisation which had to a large degree genuinely reflected the strength and influence of local political and trade union groups, was now arbitrarily altered. In many cases the seats previously held by representatives of the CNT or other libertarian groups were re-divided among other sectors of the old Popular Front. (231) Typical were the centres of Andorra and Calaceite in northern Teruel. At the former, where the seven posts had previously been divided evenly between the CNT and UGT, with the odd one going to a republican, (232) all bar one now fell to the republican group with both trade union organisations excluded from the council. (233)

At Calaceite the six positions earlier held by representatives of the CNT and

the FAI, which together with a republican group had been the only forces in the centre before the military insurrection, were redistributed among the republicans, the communists noted by the Secretary-general of the Institute of Agrarian Reform:

'Under cover of the order issued by the Governor-General those persons who were discontented with the collectives . . . took them by assault, carrying away and dividing up the harvest and the farm implements without respecting the collectives which had been formed without violence or pressure and that were a model of organisation.' (237)

Even more clear in his denunciation of the situation created by Lister's invasion was the local communist Antonio Rosel:

'People who had been and always would be enemies of the working class, because their interests were fundamentally opposed, were given encouragement and support simply because of their hostility to the CNT.' (238)

Yet many of these people were not simply hostile towards the CNT. There seems little reason to doubt the

suggestion, made most recently by an ex-officer of the 11th Division, that some Aragonese smallholders welcomed Lister's troops as liberators. (239) A mere seven months later, however, it was precisely such better off villagers who celebrated another, more final liberation. (240)

In March 1938, after yet another ill-planned and wasteful offensive, this time at Teruel, (241) the Aragonese fronts collapsed. The Nationalists, exploiting the momentum gained from their successful counter-attacks around Teruel, launched a major offensive in the area between the provincial capital and the Ebro. (242) Much of the front-line simply disintegrated. By 15 March, only six days after the start of the offensive, there remained no link at all between the Aragonese army command on the north side of the Ebro and the main reserve force which fatally had been concentrated to the south and west of Teruel. The front-line had been completely ruptured.

Worse was to follow. The main thrust of the first offensive had been to the south of the Ebro. When that front collapsed the attack was

extended to the northern side of the river. Under the weight of assaults which now came from both the north-west across the original front-line and from the south-west across the Ebro, the 10th and 11th Army Corps disintegrated as the 12th Army Corps had done a fortnight earlier. (243) By the end of the month there remained of Loyalist Aragon only a small sector of Teruel to the south and south-east of the provincial capital and the district of Boltana in the north of Huesca.

The collapse of the front-lines in Aragon clearly caused the republicans as much surprise as it did the Nationalists. It should not have done so, however. For eighteen months the north-eastern fronts had been systematically starved of munitions and had been badly undermanned. When they broke in March 1938 four fifths of the Republic's forces were in the central zone to the south and west of Teruel. (244)

The collapse of the front lines in Aragon was due, however, as much to non-military as to military factors. Aragon, like Catalonia, had been liberated during July and August 1936 by revolutionary zeal and very

little else. The loss of Aragon, followed by that of Catalonia too, was an inevitable consequence of the gradual strangulation and final destruction of the revolutionary advances achieved in the aftermath of 19 July 1936. In the wake of Lister's invasion of Aragon a lack of confidence filtered insidiously into the rearguard. As Burnett Bolloten has commented:

'Although the situation in Aragon improved in some degree, the hatreds and resentments generated by the break-up of the collectives and the repression that followed was never wholly dispelled. Nor was the resultant disillusionment, that sapped the spirit of the anarchists on the Aragon front, ever wholly removed.' (245)

There, as one ex-militia commander has affirmed, 'the anarchosyndicalists lived with their eyes fixed on the front line and turned towards the rear. (246) Behind them the destruction of twelve months of revolutionary creation and progress was compounded for those who had made the greatest efforts and the greatest sacrifices by the re-emergence of an economic

system and a social stratification which many had presumed relegated to the history books.

For libertarians in Aragon the dissolution of the Regional Defence Council and the destruction of the network of agrarian collectives epitomised, both in their manner and in their result, the character of the Second Republic in Spain. Although it stood out as the most ruthless, the invasion of the rearguard and the assault on the collectives in August 1937 may be regarded as the last in a series of confrontations between a popular demand for genuine social and economic progress and a regime which, having fostered expectations of such progress had in fact pursued a quite different course.

The outbreak of military rebellion, however, had provided libertarians with the opportunity to effect the changes which the Republic had failed to introduce. Much of the social and economic structure of provincial Aragon was destroyed in the opening moments of the revolt to be replaced in several villages by a system which had little in common with its predecessor. Assisted by the

civil war which first helped to eliminate the old part-feudal, part-capitalist structure of rural Aragon and then encouraged to join the collective movement some who might otherwise have shown an initial reluctance, Aragonese libertarians aspired to the creation of a truly egalitarian society. Despite showing a marked tolerance towards those who wished to remain as independent farmers, they gradually established a system of collective agriculture which was eventually to extend to almost every village in the region. (247) Moreover, in many villages agricultural collectivisation was followed by an extension of the system to other aspects of village life, to local commerce and various municipal services.

In this way libertarians were able to introduce a profound measure of rationalisation to village society, ensuring full employment and maximum production. Capitalist competition was eradicated and all possibility of speculation and inflation, so common in wartime, denied. Surplus wealth, which in the previous system had been garnered and then wasted by the few, was

used to raise the standards of living of the entire community. Both in its time and today the Aragonese experience has shown forth as an example, as much to the world as to Spain, of what human society can achieve.

Almost by way of an epitaph, the moral and material worth of the collective system was demonstrated by its capacity for rejuvenation after the havoc and devastation wreaked in August 1937. The assault on the collectives was quickly seen to have been a terrible mistake. The central government and Vicente Uribe, its communist Minister of Agriculture, were forced to reverse their policies in Aragon and allow and even encourage the resumption of collectivisation. (248) As one observer, no particular admirer of the anarchists, was later to affirm:

'This was one of the most exemplary episodes of the Spanish revolution. The peasants once more affirmed their libertarian convictions despite the governmental terror and economic boycotting of which they were the object. (249)

Collectives were again established in many parts of

the region. (250) They were recreated not only in those villages which had been traditionally staunch supporters of the libertarian movement but also in others like Alloza in Teruel where the original collective had apparently been founded only after outside encouragement. Significantly, despite the pressure to renounce collectivisation and the loss of much of the property which had at the start constituted the basis of the collective, 25 percent of the village decided to join the new venture. (251)

Nevertheless, despite the successful re-establishment of collective farms in many parts of Aragon, the situation in August 1937 was totally alien to that which had first

inspired the development of collectivisation and had brought the agricultural successes and social improvements associated with it. The destruction of libertarian Aragon proved to be the first stage in the collapse of Loyalist Spain. The complete disintegration of the front-lines in March 1938 emphasised the very profound effect that the devastation of the rearguard had had on the Aragonese will to resist. It marked, furthermore, the final defeat of that liberal republican - socialist ethic which had, for the most part, controlled the fortunes and epitomised the character of the Second Spanish Republic.

