



# The Volunteer

JOURNAL OF THE VETERANS OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE

"...and that government of the people,  
by the people, and for the people,  
shall not perish from the earth."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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Winter 2001

## In Madrid and Mississippi Bay Area VALB Honors the Civil Rights Movement

### Robert Moses and Pasioness Feb 25th

By Martha Olson Jarocki

On Sunday, February 25, the Bay Area VALB's annual luncheon and program will honor the 40th anniversary of the Freedom Rides with noted civil rights movement activist and educator Robert Moses. The reunion, which will be held at Oakland's Calvin Simmons Auditorium, will also feature the West Coast premier of Pasioness, a program of songs of the Spanish Civil War performed by Chicago's Jamie O'Reilly and Michael Smith.

"In Madrid and Mississippi—Volunteers for Liberty," the theme of the day's events, honors the same activist spirit that prompted young men and women to volunteer to defend the Spanish Republic in the 1930s and to work for civil rights in the 1960s.

The first of the Freedom Rides took place in February 1961, when men and women rode buses south to challenge the widespread Jim Crow practices and to test the ability of the federal government to enforce existing civil rights laws. The first Freedom Riders were beaten, bombed, harassed, and jailed. Their personal bravery, as well as the non-violent activism of others who soon came to join them, became part of the legend of the early civil rights movement. Newspaper photos and early television telegraphed the strength and ethical power of the first Freedom Riders, and the response from people, both black and white, civil rights activists and sympathizers, grew to express the solidarity of the movement. By creating wide public pressure, the Freedom Rides forced the Kennedy administration to intervene to uphold the desegregation of interstate travel.

San Francisco Bay Area Monument on the Way, page 4

Passing the Torch, by Abe Osheroff, page 5

My Brother's Resting Place, page 6

VALB Associates Arrested at School of Americas, page 7

25 Years after Franco, page 8

Max Shufer and the FBI, page 9

The Vernet Concentration Camp, page 12

ALBA's New Planned Giving Program, page 15

Book Reviews, page 17

Continued on page 3

# Letters

Dear Alba,

I have been searching for years for information about my father, Frank Costanzo, who was a member of the Abraham Lincoln Bridge and died in the Spanish Civil War, date unknown. I have traced a bit of his travels and travails, but am so curious to know more. I have just recently become aware of your organization and am in need of more information. My father was from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. For the longest time, my father's family would not speak of his involvement in the war. I honestly believe they were ignorant of the importance he placed upon his going and championing the Loyalists. As a young man myself, I could not rationalize his leaving a wife and small child to enter a foreign war, but about two years ago I located a copy of *The Good Fight!* and was thrilled to learn he was truly fighting a good fight.

God Bless you for any information you may provide.

Rev. Stan Scott  
PO Box 1147  
Steubenville, OH 43952  
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Dear Alba Friends,

My name is Dolores Payas and I'm a Spanish—with this name I couldn't be another thing—scriptwriter.

At this moment I'm working on a long feature film called *La Brigada Lincoln*. The director will be Vicente Aranda, one of the most famous and prestigious Spanish film makers. The film—a fiction—tells the story of a passionate love between a black brigadista and a Spanish woman. The background is the battle of Belchite. So I'm trying to get as much information as I can, in order to make the whole fiction as honest and truthful as possible.

I have already got most of the books listed in Alba's book store, plus some videos I have found in UK. Anyway, it'll help me a lot to get some testimony about these facts: the Belchite battle and the presence of African Americans in the Lincoln Brigade.

Can anyone help me?

Meanwhile, I send to you all love and good wishes from Spain.

Dolores Payas, Barcelona.  
payas@canal21.com

Dear Alba,

Each year since it was first unveiled, members of the Canberra Spanish community and others have met for a picnic lunch at the national memorial to the Australians who fought with the International Brigades in the civil war. This year, on the seventh anniversary, the occasion

was held on December 3, a sunny summer's day, and the usual mixture of speeches was spiced with Galician bagpipe music and folk songs. The Spanish Embassy, which has supported the memorial since its beginning, was represented once again by the current ambassador, who spoke eloquently to the 30 or so people gathered near the three olive trees, gifts of the Embassy, all thriving at the memorial site.

Other speakers included a representative of the Trades and Labour Council and the secretary of the original committee responsible for having the memorial built. The gathering also commemorated the life of Netta Burns, a member of that committee, whose life and work are marked by a plaque added to the memorial after her death two years ago.

A Friends of the Spanish Memorial committee was announced to ensure the continuation of this annual event and to spread the word more widely in Canberra and further afield. After the ceremony, everyone's food was spread out and shared on the wall built near the Memorial for just such occasions, and we enjoyed the variety of tortillas and other Spanish delicacies which are always a highlight of this occasion.

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More letters on page 19

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## Madrid and Mississippi

Continued from page 1

Robert Moses, a co-founder of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, which came together around the Freedom Rides and the sit-ins throughout the south, became a central figure in the Mississippi voter registration drive, the development of Mississippi Summer Project, and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Moses, a leader in a movement that was not about leaders as much as it was about building leadership, later went on to develop the Algebra Project, which offers a vision of school reform based in the power of communities.

Moses describes the relationship between voting rights and mathematics in his new book, *Radical Equations* (Beacon Press). "The political process has been opened—there are no formal barriers to voting, for example," he told a recent interviewer. "But economic access, taking advantage of new technologies and economic opportunity, demands as much effort as political struggle required in the 1960s."

Pasiones, the performance of songs of the Spanish Civil War, has received outstanding responses from audiences in Chicago and high praise from radio commentator Studs Terkel, who will join the group at the annual veterans' affair in New York City on April 29.

The veterans honor this 40th anniversary of the Freedom Rides in an expression of solidarity and the spirit of volunteerism, as they went to Madrid 65 years ago. This year, as voting rights are once again being denied on the basis of race, we urge you to join us in Oakland on February 25 to honor the continuing struggle for racial justice, for civil rights, for liberty. No Pasaran!

Tickets are available from the Veterans & Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, P.O. Box 11194, Berkeley, CA 94712-2194 or call 510 548 3088. Luncheon Buffet \$20; the Program \$20. ALBA is co-sponsor of the day's events.

Martha Olson Jarocki is vice-chair of the Bay Area Post of VALB. ■



PHOTO IWONA BIEDERMANN

Pasiones performers Michael Smith and Jamie O'Reilly will perform their critically acclaimed folk music cabaret of Spanish Civil War songs, and texts by Ernest Hemingway, Bertol Brecht, George Orwell and members of the International Brigades.

# Bay Area World Class Monument is on the Way

By Linda Lustig

A crucial milestone in gaining approval of a monument to the Lincoln Brigade in San Francisco was passed when the city's Port Commission voted unanimously on October 10, 2000, to accept such a monument at the new Harry Bridges Plaza on the city's waterfront Embarcadero. Brian McWilliams, then President of the ILWU, introduced the resolution to the commission and aired a short video with excerpts from Eric Severeid's documentary on the Spanish Civil War to support the measure.

The Port Commission's action followed an August 2000 resolution by the city's Board of Supervisors, approving Supervisor Sue Bierman's proposal to honor the VALB. Mayor Willie Brown had then signed the resolution and sent it to the Port Commission. Both the Board of Supervisors' and Port Commissions' resolutions were very well received and the veterans who were able to attend those sessions received a standing ovation.

The Bay Area Post began working on this project several years ago when a neighborhood group organized to save Bill Bailey's cottage. It was hoped that when the cottage was relocated it would be possible to include a monument/memorial to the Lincoln Brigade at the site. There were many meetings and for a time the tentative plans included a small exhibition in or near the cottage. Unfortunately, the project went on hold and the cottage is now in storage at a SF Municipal Railway yard.

The Post then decided to focus on winning support from the city's supervisors and Mayor Brown. A new associate in the post, Don Santina, contacted Supervisor Bierman and her assistant June Gottfleish. Within weeks the resolution was drafted, sup-



Bay Area post members Corine Thornton, Dave Smith, and Milt Wolff in front of the San Francisco City Hall after meeting with Board of Supervisors chair Sue Bierman to discuss the monument proposal.

port was obtained from Mayor Brown and the other supervisors, and we were on our way. Several Post members worked long and hard to get to this point, including Dave Smith, Hon Brown, Corine Thornton and Martha Olson Jarocki.

Lest readers believe that a monument will appear very soon, much is yet to be done. We must obtain a site within the new Harry Bridges Plaza; obtain an appropriate design; garner approval of the site and the monument/memorial from the Port Commission, several committees of the city's Art Commission and the full Art Commission; raise funds; and finally build the monument. A small committee is now looking at site possibilities and planning a workshop for vets and interested community members to ensure that in addition to being

a significant artistic and historical work of art, the monument/memorial represents an appropriate addition to the Plaza. Committee members are Emily Lazar, Linda Lustig, Judith Montell, and Martha Olson Jarocki. ▀

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Linda Lustig is Treasurer of the Bay Area Post.