Graham Kelsey

1. Vicente Ballester, regional secretary of the CNT of Andalucia and nominated to succeed Horacio Martinez Prieto as national secretary was assassinated in Cadiz in July 1936. He spoke in Zaragoza with Francisco Ascaso and Miguel Abos, (see Solidaridad Obrera (SO), 24 January 1936 and Heraldo de Aragon (HdA), 22 January 1936).
2. A list of the Aragonese trade unions represented at the congress was published in SO, 6 May 1936. Listed were 36 from the province of Huesca, 18 from Teruel and 49 from Zaragoza (exclusive of those in the capital), which with the city of Zaragoza made a total of 104 centres with trade union organisation.
3. The region of Aragon was actually a part, albeit the major part of the regional confederation of Aragon, Rioja (Logrono) and Navarra. At the beginning of June a note from the regional committee stated that there were now 400 trade unions established; Cultura y Accion (CyA), 11 June 1936. This would necessarily have meant some 450 trade unions in the three Aragonese provinces.
4. The officially computed total was 70. (Boletin de la Camara Oficial del Comercio y de la Industria y del Museo Comercial de Aragon, 1937, No. 4, 10-11) (4 general strikes and 65 others which clearly adds to 69), but a comparison with official notices published in the press shows that the list is incomplete and that the total was actually still higher.
5. Quoted in Diario de Aragon (DdA), 8 July 1936.
6. Information on the military insurrection in Zaragoza is taken from, HdA and El Noticiero, 24 July 1936 et seq.; SO, 26 August and 25 September 1936; De julio a julio: un ano de lucha (Barcelona, 1937), 49-53; Jose Borrás, Aragon en la revolucion espanola (Barcelona, 1983), 88-104; Guillermo Cabanellas, La guerra de los 1000 dias (2 vols., Barcelona, 1977), vol.II, 74-91; Luis Romero, Tres dias de julio (Barcelona, 1967), 50-6, 134-8, 218-21, 396-7, 420-1, 440-1; and Luis Gonzalo, 'Zaragoza, 18-7-36', in Andalan, no. 70, July 1975.
7. The Civil Guard, a traditionally paramilitary police force, was hated by the workers for its repressive attitude and the links it maintained with large landowners and industrialists. Rather than abolish it as many had hoped, the Second Republic set up a new force, the Assault Guard, to counter-balance the right wing links of the other. In Aragon, however, the two forces were too often used in conjunction against popular agitation for this to be the case.

8. HdA, 24 July 1936.
9. Cesar M. Lorenzo, Les anarchistes espagnols et le pouvoir, 1868-1969 (Paris, 1969), 144; particularly for Durruti, see Jose Peirats, Los anarquistas en la crisis politica espanola (Buenos Aires, 1964), 119.
10. G. Cabanellas, Cuatro Generales, vol.II, 84.
11. Note the comments of Carod, member of the CNT regional committee and the column leader, in Ronald Fraser Blood of Spain. The experience of Civil War, 1936-1939 (London, 1979), 121.
12. Antonio Ejarque, president of the reformed metalworkers union in 1930 and member of the CNT's national revolutionary committee at the end of 1933, was to be commissar of the 25th Division and, briefly in 1947, national secretary of the CNT. Servet (Evelio) Martinez, secretary of the reformed glassworkers union in April 1931 and member of the CNT national committee during 1934-36, was Economy Councillor on the Regional Defence Council of Aragon from December 1936. Adolfo Arnal, vice-secretary of the glassworkers union in 1931, secretary of the local federation during 1934-6 and then member in 1936 of the national committee, was first Economy Councillor and then Agricultural Councillor on the Regional Defence Council before rejoining the militia forces as commissar of the 28th Division. Promoted to batallion commander he was killed near Alfambra (Teruel) in February 1938. Joaquin Aznar, jailed for his part in the Puente de Vallecas plot against General Primo de Rivera amnestied in April 1931, retried and condemned to life imprisonment in February 1932, and amnestied in April 1934, served on the national pro-prisoners and national defence committees in Zaragoza during 1934-36. He was killed in the first moments of the uprising, as was Benito Esteban, a stalwart figure in Zaragoza's pro-prisoners network who was repeatedly imprisoned himself during the years of the Second Republic. Francisco Munoz, one of the family of libertarian activists, was CNT regional secretary from 1934-38.
13. A metalworker from the village of Angues in Huesca, Abos had come to the fore first in Zaragoza, (1915-16), and then in Barcelona, (1918-19). Returning to Zaragoza at the start of the 1920s, he had served on local, regional and, in 1934-36, national CNT committees.
14. (Francisco Garaita, president of the reformed boilermakers section in 1931, was, like Santiago Baranda (see below), a much respected senior member of the trade union network in Zaragoza.

Miguel Chueca, president of the reformed woodworkers union in 1931 and first president of the 'Revolutionary Youth', also in 1931, had been a tireless propagandist for the CNT, member of the editorial staff of Cultura y Accion, the Zaragoza CNT weekly, director of La Antorcha, the occasionally produced paper of the 'Revolutionary Youth', and local correspondent for CNT. Labour Councillor on the Aragonese Regional Defence Council, he rejoined the militia forces, after the Council's dissolution, as commissar in an independent company of machine-gunners.

15. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 141. Note also the comments of the veteran cenetista Jose Borrás, op. cit., 93-4.

16. Note the comments of C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 141, n.4. Note also the comments of Abos and others in Actas del pleno celebrado por la organizacion de Aragon, el dia 31 de Enero de 1937 and also the fourth appendix in Jose Borrás, op. cit., 275-290. Branded as a traitor by some and rebuffed by almost all, he was tried for his life at the end of January 1937 (Actas del pleno, 31 de Enero de 1937). Separated from the CNT and from any participation in the war effort (CyA, 13 February 1937; Nueva Aragon (NA), 18 February 1937), he died a broken man in a refugee camp in southern France at the end of 1940 (Pedro Torralba Coronas, De Ayerbe a la roja y negra (Barcelona, 1980), 148-9).

17. De julio a julio, 52-3. In fact CNT membership in Zaragoza was a little over 20,000.

18. Some anarchosyndicalists tried to raise the standard of revolt during the second week of the general strike (SO, 25 September 1936), and again in mid-August (SO, 30 September 1936).

19. See G. Kelsey, Anarchosyndicalism, libertarian communism and the State: the CNT in Zaragoza and Aragon 1930-1937 (Doctoral thesis, Lancaster University, 1984), 224-237.

20. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 142. In Huesca the shopworkers society provided the military with full co-operation and all their funds (HdA, 9 August 1936).

21. A reduced version of El Noticiero had actually been put together early on the morning of 23 July but the first full versions of the two newspapers appeared on 24 July.

22. The North line to Pamplona and the north coast, as against the other main line, the MZA (Madrid, Zaragoza and Alicante).

23. HdA, 24 July 1936.

24. HdA, 24 July 1936.

25. La Libertad (LL), 27 July, 14 August 1936.

26. SO, 13 September 1936.

27. SO, 25 September 1936; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 143.

28. L. Gonzalo, 'Zaragoza, 18-7-36'.

29. The first trains to Huesca and Teruel ran on 28 July 1936 (HdA, 28 July 1936).

30. HdA, 28 July 1936. On the persecution suffered by the tramworkers note the reference in Vanguardia, 14 November 1937, after the death in action of an ex-Zaragoza tramworker, Francisco Villarroya.

31. Information on the spread of the military insurrection and the advance of the volunteer militias into Aragon is drawn from HdA, Diario de Huesca (DdH), and LL, July and August 1936; SO, July and August 1936, et seq.; Jose Borrás, op. cit., 105-128; Jose Manuel Martinez Bande, La invasion de Aragon y el desembarco en Mallorca (Madrid, 1970), 53-126; 'Jacques de Gaule' (Juan Gomez Casas), El frente de Aragon (Barcelona, 1973), 52-98; Abel Paz, Durruti: The People Armed (Quebec, 1976), 224-39; P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 32-69; Alardo Prats, Vanguardia y Retaguardia de Aragon (Barcelona, 1937), 20-26; Miguel Garcia, Miguel Garcia's Story (Orkney, 1982), 33-40; Elias Manzanera, Documento Historico. la columna de hierro (Barcelona, 1981), 18-22.