For the latest news  
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and subscribe to the  
e-mail newsletter.

# Passing the Torch

By Abe Osheroff

For some years I have devoted myself to reaching the young about the significance of the Spanish Civil War, its uniqueness and the lessons to be drawn from it. I have visited over 200 campuses, taught classes at UCLA and the University of Washington, and learned a great deal from my students.

As time went on it became clear to me that the military and political aspects of the war were interesting to the students, but not central. What they wanted to know was how it was relevant to their lives. Answering that question became the keynote of my dialogue with them.

Starting with the assumption that the young tend to be idealistic and anti-authoritarian, I talk to and with them about what made pacifists fight,

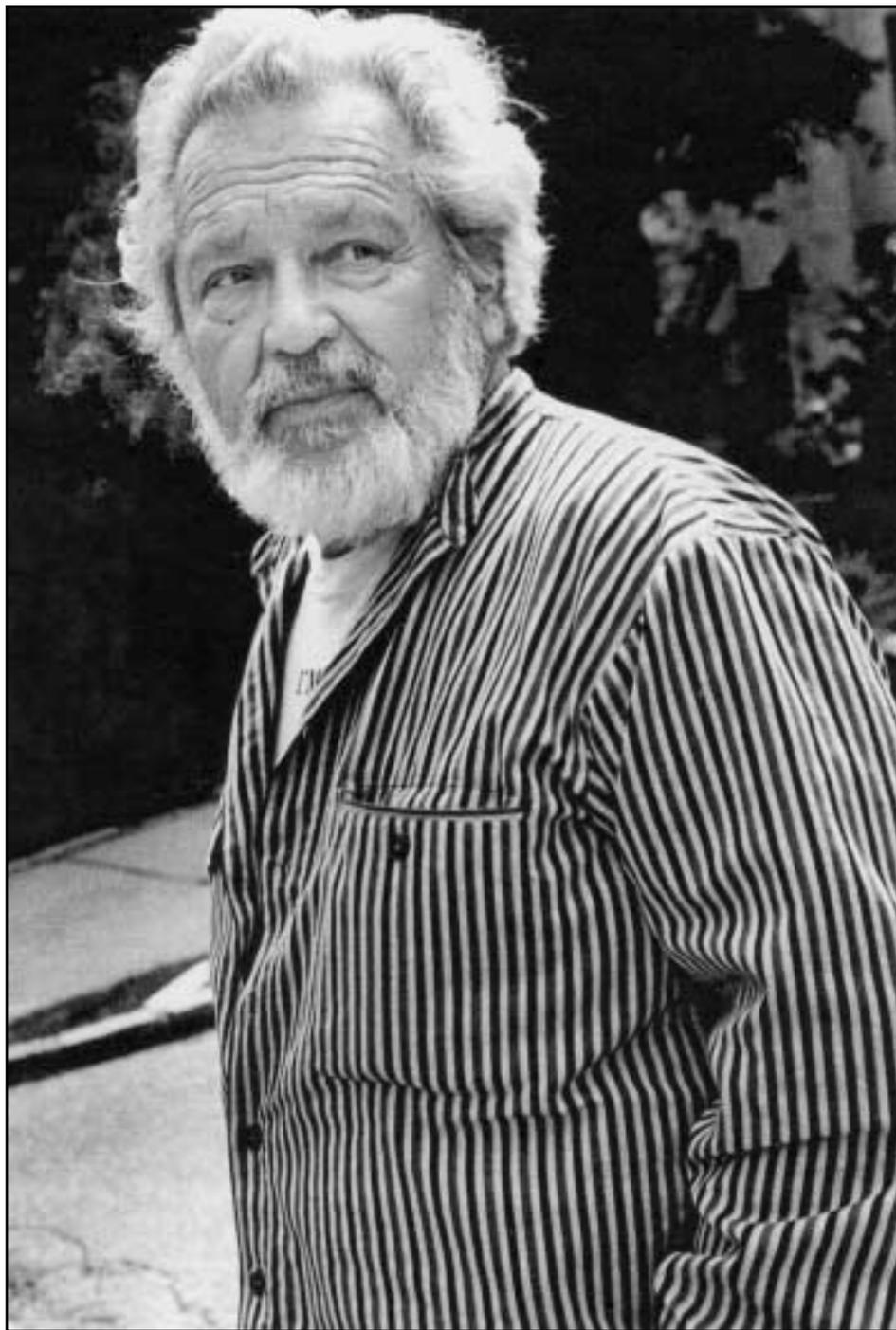
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*"Of all the various medications I need to keep going, none is as life sustaining as touching and being touched by the young."*

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why 40,000 men and women from all over the world put their lives on the line for an ideal. Solidarity becomes more than a political slogan, but rather human love in action. We examine social activism as a life style, to be seen not as self-sacrifice but as richly rewarding.