32. A general strike was maintained in Huesca until 27 July, (Diario de Huesca recommenced publication on that day), and anarchosyndicalists maintained their resistance in Teruel until the same day when Civil Guard reinforcements arrived from the province (J.M. Martinez Bande, op. cit., 45; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 143)

33. El Pirineo Aragonés, 25 July 1936; DdH, 27 and 30 July 1936; HdA, 28 July 1936; La Union, 30 July 1936.

34. For a detailed analysis of the period of the Second Republic in Zaragoza and Aragon with special reference to the development of trade unionism, see my doctoral thesis, quoted above in n. 19.

35. HdA, 30 July 1936 and Jose Borrás, op. cit., 108-112.

36. Falangists - members of the Falange (Falange Espanola), the group of Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, son of the earlier military dictator, which mixed a strong support of church and

country with an unbridled hostility for all forms of radical working class organisation. Jose Carrsquer, 'La odisea de Eplia' in SO, 23 September 1936,

37. Ibid.; and HdA, 13 August 1936.

38. HdA, 29 July 1936.

39. HdA, DdH, 30 July 1936; P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 63.

40. HdA, DdH, 30 July 1936; P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 48.

41. HdA, 24 July 1936.

42. HdA, 29 July 1936. See also Jose Conceiro Tovar, Hombres que decidieron (17 a 22 de Julio de 1936), (Madrid, 1969), 558-59.

43. For Julian Mur see B. Fernandez Aldana, La guerra en Aragon, como fue (Barcelona, 1938), 9-11, 48-9; and Jose Maria Viu, 'Como mueran los republicanos', in NA, special issue, 10 December 1936. Mur had not only detected the secret meeting of the Generals Cabanellas and Mola at the start of June 1936 but also several others in the weeks leading up to the uprising; none of his warnings were attended to, however; (B. Fernandez Aldana, op. cit., 9-11; G. Cabanellas, Cuatro Generales, vol. I, 426-7.

44. HdA, 24 July 1936. See also Jose Borrás, op. cit., 127-8.

45. Note the article of Jose Gaya Picon, 'The enemies of the Republic must be ejected rapidly from their positions', published just three weeks before the uprising (Pueblo de Huesca (PdH), 29 June 1936).

46. SO, 30 August 1936; P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 32-42.

47. G. Cabanellas, Cuatro Generales, vol. II, 83.

48. Note the examples of Beceite (CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Valderrobes (Teruel), sus luchas sociales y revolucionarias (Toulouse, 1971), 49); Cretas (Encarnita & Renato Simoni, Cretas: la collectivisation d'un village Aragonais pendant la guerre civile espagnole, 1936-7 (Memoire de Licence, University of Geneva, 1977), 205; and Aldeba (SO, 27 August 1936).

49. For example in Alcampel (CNT-AIT: Realizaciones revolucionarias y estructuras colectivistas de la comarcal de Monzon (Huesca) (Barcelona, 1977), 7); Benabarre (Fragua Social, 25 September 1936); and Binaced (SO, 14 November 1937; CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 60).

50. CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Valderrobes, 50 (Beceite); E. & R. Simoni, op. cit., 205, 207 (Gretas); SO, 4 June 1937 (Velilla de Cinca); CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 139-40 (Tamarite de Litera).

51. SO, 6 September 1936; CyA, 29 July 1937; CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Valderrobes, 50-51, 125, 138-9, 157-9.

52. R. Fraser, op. cit., 121. Carod was not the only CNT emissary to try and raise parts of the region: another, who I have been unable to identify positively, tried to raise a volunteer force from among such villages of western Zaragoza as Aranda de Moncayo, Jarque and Arandiga (HdA, 30 July 1936).

53. CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Valderrobes, 157-9; CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Utrillas (Teruel), en lucha por la libertad contra el fascismo (1936-39) (Toulouse, 1970), 37-40).

54. On the engagement at Caspe see Baltasar Miro, 'La ruta contra el fascismo: caspe, la pagina mas negra de la sublevacion fascista', in SO, 3 September 1936; M. Garcia, op. cit., 37-40; J.M. Martinez bande, op. cit., 84-6; 'J. de Gaule', op. cit., 86-7. Julian Casanova Ruiz, Caspe 1936-1938; conflictos politicos y transformaciones sociales durante la guerra civil (Zaragoza, 1984), 35-40.

55. Rafael Blanco, 'La toma de Sastago', in SO, 25 and 26 August 1936.

56. SO, 18 August 1936. For a graphic account of one of the first attacks on Belchite see M. Garcia, op. cit., 40.

57. In the very first days of the Civil War it is probably imprecise to speak of actual columns. A large part of the militia forces appear to have been formed of groups which made their own way to such collecting points as Candanos, Penalba, Bujaraloz and the station at Caspe. (See for example M. Garcia, op. cit., 35-40). One such group, led by Manuel Prieto, the leader of the January 1932 anarchist rising in Upper Catalonia, had left Barcelona as early as 21 July but was ambushed at Pina de Ebro where Civil Guards had concentrated, and everyone was killed (LL, 24 July 1936; HdA, 29 July 1936).

58. According to some military sources he had been a strong supporter of the military conspiracy before 19 July (G. Cabanellas, Cuatro Generales, vol. II, 124-5). For CNT accusations against him see FAI, Memoria del pleno peninsular de regionales celebrado los dias 21, 22 y 23 de Febrero de 1937, 25.

59. A. Paz, op. cit., 233; Jose Mira, Los guerrilleros confederados: un hombre, Durruti (Barcelona, 1937), 110-1.

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60. Yet, within 24 hours volunteer forces were attacking Almudebar and their left flank was covered, or not covered, by Durruti's forces now several kilometres to the rear.

61. A. Paz, op. cit., 230-2; J. Mira, op. cit., 110-1 ; 'J. de Gaule', op. cit., 88).

62. Tardienta was occupied and Almudebar attacked on 28 July (SO, 29 July 1936; DdH, 30 July 1936), and Sietamo, 7 km short of Huesca, was attacked, for the first time, two days later (DdH, 1 August 1936; J.M. Martinez Bande, op. cit., 80).

63. A captured military report published in LL, 24 July 1936.

64. SO, 26 August 1936; Eloy Fernandez Clemente, Aragon contemporaneo, 1833-1936 (Madrid, 1975).

65. SO, 9 August 1936, reported the occupation of 'Selfa', presumably Gelsa, Pina and Osera. See also J.M. Martinez Bande, op. cit., 87.

66. J.M. Martinez Bande, op. cit., 114-15.

67. Loyalist Aragon included some 70-75 percent of Huesca and Teruel but only 20 percent of Zaragoza. Nominally only 42 percent of the Aragonese population resided in the Loyalist zone but this figure was certainly swelled considerably by the influx of refugees from the Nationalist sector. For a more thorough analysis of these points see Appendix II in my doctoral thesis, quoted in note 19 above.

68. The population of Zaragoza (1930 census) was 173,987. The next three largest centres were Calatayud (15,215), Huesca (14,632) and Teruel (13,584): Anuario Estadistica de Espana, 1931, 17.

69. However, the recent discovery of important source materials relating to the planning and preparation of the insurrection, in particular the documentation provided by Teniente-coronel E. Fernandez Cordon (in the Servicio Historico Militar in Madrid) shows that this traditional view will have to be drastically revised. There can now be little doubt that General Mola, as the leaders of the military conspiracy, had already appreciated the need to totally annul every vestige of the Second Republic and its support in Spanish society with as much violence as was necessary: see Julian Casanova Ruiz, Anarquismo y Revolucion en la sociedad rural Aragonesa durante la guerra civil (Julio 1936-Marzo 1938), 3 vols., University of Zaragoza, Doctoral thesis, September 1983, vol. I, 140-4.