VALB's unique history has opened many doors in academic circles. For me that has meant invitations to many campuses. Recent stops on the road have included Stanford University, Claremont College, University of Massachusetts, University of Texas, Portland Alliance, Tufts University, Mt. Holyoke College, a growing number of high schools, and more. A high point was a Northwest Conference of



Abe Osheroff

High School Teachers addressed by Tony Geist and myself.

The recent past has been very productive in passing our torch to a new generation. I have come away from each encounter confident that many of these kids will make a difference in the fight for a better world. And because I keep in touch with many of them, I already know that quite a number have picked up the torch of justice and freedom. They are pro

bono lawyers for the poor, labor organizers, doctors committed to national health care, progressive teachers and university professors, consumer advocates and environmentalists.

My own life has been enriched by this experience. Of all the various medications I need to keep going, none is as life sustaining as touching and being touched by the young. They have indeed paid me well. ■

PHOTO JAY JAFFEE

# MY BROTHER'S RESTING PLACE

by Jay Greenfield

**M**y brother Herman (Hy) Greenfield, a member of the Mac-Paps, was killed at Segura de los Banos, a small town in Aragon, in February 1938. He was 21 years old.

I was five when Hy died—four when he left for Spain—and my memories concerning him and his death are vivid, inconsistent and false. They are so much a part of me, though, that they form the backdrop of a novel I recently completed. Last June, my wife and I stood at the site of Hy's death and then at his unmarked grave. This is how we found his resting place.

In all of the books I have seen on the Spanish Civil War, I could find only one mention of my brother—13 words in Arthur Landis' *The Abraham Lincoln Brigade*. In his chapter on Segura, Landis recounts the work done at "the mobile hospital unit of Dr. [Edward] Barsky": "Among the 15th Brigade casualties other than Commander William Titus were such men as David ("Red") Drummond . . . ; Martin Sramek . . . ; Hy Greenfield, who died while Dr. Barsky desperately sought to save his life; George Duke; William Oter; Manny Mandel; Michael Raivicz . . . ; and a host of others" (p. 396).

Landis' report was confirmed by Joe Luftig, my brother's friend in both America and Spain, who helped carry Hy's stretcher from the battlefield to Dr. Barsky's hospital.

In late 1999, I decided the time had finally come to see where Hy fought and died for freedom. My wife, Judy, strongly supported the decision. I had told her about Hy on the day we met and, after over 42 years with me, she felt that he was her brother also.

Tom Entwistle, an American resident in Madrid who has organized reunion tours for International Brigade veterans, undertook to help us. Tom, quite simply, arranged and did everything; Judy and I just went along.

Tom made an appointment for us to meet the mayor of Segura on Saturday, June 3, 2000—early in the morning because the mayor worked in the fields. After meeting Tom in Barcelona on June 2, we checked into a pensione in Montalban, a town a few kilometers from Segura; Segura had no place for us to stay. That evening we drove to Segura to walk through the town and speak to whomever we met, so that word of our search would spread. Tom "guaranteed" that this would bring forth an "old-timer" who had been there in 1938 and who knew where Dr. Barsky's hospital had been.

Segura sits in a valley surrounded by hills. On our drive from Montalban, Tom pointed out the locations of the International Brigade units during the battle. My brother was probably fatally wounded a few hundred meters east of Segura where the Mac-Paps were fighting between two ranges of hills. In June 2000, it could hardly have been more lush or more peaceful.

A picture-postcard farming town of some 20 houses and a Catholic church, Segura was immaculate. The population on June 2 was about 20 adults; it would grow to 100 by the end of the month when the summer residents arrived. We met nearly half the population on Friday evening, among them a group of women who were scrubbing a huge communal washing tub. Friendly and courteous as only the Spanish can be, they spent half an hour talking to us, but none of them had been alive in 1938 and none knew about a military hospital in the town.

On Saturday morning, we met at the mayor's house with Mayor Eladio



Hy Greenfield

Marso Oro; his wife, Josefa Royo Millan; and his wife's sister, Maria Pilar Royo Milan. They too had been born after 1938, but they believed the military hospital had been in a three-story stucco house still standing in the center of the village. The mayor left for work, and Maria Pilar took us to that house.

Just as Tom Entwistle had predicted, an "old timer" appeared a few minutes later. The man, also named Tomas, had always lived in Segura and had been 10 years old at the time of the battle. Tomas clearly remembered that the stucco house had been a military hospital; he recalled having seen the wounded soldiers being brought there from the field.

We asked Tomas what had happened to the soldiers who had died in the hospital, and he replied that they

Continued on page 7

## Resting Place

Continued from page 6

had all been buried in a common unmarked grave in a corner of the church cemetery reserved for nonbelievers. Maria Pilar led us there.

The cemetery was a square, about 40 yards on each side, enclosed by a stucco wall. We entered through a wrought iron gate surmounted by a cross. Except for a narrow 15-yard strip in the far left corner, it was well tended and crammed with Catholic tombstones. The strip was the common grave where the nonbelievers were buried—where my brother and his comrades had lain since 1938.

The front part of the strip was overgrown with grass and weeds. The rear was lined with elaborately carved crypts that held the ashes of recently dead Catholics for whom there was no room elsewhere in the cemetery. We did not have the emotional energy to learn exactly where in the strip the Loyalist soldiers were buried.

Tom and Maria Pilar left us alone at the common grave, and Judy and I said Kaddish, as a friend of ours who is a Holocaust survivor had suggested. Although Hy had been an atheist, it seemed the right thing to do. The traditional Jewish prayer of mourning is, in fact an affirmation of life and continuity. Hy's life, like the lives of all International Brigade volunteers, needed to be affirmed and his memory continued—by deeds most of all, but by meaningful words as well.

We also felt that my deceased parents, who had never forgotten Hy nor stopped loving him, would have wanted Kaddish said at his grave.

Before leaving the cemetery, we put a small stone on the wall behind the common grave, a Jewish custom to show that the dead are not forgotten. We resolved to return to Segura to place a plaque at the burial site in memory of Hy and the Loyalist soldiers who lie beside him.

When Judy and I landed at JFK a few days later, I realized that on the way home we would pass the cemetery where my parents are buried. As much as I had needed to see Hy's

## Bay Area VALB Associates Arrested at School of the Americas



Actor Martin Sheen (left) was arrested with VALB Associates Ray McGrath and Corine Thornton. (Photo taken at Benning, Georgia, at last year's protest.)

At demonstrations held between November 17-19, 2000, two members of the Bay Area VALB, associate Ray McGrath and executive secretary Corine Thornton, were among the 1,700 arrested for protesting at Fort Benning, Georgia, against the School of the Americas. The SOA trains soldiers from Central and South America, at U.S. taxpayer expense, in the finer points of terror, torture, rape, murder, and suppression of human rights. For the past 11 years, Father Roy Bourgeois, a Vietnam vet and a Catholic priest, has organized non-violent protests at the gates of Fort Benning to commemorate the deaths of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter, and four church women who were raped and slain, the Archbishop Oscar Romero's assassination, and the massacre of the entire village of El Mozote. At first, Father Roy was joined by only one or two others, but each year the numbers have grown. Last year there were more than 12,000.

For the past two years, the Bay Area Post of VALB has contributed to the SOA Watch efforts to close this notorious school. The army has now changed the name to Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, but it is still the same shameful operation.

—Corine Thornton

grave, I needed to try to close the circle by visiting their graves as well. I had not had the foresight to bring dirt or stones from the Segura cemetery, but we did have a card from the pensione where we had stayed. We left pieces of the card and stones on my parents' graves, and again we said Kaddish.

How did I feel standing in front of my brother's grave after so many

years? I didn't have an epiphany, and nothing was resolved or changed. No circle was closed. What struck me was the simplicity and beauty of Segura, the kindness of its people, and the courage of the International Brigade volunteers who put their lives where their ideals were. I felt better, more hopeful, and more convinced than ever that Hy's death had not been in vain. ■

# Spain 25 Years after Franco's Death

Gabriel Jackson

The Spanish media seem to be particularly fond of noting anniversaries of various public events, and November 20 of the millennial year marked the 25th anniversary of the death of the dictator General Franco. I mention this penchant for anniversaries because I do believe it is largely a media phenomenon. I doubt whether most Spaniards think about it the way they would remember a family birthday or wedding anniversary. As for how they do remember Franco, for those under 40, his rule is "ancient history," as is the Vietnamese war for most Americans under 40. In Europe, as in the U.S., rose-tinted TV, videos, "in depth" interviews, and news retrospectives are bombarding the eyes and ears of the populace and manipulating the conscious memory of almost all those who did not suffer direct oppression under the dictatorship. There are still tens of thousands of persons, mostly over 60, with bitter memories of war, exile, economic hardship and, on the left, political persecution. But from about 1960 on, Spain has steadily become more prosperous than at any time in the entire past, and also, from about 1960, the dictatorship was considerably less intrusive in people's daily lives than it had been previously.