70. Notice of the orders being given was published in LL, 21 July 1936: see also L. Romero, op. cit., 338-9; note also the

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death of Miguel Martin Debesa, chief of the urban police, reported in HdA, 24 July 1936 (claimed as suicide in El Noticiero, 23 July 1936).

71. L. Romero, op. cit., 221; J. Borrás, op. cit., 100-1.

72. Diario de Aragon (Amadeo Anton), (Andalan, no. 87, April 1976) and El Pueblo de Huesca (Jose Maria Ferrer), (LL, 29 August 1936; Jose Antonio Ferrer Benimeli, La masoneria en Aragon (3 vols., Zaragoza, 1979), vol. III, 127). The archivist and director of the periodical Aragon, Marin Sancho, was similarly held and executed (J.A. Ferrer Benimeli, op. cit., vol. III, 113-16).

73. Domingo Martinez Moreno of Teruel (Fragua Social, 3 October 1936) and Angel Vera Coronel of Zaragoza (Mas Alla, no. 12, 11 August 1937), - but not Agustin Carrascosa of Huesca, see above.

74. Mariano Carderera and manuel Sender of Huesca (LL, 29 August 1936; J. A. Ferrer Benimeli, op. cit., vil. III, 125-6, 136-5); Pedro Fabre of Teruel (La Verdad, 21 January 1938); and Manuel Perez Lizano of Zaragoza (Luis German Zubero, 'La represion en Zaragoza, 1936-45', in Andalan, no. 241, October 1979).

75. Note the case quoted in Santiago Loren, Memoria parcial (Madrid, 1979), 241, and also the Pedrola shootings noted by L. German Zubero in 'La represion en Zaragoza, 1936-45'.

76. From General Millan Astray's speech in the village of Casetas, quoted by Antonio Gracia in Avance, 18 June 1937. The general, a mutilated veteran of the Moroccan wars, of whom Arturo Barea painted a marvellous cameo (The Forging of a Rebel, English translation - London, 1984; vol.2, The Track, 88-90) had visited the Zaragoza area at the end of August 1936.

77. As the civil war progressed even right-wingers were to be in danger; see El Dia, 3 and 8 August 1937.

78. Note of the CNT regional secretary, Francisco Munoz, in SO, 14 August 1936.

79. SO, 9 August 1936.

80. CyA, 7 August 1937; Joaquin Aina was also shot but the young libertarian Mariano Lencina managed to escape.

81. SO, 2 October 1936.

82. CyA, 10 October 1936.

83. SO, 18 March 1937.

84. CyA, 16 November 1937.

85. Information on the assassinations in Zaragoza is drawn from SO, 26 August, 13, 25, 30 September, 2 October, 21 November, 24 December 1936, 18 March 1937; NA, 29 January, 26 February, 9 March, 7, 24 April 1937; CyA, 16 November 1937; El Dia, 8 August 1937; Mas Alla, 11 August 1937; 'EEG', 'La represion fascista en Zaragoza, 1936-7', in Andalan, no. 138, November 1977; L. German Zubero, 'La represion en Zaragoza, 1936-45'; Pablo Larraneta, 'Diario inedito del capellan de ejecuciones, los fusilamientos de Torrero', in Andalan, nos. 294-6, November 1980; and J.A. Ferrer Benimeli, op. cit., vol. III, 184-93; J. Borrás, op. cit., 226-9.

86. J.A. Ferrer Benimeli, op. cit., vol. III, 187.

87. L. German Zubero, 'La represion en Zaragoza, 1936-45', Hundreds, if not thousands, more were executed at a spot known locally as 'Valdespartera' on the Valencia road (SO, 30 September 1936; S. Loren, op. cit., 241), and near Movera on the north-eastern outskirts of Zaragoza (NA, 29 January 1937; P. Larraneta, 'Diario inedito del capellan de ejecuciones', refers to a mass grave of 1,000 bodies).

88. For executions in Huesca see SO, 16 August, 3 September, 29 December 1936; LL, 29 August 1936; B. Fernandez Aldana, op. cit., 12-13; A. Prats, op. cit., 43-4; Hans E. Kaminski, Los de Barcelona (Barcelona, 1973), 211-12; J.A. Ferrer Benimeli, op. cit., vol. III, 119-36. For those in Teruel see the series of articles by Garcia Ortega in La Verdad, January 1938. For those in Belchite see Luis Granell, 'Los rojos en Belchite', in Andalan, no. 143, December 1977. For those in Uncastillo see Avance, 18 June 1937; Combate, no. 4, 2 August 1937; Castilla Libre, 28 November 1937; P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 357-60. For those in Zuera see SO, 13 October 1936; Combate, no. 3, 26 July 1937. For those in Ayerbe and other villages of upper Huesca see Fragua Social, 10 October 1936; P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 361-2. For those in Barbastro after the conquest of Loyalist Aragon see J.R. Marcuello, 'Los fusilamientos de las Capuchinas', in Andalan, no. 189, November 1978; Cambio 16, no. 294, 31 July 1977. See also the data collected from veteran survivors by J. Borrás, op. cit., 224-54.

89. Gaston Leval, Collectives in the Spanish Revolution (London, 1975), 72-4.

90. Also sometimes called 'comites revolucionarios' or 'comites de milicias'. See also L. Romero, op. cit., 1937; CyA, 16 November 1937.

91. As, for example, at Alcaniz, Granen and Monzon (Augustin Souchy, Entre los campesinos de Aragon: el comunismo libertario en las comarcas liberadas (Barcelona, 1977), 25, 73, 82); Montalban and Utrillas (CNT AIT: Comarcal de Utrillas, 21); Bujaraloz (Gaston Leval, Colectividades libertarias en Espana (Madrid, 1977), 175); Oliete and Lagunarrota (Jose Peirats, La CNT en la revolucion espanola (3 vols., Toulouse, 1951-3), vol. I, 323-6).

92. For example in Alcorisa (G. Leval, Collectives, p. 130), and in Campo and benabarre (Fragua Social, 25 September 1936).

93. Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista (POUM), (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification); the independent communist party of Marxist Unification); the independent communist party of Joaquin Maurin and Andres Nin. Partido Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (PSUC), (United Socialist Party of Catalonia); effectively the Catalan section of the communist party. Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (Esquerra), (Republican Left of Catalonia), a left republican but Catalan nationalist party established in 1930 whose leader, Luis Companys (see below p.) was now regional President.

94. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 146-8, and Macario Royo in R. Fraser, op. cit., 350.

95. For example George Orwell: see Homage to Catalonia (London, 1966), 8-10, 105-12.

96. The Communist Party established itself as the single most determined opponent of all change: as a result much of the bourgeoisie, both that which was already politically aligned within the Popular Front and a considerable proportion of that which was not, joined it. See Vernon Richards, Lessons of the Spanish Revolution (London, 1972), 112-19; Noam Chomsky, 'Objectivity and liberal Scholarship', an essay published in American Power and the New Mandarins (London, 1969), 94-6; G. Orwell, op. cit., 46-70; and, in particular, the study by Burnett Bolloten, The Grand Camouflage: The Communist Conspiracy in the Spanish Civil War (London, 1961), which has recently been republished with a less contentious title, The Spanish Revolution: The Left and the Struggle for Power during the Civil War (Chapel Hill, 1979); and David Cattell, Communism and the Spanish Civil War, (Berkeley, 1955).

97. For an account of the assembly see A. Paz, op. cit., 263-4; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 147-8; and Actas del Pleno

extraordinario de sindicatos de Aragon con representatntes del las columnas que operan en el frente, celebrado en Bujaraloz el dia 6 de Octubre de 1936.

98. Consejo Regional de Defensa de Aragon, Boletin, no. 4, 5 November 1936.

99. Actas del Pleno extraordinario, Bujaraloz, 6 de Octubre de 1936.

100. CNT, 17 September 1936.

101. Actas del Pleno extraordinario, Bujaraloz, 6 de Octubre de 1936; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 148; note also R. Fraser, op. cit., 350.

102. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 149

103. The announcement of the formation of the council was carried in CyA, 10 October 1936. The list of councillors was produced in SO, 17 October 1936 (presumably from CyA, no. 13, which is not in any of the main collections of the newspaper). The council's first meeting was at Fraga on 18 October 1936 (CyA, 21 October 1936).

104. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 149-50; Pierre Broue and Emile Temime, The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain (London, 1970), 205; Nazario Gonzalez, El anarquismo en la historia de espana contemporaneo (Barcelona, 1970), 93.

105. Martinez Prieto had resigned as national secretary at the end of the Zaragoza national congress. That congress had decided firstly to move the national committee to Madrid and secondly to require the holding of a national vote for a new secretary. The new national committee was organised in Madrid on 18 June (SO, 20 June 1936) and, pending the result of the plebiscite, David Antona became its interim secretary (Castilla Libre, 29 July 1937). He was still national secretary at the beginning of September (SO, 2 september 1936, CNT, 3 September 1936) but according to C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 255, Martinez Prieto re-assumed control of the national committee during the second week of that month before resigning again in mid-November when he was succeeded by Mariano Vazquez Rodriguez.

106. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 150. The delegation comprised the Aragonese anarchosyndicalists Joaquin Ascaso (see n. 112 below) and Miguel Chueca (see n. 14 above), the independent syndicalist Benito Pabon and two republicans, Jose Maria Viu and Victoriano

Acuna. Leval, Collectives, 76.

107. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 150. Although fifteen years earlier he had been closely linked to the CNT as one of its lawyers, he was, by 1936, the leading figure of the petit-bourgeois Catalan Esquerra Republicana Party which, during the five years of the Second Republic, had been frequently and often violently at odds with the CNT.

108. Compare the famous meeting between Companys and the delegation of anarchists on 20 July 1936: A. Paz, op. cit., 213-4; J. Peirats, La CNT, vol. I, 162; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 107; P. Broue and E. Temime, op. cit., 130.

109. Francisco Largo Caballero was by 1936 the leader of the more radical wing of a Spanish socialist movement wracked by internal dissension and considerably undermined by communist infiltration. He had not always been radical, however, having in the late 1920s reached an accomodation with the military dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera in opposition to his 'moderate socialist' opponent of 1936, Indalecio Prieto.

110. Information on the meetings in Madrid comes from J. Peirats, La CNT, vol. I, 229; P. Broue and E. Temime, op. cit., 205-6; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 150; Consejo Regional de Defensa de Aragon, Boletin, nos. 4 & 5, 5 and 7 November 1936.

111. Manuel Azana, originally the leader of the small republican group Accion Republicana, and later titular head of Izquierda Republicana, the coalition of republican groups created in 1934, had been premier from October 1931 to September 1933 and again briefly from February to May 1936 before assuming the Presidency.

112. CyA, 10 October 1936; Actas del Pleno extraordinario, Bujaraloz, 6 de Octubre de 1936. The original plan had been for ten councillors, seven from the CNT, two from the UGT and one republican.

113. Gaceta de la Republica, 25 december 1936.

114. CyA, 8 December 1936; SO, 10 December 1936; Consejo Regional de Defensa de Aragon, Boletin, no. 12, 21 December 1936. Pabon, a lawyer who had worked closely with the CNT throughout the 1930s, had stood as an independent syndicalist candidate for Zaragoza (capital) in the Cortes elections of February 1936, apparently with the blessing of the national CNT committee who had refused to allow the candidature of Angel Pestana as a member of the official Syndicalist Party.

115. Gaceta de la Republica, 19 January 1937. The cousin of

Francisco Ascaso, Joaquin Ascaso had helped to organise the demonstrations by unemployed workers in July and August 1931 before becoming president of the bricklayers section of the construction workers union in October 1931. A prominent leader of that union during its several months of clandestine existence both in 1932 and 1933, he played an important part in the organisation of the december 1933 CNT uprising in Aragon but was detained 36 hours before it was due to commence. Though a delegate for the Zaragoza construction workers union at the CNT National Congress in May 1936, he was actually in Barcelona when the uprising broke out.

116. Frank Mintz, L'autogestion dans L'Espagne Revolutionnaire (Paris, 1970), 51.

117. G. Leval, Collectives, 131.

118. Victor Blanco, Alcampel 1880-1936 (published as an annex to a re-edition of Augustin Souchy, Entre los campesinos de Aragon (Barcelona, 1977)), 116-21.

119. G. Leval, Colectividades, 386.

120. SO, 9 September 1936.

121. On Justo Val Franco see SO, 12 November 1937. Manuel Lozano Guillen was finally shot in April 1945, see P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 82, 352.

122. SO, 26 August 1936.

123. Saturnino Carod in R. Fraser, op. cit., 348.

124. SO, 26 August 1936.

125. Jose Cosme Samperiz in SO, 26 August 1936.

126. V. Blanco, op. cit., in A. Souchy, op. cit., 116.

127. SO, 26 August 1936. The same terms were laid down at the assembly of delegates from the villages of the neighbouring 'Litera' district in Binefar (SO, 8 September 1936)

128. SO, 26 August 1936. These regulations were restated at the regional congress of collectives in Caspe in February 1937; see G. Leval, Collectives, 86.

129. R. Fraser, op. cit., 359-60.

130. A point appreciated by the Nationalists in Aragon: see the note published in Boletin de la Camara Oficial del Comercio y de la Industria y del Museo Comercial de Aragon, 1937, no. 3, 2-3; note also their destruction of wheat stocks in the villages of Bujaraloz and Farlete: SO, 13 and 15 August 1936.

131. See below.

132. SO, 26 August 1936.

133. SO, 14 August 1936.

134. G. Leval, Collectives, 76.

135. An image of which even such a scholar as Frank Mintz has found himself persuaded; F. Mintz, op. cit., 75.

136. SO, 9 September, 1936.

137. Information on the regional congress of collectives at Caspe is taken from NA, 16 and 17 February 1937; CyA, 18 and 20 February 1937; Boletin de Informacion CNT-AIT-FAI, 22 February 1937; SO, 25 February 1937; and Memoria de la obra de la revolucion, las colectividades campesinas de Aragon: datos del congreso constituyente de la federacion de colectividades 14-15 febrero de 1937 See also J. Peirats, La CNT, vol. I, 340-2;

Diego Abad de Santillan, Por que perdimos la guerra (Barcelona, 1977), 147-52; G. Leval, Collectives, 83-90; F. Mintz, op. cit., 100-102; J. Borrada, op. cit., 168-74.

138. NA, 16 and 17 February 1937.

139. NA, 16 February 1937; G. Leval, Collectives, 85.

140. Mavilla, from Sarinena in Huesca, had been a teacher in Barbastro and a leading figure of the CNT there throughout the period of the Second Republic: he was nominated to be Agricultural Councillor on the first regional defence council (October) before becoming general-secretary of the federacion Regional de Colectividades de Aragon in February 1937.

141. Note his article in SO, 24 April 1937, and his comments at the ensuing regional plenum (NA, 30 April 1937; SO, 1 May 1937).

142. SO, 28 April 1937.

143. SO, 28 April 1937, gives 150,000. The exact figure was 141,794 (Frank Mintz, La autogestion en la Espana revolucionaria (Madrid, 1977), as 171). Mintz actually ascribes this figure, as does Diego Abad de Santillan his 141,430 (op. cit., 149), to the February congress but it appears absolutely clear to me from accounts in the newspapers of the time that the larger figures - taken from Memoria de la obra de la revolucion - refers to the ensuing plenum.