More important than how Franco is consciously remembered is the question of what has changed and what remains of the dictatorial regime of the years 1939-1975. The biggest change is that Spain is now truly governed by civilians (of both sexes). There are still more varieties of armed police than one sees in England or Scandinavia, but their numbers and manner are much less threatening than during the Franco era. There are no captains general holding an implicit veto over the actions of the civilian authorities. The Constitution of 1978 decentralized as well as democratized the government. The Madrid Cortes,

the parliaments of the 17 autonomous provinces, and the municipal governments of the large cities have all won office through honest elections, and the executive represents in each case the majority party or coalition. Women have been named to important cabinet posts by both the Socialist and Popular Party governments, something inconceivable under Franco.

Spain has also become a non-confessional state. By this I do not mean to suggest that the Catholic Church does not wield enormous influence in education and in the unspoken hierarchies of social life. But civil divorce is available. Many couples live together in common-law marriage without baptizing their children. Birth control information is freely available, and abortion is legal when rape or danger to the health of the mother are involved. Religious instruction is part of the curriculum in most schools, both private and public, but pupils are excused from it if that is the desire of their parents. Advancement in the civil service, professions, and business enterprises does not depend on religious conformity except to the extent that such factors play an unspoken role in the conservative sectors of any society.

A third major change is the complete liberty of speech and of the media, evident not only as basic political liberty, but as cultural liberty and variety in the widest senses. Post-Franco Spain welcomes movies in several dozen languages, and the proportion of books translated from other languages is much higher than in the United States. Many of my friends feel rueful about these facts because they have been disappointed in their expectation that political liberty would lead to a great burst of high quality artistic-literary creation in Spain, a phenomenon that has not occurred. The positive side of the situation, in my opinion, is that Spaniards are frankly open to foreign cultural

influences, and also that in the new conditions of personal liberty they have been extremely busy improving the material quality of Spanish life.

There are also several ways in which the Franquist heritage remains very influential. The political parties are still caudillista, totally dependent on the charisma of single leaders. When Adolfo Suarez lost control of the Union for the Democratic Center, the party simply fell to pieces. When the Socialist government was discredited by the use of hired killers to combat Basque terrorism, there was no alternative leader to replace Felipe Gonzalez, and only now, a full six years later, has the party begun to recover its role as the principal party of the democratic left. In the Catalan Nationalist Party (Convergència i Unió), the word of Jordi Pujol was law for 20 years, and several dauphins were decapitated, metaphorically speaking, along the way. In the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) the word of Javier Arzalluz has been the law for 20 years, and still is, despite the tremendous and obvious political errors made under his leadership in recent years.

In the case of the Popular Party, in power since 1996, it is not only the party that is run on a caudillista basis, but much of the government as well. The prime minister, José María Aznar, does not discuss his plans with the Cortes or in the media. He makes private deals. During his first term he secured the necessary cooperation of the Catalan and Basque Nationalist governments by negotiating privately with the presidents of those autonomous governments. He is also creating a new PP economic oligarchy by naming friends to administer important public corporations and then privatizing those industries with his appointees already in place as the new "private sector" executives.

Convinced that the independent

Continued on page 11

# Engineering Career Derailed: Max Shufer and the FBI

By Jane Shufer

In the fall of 1949, my father, Max Shufer, was working at the Bureau of Standards in Washington, D.C. The head of a lab employing 25 to 30 people, he was in charge of refining the army's way of photographing enemy territory, a design for which he later received a patent.

In the winter of 1950, he was installing TV antennas, and glad to get the work.

The story of how my father was blacklisted for fighting in Spain is quieter than many from the same era. He made no headlines, wasn't threatened with jail, and was, in fact, legally cleared of all charges. This made absolutely no difference to the wreck of his career and, as it turned out, his health.

My father grew up in the Bronx and went to City College, where he learned about the left (and spent a summer at the famous labor school Commonwealth College in Mena, Arkansas). Then he went to M.I.T. to study physics, aiming eventually for a Ph.D. But that was in 1936.