144. G. Leval, Collectives, 83-4.

145. That expansion was more than maintained: two weeks after the plenum the number of collectivists had grown to 180,000 (NA, 11 May 1937), and by the end of June it had risen still further to 300,000 (A. Prats, op. cit., 189).

146. F. Mintz, L'Autogestion, 66-7.
147. 'Mintz y las comunidades libertarias espanoles', an interview with Frank Mintz published in Andalan, no. 102, December 1976. In the Spanish edition of his work (La Autogestion, 179), Mintz names Cofita and Ariestoles as being two such villages. Neither, however, were among the approximately 950 municipal centres of Aragon: Ariestoles I have been unable to locate; Cofita was a hamlet attached to the village of Fonz, but no communist group was established in Fonz until the start of November 1937 (Vanguardia, 17 November 1937), three months after the destruction of the collectives.
148. CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 139-40.
149. G. Leval, Collectives, 106.
150. G. Leval, Collectives, 125
151. Leval (ibid., 121) actually gave a precise figure of 3,337 for the village population. The official census for Andorra (1930) was 3,195 (Boletin Oficial de la provincia de Teruel, 9 July 1931).
152. Leval said, at a general meeting of the entire village on 1 November 1936 (ibid., 123). It is perhaps worth noting that this was clearly a jointly organised collective by members of both the UGT and CNT as Leval (ibid., 123) noted membership of the two as being in the ratio of 3:2 in favour of the former; (UGT - 340, CNT - 220).
153. G. Leval, Collectives, 125. Again, although Leval (ibid., 121) said that there were 909 families, the male adult population (electoral roll, over 21) for the 1930 census was 804 (Boletin Oficial de la provincia de Teruel, 9 July 1931). The difference was almost certainly due to 'the refugee factor': villagers, who had migrated to Zaragoza in the 1910s and 1920s and who now, fleeing the fascist terror, had returned with their families to their native villages.
154. G. Leval, Collectives, 125.
155. Campo Libre, 18 September, 9 October 1937.
156. Josep Maria Bricall, Politica economic de la Generalitat 1936-1939 (Barcelona, 1970), 44.
157. 35-40 percent by March 1937, according to Joaquin Ascaso, the President of the regional defence council, in an interview with Lucien Haussard published in Le Libertaire of Paris, 18 March 1937 (reprinted in NA, 26 March 1937). In the same interview Ascaso added that sugar production had increased 75 percent on the

- preceding year.
158. Boletin de la Camara Oficial del Comercio y de la Industria de Zaragoza, 1938.
159. G. Leval, Collectives, 99-100; A. Prats, op. cit., 104-5.
160. R. Fraser, op. cit., 365.
161. G. Leval, Collectives, 111-12.
162. Ibid., 111.
163. G. Leval, Collectives, 199; CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 29-30. Another hospital was established at La Puebla de Hajar (NA, 11 April 1937).
164. Cambio 16, 31 July 1977.
165. Ibid. Several of these anarchists who helped to establish the hospital were no doubt among the 15,000 who were to be imprisoned in the Capuchine monastery, half of whom ended their lives against the cemetery wall. In 1978 a plaque with 7,424 names of those who died in just such a way was erected in Barbastro cathedral: see J.R. Marcuello, 'Los fusilamientos de las Capuchinas', and P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 353.
166. G. Leval, Collectives, 127.
167. R. Fraser, op. cit., 361.
168. Ibid., 357.
169. For the school in Calanda see A. Souchy, Entre los campesinos de Aragon, 31; G. Leval, Colectividades, 390-1; and Maria Jimenez, 'La colectividad agricola de Calanda', in Mujeres Libres, n. 10, 1937, reprinted in Las colectividades campesinas, 1936-1939 (Barcelona, 1977), 211-15. Francisco Ferrer Guradia was the most prominent of several teachers involved in the development of a rationalist and libertarian education at the turn of the century. He was executed on 13 October 1909 on entirely spurious charges relating to the disturbances in Barcelona in July of that year: the so-called 'Tragic-week'.
170. These had come from Barcelona (Augustin Souchy, Nacht uber Spanien (Darmstadt, 1957), 149 [translated and reproduced in Sam Dolgoff, The anarchist collectives (New York, 1974)), 131]. Teachers were clearly in short supply in Loyalist Aragon (note the situation in the Valderrobres district [A. Souchy, Entre los campesinos de Aragon, 56]), though not as short as suggested by one libertarian writer who claimed that 90 percent of the villages of Aragon were without them ('Eufrates X', in Frente y Retaguardia, 17 July 1937). There were several reasons

for this: first, many village teachers had been rightists and had fled; secondly, many of those who were not had been actively left wing and had been among the first to go to the fronts (see again Frente y Retaguardia, 17 July 1937); thirdly, many left wing teachers in Aragon had been slow to appreciate and react to the dangers of the military revolt during the first few days and had perished as a result; and finally, from the point of view of collectivised Aragon, a large proportion of the teaching profession in the region was affiliated to the pro-communist teachers federation, the FETE (Federacion Espanola de Trabajadores de la Ensenanza), which had expanded enormously after July 1936 (FETE, 18 January 1937, claimed 98 percent of the sector and 100 members in Aragon).

171. For the school at Monzon see Felix Carrasquer, La escuela de militantes de Aragon (Barcelona, 1981); Jose Dueso, 'La escuela de militantes libertarios de Monzon', in Cenit, no. 151, July 1963; and the articles of Jose Carrasquer in NA, 6 April 1937 and SO, 8 April 1937.

172. For the school at Graus see A. Prats, op. cit., 105-6; G. Leval, Collectives, 103; Boletin de Informacion CNT-AIT, 19 July 1937, 13.

173. In the district of Binefar 40 percent of the male work-force was at the front (CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 18). By comparison E. & R. Simoni (op. cit., 221) have stated that at Cretas it was only 20 percent (about 100 on 490). Most of the examples I have gleaned from the available sources tend to fall between these two percentages. Thus, we have 280 from Andorra (G. Leval, Collectives, 125), equalling 35 percent (male electorate of 804): 100 from Mazelon (SO, 17 November 1937), giving 23 percent (male electorate of 438): 110 from Esplus (G. Leval, Collectives, 145) producing an estimated 37.5 percent (male electorate of 295): 500 from Calanda 8A. Souchy, Entre los campesinos de Aragon, 30) giving 40 percent (male electorate of 1240): and lastly from Binefar, the main libertarian centre of the Litera in eastern Huesca, 600 (A. Souchy, op. cit., 81), giving a much higher figure of 67 percent (estimated male electorate figure of 900). (Village male population figures are, in the case of Teruel province, taken from the Boletin Oficial de la provincia de Teruel, 9 July 1931, and in the case of Huesca province, an estimation on the basis of a comparison with similarly sized centres in Teruel).

174. A. Prats, op. cit., 100-101; J. Peirats, La CNT, vol. I, 314. Note also the examples of Oliete (Maria Jimenez in SO, 20 June 1937); Mas de las Matas (A. Souchy, op. cit., 36); and Mazaleon (Candido Diez in SO, 17 November 1937).

175. A. Souchy, Nacht uber Spanien, 147-9 (translated and reprinted in S. Dolgoff, The anarchist collectives, 133-4).

176. R. Fraser, op. cit., 358.

177. Actas del Pleno regional de comarcales de la Region Aragonesa celebrado los dias 15 y 16 de Marzo de 1937 en Alcaniz, 3

178. Actas del Pleno regional de comarcales, Marzo de 1937. See also the discussions at an ensuing regional conference in Actas de la Conferencia regional de militantes de Aragon, celebrado en Alcaniz el dia 21 de Mayo de 1937.

179. For Chueca and Arnal see notes 14 and 12 respectively. Vinuales, a teacher at berbegal in Huesca (note a plea from the village children for his release from Huesca jail [La Tierra, 25 April 1933]) and a one-time student of the sculptor, artist and teacher Ramon Acin ('Recordando al maestro Acin', NA, 9 March 1937), was a leading figure of the CNT in Huesca. Appointed Councillor for Information and Propaganda in the second regional defence council (December), he resigned in April 1937 and joined the 127 Mixed Brigade as a lieutenant-adjutant to its young anarchist commander Maximo Franco (see note 185). They died together in a suicide pact on the dockside at Alicante; (see the account in Eduardo de Guzman, La muerte de la esperanza (Madrid, 1973), 393-4).

180. Actas del Pleno regional de comarcales, Marzo de 1937, 2-4. Arnal and Vinuales resigned from the council four weeks later: SO, 18 April 1937.

181. Actas del Pleno regional de comarcales, Marzo de 1937, 4.

182. The name given to the events in Barcelona at the start of May 1937 when CNT militants took to the streets in an effort to stop, in the short term, the occupation of the city's telephone exchange and, in the long term, the continuing reversal of the revolutionary changes established in July and August 1936; see Augustin Souchy, La verdad sobre los sucesos en la retaguardia leal: los acontecimientos de Cataluna (Buenos Aires, 1937); Manuel Cruells, El fets de Maig: Barcelona 1937 (Barcelona, 1970); Frank Mintz and Miguel Pecina, Los amigos de Durruti, los trotskistas y los sucesos de Mayo (Madrid, 1978) and G. Orwell,

op. cit., 105-72. See also J. Peirats, La CNT, vol. II, 137-73; P. Broue and E. Temime, op. cit., 281-8; V. Richards, op. cit., 120-27; Felix Morrow, Revolution and Counter Revolution in Spain (New York, 1974), 140-64; J.M. Martinez Bande, op. cit., 222-45; R. Fraser, op. cit., 374-82.

183. An almost complete military picture of the development of the war in Aragon is provided by the four monographs of Jose Manuel Martinez Bande, nos. 5,9,10 and 11 in his 12 part series: La invasion de Aragon y el desembarco en Mallorca (Madrid, 1970); La gran ofensiva sobre Zaragoza (Madrid, 1973); La batalla de Teruel (Madrid, 1974); and La llegada al mar (Madrid, 1975).

184. Particularly from the hills to the north of Huesva (Arguis) to the frontier with France, and to the west of Teruel in the Sierra de Albarracin where the front was only stabilised in July 1937 after a Loyalist offensive in the area (J.M. Martinez Bande, La gran ofensiva, 59-74).

185. From a very conservative family, son of the village chemist in Alcala de Gurrea in Huesca, Maximo Franco Caverro had, because of his education, quickly become a noted CNT militant. He had played a leading part in the events of December 1933, receiving six years imprisonment in September 1935 (but was amnestied within the month), and was then a delegate at the CNT national congress in May 1936. After the military rebellion he rose quickly through the ranks of the volunteer forces to lead first the 127 Mixed Brigade and then the 71 Division. He died with Vinuales on the dockside at Alicante (see n. 179). Pascual Alda, nicknamed 'Cucalon', had been a militant of the construction workers union and a leading anarchist in Zaragoza. He was mortally wounded in the assault on the village of Rudilla (Teruel) at the start of August 1937. (CyA, 4 and 7 August 1937).

186. For the former see P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 61; SO, 18 and 26 December 1936; for the latter see D. Abad de Santillan, Por que, 227.

187. 'A grave error was committed in wishing to change our guerrilla war, typically Spanish, into a regular one', (D. Abad de Santillan, Por que, 227). On this question see the same source, 226.75.

188. G. Orwell, op. cit., 20, 34-6. See also the comments of another foreign observer, Jef Last, in Spanish Tragedy (London 1939), 26.

189. C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 218-52; for a rather different interpretation of the events see V. Richards, op. cit., 73-95.

190. This second administration (the first had been formed at the beginning of September 1936) contained six socialists, including the premier, and four anarcho-syndicalists, as against only six republicans, three of whom were without portfolio, and two communists who were still considered working class representatives (C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 253).

191. For a general discussion of the events leading up to the fall of the Largo government see P. Broue and E. Temime, op. cit., 265-90; V. Richards, op. cit., 112-43; and F. Morrow, op. cit., 131-76. For a more specific study of the role and position of the communists in these events see the books already mentioned in note 96.

192. In mid-June the government, bowing to communist pressure, decreed the outlawing of the POUM and accepted the detention of its leaders on utterly spurious charges. See the accounts given in P. Broue and E. Temime, op. cit., 299 - 305; F. Morrow, op. cit., 188-95; an 'apologetic' account is given in High Thomas The Spanish Civil War (3rd edn., London, 1977), 701-9.

193. Manuel Azana, Obras Completas (4 vols., Mexico City, 1966 - 68), vol. IV, 614.

194. At the turn of 1936 the government of Largo Caballero issued a decree requiring the reconstitution of official municipal councils to replace the defence committees and other ad hoc arrangements which had been widely established in the wake of the military revolt. The new bodies were organised by mutual agreement among local political and trade union groups according to their local strength and the composition of the resulting councils, in Aragon, was published in the regional daily Nuevo Aragon: 208 by the end of February, a further 97 by the end of March and over 360 by the beginning of August 1937. That final figure, encompassing 2359 councillors of which the affiliation of 2352 is known, constituted 70 percent of the municipal districts of Loyalist Aragon and the data provides a unique picture of the political character of the region at the height of the collective experience: (for a full analysis of the data see Appendix II of my doctoral thesis, quoted in n. 19). Of those 2352 councillors only 57 were of the Socialist party, 41 of these coming from the districts of Benabarre and Boltana in Pyrenean Huesca, but more notably still, there were just

- 18 representatives of the Communist Party, a mere 0.76 percent of the total number of councillors.
195. CyA, 3 July 1937; FAI, Memoria del Pleno peninsular de Julio de 1937, 124-5. Note also the response of the regional council (NA, 6 July 1937), this a week after the actual events.
196. Vanguardia, 3 July 1937; SO, 11 July 1937; NA, 27 July 1937 (as part of the speech given by Joaquin Ascaso at Caspe on the previous day). A notice from the regional committee of Union Republicana in Aragon, maintaining its full support of Ascaso and the regional defence council was published just three days before the council's overthrow (SO, 7 August 1937).
197. Information on the overthrow of the Aragonese regional defence council is drawn from J. Peirats, La CNT, vol.II, 271-88, and Los anarquistas, 268-72; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 305-10; R. Fraser, op. cit., 390-4; E. and R. Simoni, op. cit., 255-62; CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 143-56; CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Utrillas, 52-4; CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Valderrobres, 54-6, 74-5, 147, 160; Informe de los hechos acaecidos en varios pueblos de Aragon a partir del dia 11 de Agosto de 1937 y que el Comité Regional de la CNT eleva a las autoridades del Gobierno de la Republica para su inmediato comprobacion y sancion (reprinted in A. Souchy Entre los campesinos de Aragon, 143-62; large parts of the report were published in Boletin de Informacion y Orientacion Organica del Comité Peninsular de la FAI, no. 8, 12 September 1937, with the title 'las vandálicas depredaciones de las fuerzas de Lister en Aragon'); Informes presentados por el Comité Regional de la CNT y de los Consejeros que han representado a la CNT en el Consejo de Aragon dando cuenta de su gestion al Pleno de Sindicatos, celebrado en Caspe, los dias 11 y 12 de Septiembre de 1937.
198. The 27th was in reserve at Ontinena, Fraga, Candanos and Alcaniz (J.M. Martinez Bande, La gran ofensiva, 88); the 30th held the line in the Montalban-Utrillas district (ibid., 23); and the 43rd had just been withdrawn from the front and was in reserve in the Binefar district (CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 155).
199. The events in one village, Albalate de Cinca, are described in Felix Carrasquer, op. cit., 105-6.
200. See below.
201. For an account of the offensive on the Aragon fronts see P. Broue and E. Temime, op. cit., 410-1; J.M. Martinez Bande, La