In 1937, after his first year, my father left M.I.T. and went to Spain. There he fought for about eight months before being captured by the Fascists near Belchite in March 1938. He spent the next year in the prison camp of San Pedro de Cardenas. Released finally in a trade for Spanish POWs, he came home to New York (but only after my grandfather, Solomon Shufer, had gotten a real passport to him, since my father went to Spain under the name "Irving Rabinowitz," which provided him with the nickname "Rabbit").

Despite, or perhaps because of, a long letter pleading his absence due to the need to fight as an International, M.I.T. did not allow its prodigal son to return. After a few months relaxing at Camp Unity, my father enrolled at Columbia University and continued to pursue his graduate degree in physics, while living at home with his parents.

But two years of war and prison had put him out of the student mindset. By then, he was engaged to be married to a girl he'd met at Camp Unity, and my grandfather was starting to suggest it was time to step out of the ivory tower into a paying job.

After being turned down by the air force because of a heart murmur, my father took a variety of tests and wound up being accepted at the national Bureau of Standards in Washington, at a rate of \$50 per week. He and his new bride moved to D.C. in early 1940 and he began work as an electronics engineer. But in 1942, the year his oldest daughter was born, he was summoned to a loyalty hearing. The entire department came with him to testify in his favor, he recalls (it was no secret that he'd fought in Spain), and he just ended up going back to work. "It was almost as if they decided to forget about it," he says now.

My father then began working on a subminiature oscillator that could be put into a proximity fuse. In English, that means he was fine-tuning bombs so they would explode in the air, rather than in the dirt, improving their effectiveness in what he saw as the second stage of the battle against Fascism. Meanwhile, his then-wife was involved with a left-wing war relief effort, organizing some kind of coffeehouse for soldiers on leave. A young Pete Seeger stayed at their apartment on Longfellow Avenue, as did Hudie Ledbetter, better known as Leadbelly.

In the summer of 1948, the climate began to chill. "Nothing obvious, but had a feeling," my father recalls. He was shifted to another section of the lab. Then, on September 14, 1948, a week after his birthday, my father received a letter dated the previous day suspending him immediately, calling him "disloyal to the government" and informing him that his job was terminated within 30 days, though he could ask for a trial. The

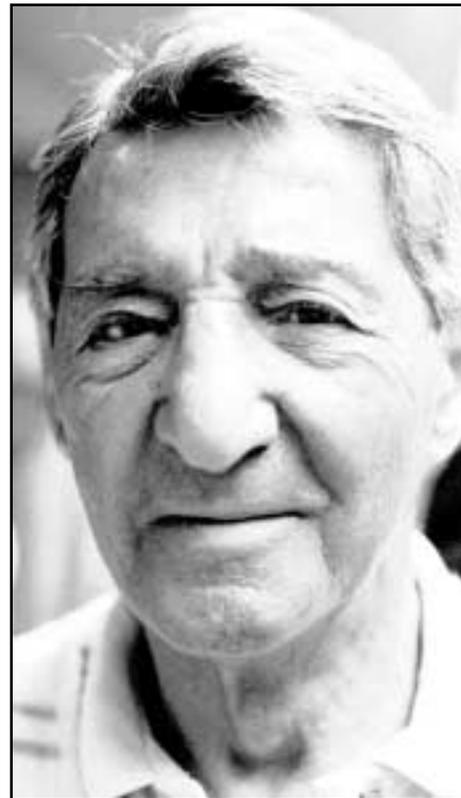


PHOTO RICHARD BERMACK

Max Shufer

letter made the following charges, based on information from an unnamed source:

- that he had been or still was a Communist (actually, not true).
- that he was a member of the Young Communist League (also not true);
- that he was a member of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (true);
- that he had attended Commonwealth College (true); and
- that he was associated with Communists, persons of Communist inclination, and persons of Communist front organizations, including his wife (and indeed, it was true that he was associated with his wife)."

It was a shock," he says briefly. "That was really a blow."

His first priority was to find work. A family friend with a TV repair com-

Continued on page 10

# Shufer and the FBI

Continued from page 9

pany hired him. And he also went to his union, which supplied a lawyer.

Once again, there was a hearing. Once again, his co-workers testified for his character—though my father didn't want his subordinates to show up, fearing they'd be smeared as well. This time the supervisors came. And this time, it didn't work. He was fired.