- gran ofensiva, 77-153; Ricardo Sanz, Los que fuimos a Madrid (Madrid, 1977), 145-58; H. Thomas, op. cit., 725-8.
202. The Basques had withdrawn from the war after the fall of Bilbao in mid-June while Santander was to be occupied on the day after the start of the offensive in Aragon, 25 August, leaving the Asturians to fight on alone.
203. Enrique Castro Delgado, Hombres made in Moscu (Barcelona, 1965), 498-9.
204. Enrique Lister, Nuestra guerra (Paris, 1966), 166.
205. J.M. Martinez Bande, La gran ofensiva, 123.
206. Saturnino Carod in R. Fraser, op. cit., 393.
207. J. Peirats, La CNT, vol.II, 27; C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 306; Manuel Azaretto, Las pendientes resbaladizas (Montevideo, 1939), 207-9; Informe del Comité Peninsular de la FAI al Movimiento Libertario Internacional: el anarquismo en España, 23. Note also F. Carrasquer, op. cit., 101; and the comments of two anarchosyndicalist ex-officers, Saturnino Carod and Sevilla Pastor, in R. Fraser, op. cit., 393.
208. This is according to Jose Silva, Secretary-General of the Institute of Agrarian Reform: La revolucion popular en el campo: colectividades agricolas (Barcelona, 1937), 17.
209. Nominally a member of Azana's Izquierda Republicana, Mantecon joined the communists at the end of the war and is now regarded as having been a pseudo-communist from well before: see H. Thomas, op. cit., 724, and note also the scornful opinion of Ricardo Sanz, op. cit., 155.
210. E. Lister, op. cit., 152.
211. The forces of Lister, as also those of another communist commander, Valentin Gonzalez, had already been responsible for several attacks on collectives in parts of Toledo, Guadalajara and Cuenca: see C.M. Lorenzo, op. cit., 306-7; and also the many articles in Castilla Libre during 1937, as 2 March 1937, 24/28 March 1937, 9 April 1937, 6 May 1937, 29/30 May 1937 and 5 June 1937.
212. R. Fraser, op. cit., 391.
213. CNT-AIT: Comarcal de Monzon, 143.
214. Ibid., 155-6.
215. Quoted in G. Ival, Collectives, 336.
216. B. Bolloten, op. cit., 199.
217. A metalworker from Zaragoza, Rosel had been secretary of the 'Circulo Socialista de Torrero' and a member of the city's

'Claridad' group (supporters of Largo Caballero's line), though he has since claimed to be a communist since 1930 (Andalan, no. 270, May 1980. In 1937-8 he was vice-secretary of the Zaragoza provincial UGT committee and, according to Fraser (op. cit., 391), was a member of the communist regional committee in Aragon. (However, that committee was listed in Vanguardia, 15 July 1937, and did not include Rosel. More likely he was a member of the Zaragoza provincial committee.)

218. R. Fraser, op. cit., 391.

219. J. Silva, op. cit., 17; an identical opinion was maintained in a report from the Institute of Agrarian Reform (CyA, 20 November 1937).

220. J. Silva, op. cit., 17.

221. This figure has been variously estimated but a simple calculation using route distances from Balnearic de Panticosa in the Pyrenees to Orihuela de Tremedal in south west Teruel, via Sabinanigo, Huesca, Zaragoza, Belchite, Vivel del Rio Martin, Teruel and Albarracin, gives a total length of 436 kilometres.

222. Note the comments of one of the foremost military leaders in Aragon, Ricardo Sanz (op. cit., 148-9).

223. Note the very early efforts of the villages of Peralta de Alcofea, El Grado and Albelda, all advertised in SO, 16, 21 and 27 August 1936 respectively. See also the continuing lists of supplies provided by various villages, both for the Aragonese fronts and for Madrid, which were published regularly, often on a daily basis, in the regional daily, Nuevo Aragon.

224. G. Leval, Collectives, 118.

225. As in the village of Cretas (E. and R. Simoni, op. cit., 260).

226. Ibid., 259.

227. Vanguardia, 27 January 1938.

228. E. and R. Simoni, op. cit., 260.

229. Ibid.

230. Vanguardia, 3 December 1937.

231. This does not appear to have been necessarily immediate; note the case of Cretas (E. and R. Simoni, op. cit., 258-9) where the old committee continued to sign the council records until 13 September 1937 when it was sacked. The two researchers concluded that opponents had waited until the harvesting had been completed.

232. NA, 3 March 1937.

233. SO, 3 December 1937. The seventh post went to a member of

the united socialist and communist youth organisation.

234. Typed sheet from the municipal council dated 13 January 1938 (Archivo Historico Nacional [hereafter AHN], Salamanca, Series 'R', Box 108).

235. Typed sheet from the UGT of Calaceite (AHN, Salamanca, Series 'R', Box 108).

236. Typed sheet from the village communist group (AHN, Salamanca, Series 'R', Box 108).

237. J. Silva, op. cit., 17.

238. Quoted in R. Fraser, op. cit., 391.

239. Timoteo Ruiz in R. Fraser, op. cit., 391.

240. David Mitchell, The Spanish Civil War, (London, 1982), 157.

241. One of the coldest spots in the peninsula, the offensive was, incredibly, mounted in mid-winter: for an account of the Teruel campaigns see J.M. Martinez Bande, La batalla de Teruel.

242. On the Nationalist offensives in Aragon in March 1938 see J.M. Martinez Bande, La llegada al mar; Ricardo Sanz, op. cit., 165-205; E. Lister, op. cit., 189-200; P. Torralba Coronas, op. cit., 190-5.

243. R. Sanz, op. cit., 179-80, 204-5.

244. Indalecio Prieto to the cabinet, quoted in P. Broue and E. Temime, op. cit., 474.

245. B. Bolloten, op. cit., 200.

246. Saturnino Carod in R. Fraser, op. cit., 394.

247. By the end of June 1937 the collectivist movement in Aragon was 300,000 strong (A. Prats, op. cit., 89). On an estimated population of 435,000 (433,000 according to A. Prats [op. cit., 89]; 437,000 according to my personal estimation [see Appendix II of my doctoral thesis]), this represented nearly 70 percent of the population. Moreover, as several of the larger centres, such as Monzon and Barbastro, had only relatively small collectives, collectivisation can be considered to have extended to 90 or even 95 percent of the smaller towns and villages of Loyalist Aragon.

248. Note the special meeting, held at the end of September 1937, which was presided over by the man responsible for the order overthrowing the collectives, Jose Mantecon, the Governor-General in Aragon (CyA, 20 November 1937).

249. G. Munis, Jalones de derrota, promesa de victoria (Barcelona, 1977), 430.

250. Some examples are given in F. Mintz, La autogestion, 82;

note also Felix Carrasquer (op. cit., 107-8) on the importance of his trained students in stabilising and revitalising the rural collectives.

251. R. Fraser, op. cit., 393. The percentage was similar at calaceite: 108 out of 425 (typed sheet from the municipal council [AHN, Salamanca, Series 'R', Box 108]). At Mas de las Matas, however, where the collective had been much stronger, a surviving member stated that 60 percent of the village rejoined (Ernesto Margelli in R. Fraser, op. cit., 393).

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DdH - Diario de Huesca - conserv. daily - Huesca - *1930/6
HdA - Heraldo de Aragon - conserv. daily - Zaragoza - *1930/9**
LL - La Libertad - repub. daily - Madrid - *1930/9**
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 (tri-weekly - Huesca - 1931-3)
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Notes