My father was allowed to appeal, and my grandfather came up with a new lawyer, Joseph Rauh, who had clerked for Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter and went on, with his associates, to defend others attacked during that era, including Lillian Hellman and Arthur Miller. "He was one of the few lawyers brave enough to go up against the committee," says my father, adding, "He was a very sharp guy."

My father needed a sharp guy. He was becoming acquainted with the FBI. One morning, he recalls, a neighbor stopped by to tell him that there were some strange men standing around Longfellow Avenue. Walking outside with his oldest daughter, then about 6, he saw three tall men in black suits, with hair so short it seemed shaved, standing aimlessly around a car parked near the intersection of Georgia Avenue. He stared at them, and they looked at nothing, and that was that.

Another time, my father recalls, that wasn't that. "I knew by then my phone was tapped for sure," he says. So by phone he planned a visit to a friend across town. It was evening when he pulled his car out into the street, and sure enough, another car started following him. He speeded up, went fast around a corner, pulled to the curb, turned off the lights, and watched the government car speed past without noticing him. "They're as competent as they've always been," he says.

At some point during this period he got a call from an agent with a question. "He wondered if I knew anybody else," my father says. "I honestly can't remember the words. I

really cut it short, because I hated them."

But it wasn't enough to ignore or trick his opponents. My father had to prepare a defense for his appeal. Most importantly, he wanted to figure out who his unnamed accuser was. Still in Washington, he wrote a passionate, multi-page letter to my grandfather in New York, outlining the accusations and his thoughts. "The fact that I fought in Spain, and was and still am an Anti-Fascist, has been known since the inception of my Government career," he wrote. Later he became a little more personal: "We are all well, in any case, although this mess has me plenty disturbed."

It may have been Rauh who suggested that the accusation was a written one; my father can't remember. But that cracked the mystery — my father recalled corresponding with another vet, V.E. Hodges, whom he'd met in the prison camp. Ed Hodges was a southerner with whom my father had kept in touch after they returned to the U.S.

My father and grandfather took a train to Lexington, Kentucky, to track down Hodges and find out why on earth he'd informed on a fellow brigadista. What they discovered when they found him, my father recalls, is that Hodges hadn't done anything of the sort. But he and his family had been kicked out of their house while the FBI searched it.

"Don't be silly, a search warrant?" my father scoffs today. "That's for the books."

Whatever else the agents took with them, they had a letter from one Max Shufer, presumably describing his fervent beliefs that all men were created equal—and possibly, his equally strong beliefs that Marx was right. "The letter that crucified me was a typical youthful letter," he says today.

My father and my grandfather persuaded Hodges to write and sign a statement that my father was not a member of the Communist Party.

Armed with that, Rauh prepared his defense. Apparently, it was a success—in 1949 the Department of Commerce, which oversaw the Bureau of Standards, cleared my father of suspected disloyalty.

But the army and navy did not.

"The net result was that I couldn't get any job that required a security clearance," he explains. For a physicist, for an electronics engineer working with defense equipment, it was a career death sentence. "They didn't have to prove anything. They just said, 'We don't want you.'"

"It was a terrible time. Terrible," he says. "There was a big bridge in Rock Creek Park and people were jumping off it."

After the appeal was done, my father set up an office with a man who'd been fired from the Bureau of Standards for union activities. They began repairing instruments—even getting work from, ironically, the bureau. The family moved back to New York City when my father got a job with Consumers' Union testing electrical equipment, and that's when he discovered that he had developed a bleeding ulcer. It left him so weak that he nearly passed out on the steps of a Manhattan church, and provided him with a long legacy of ailments. Nevertheless, he worked steadily at a variety of repair and basic engineering jobs.

In 1956 a good friend who was chief engineer at a research company gave my father a second chance. "I told him I was unable to work in my field," my father explains. The man vouched for him so that he could get a basic clearance. "He broke the blacklist for me," my father says. "Once I was working in an electronic outfit, the other outfits accepted me."

My father had to leave that first place in 1960, when it began accepting more military contracts, which would have forced him to apply for a more restricted clearance. But he was able to

Continued on page 11

## Franco's Death

Continued from page 8

newspaper *El Pais* and the TV-radio chain Canal Plus were “enemies” of Spain, he tried to destroy them by legal suits and intimidation, including the withdrawal of the passports of the two top officers of the media conglomerate. The suit was thrown out of court as having absolutely no legal merit, and the judge who had tried to have the media group outlawed was convicted of repeated lying and expelled from the judicial corps. But just recently Aznar, consulting a few of his closest allies but not even informing his own cabinet, pardoned this judge and announced that he would again be eligible to resume his judicial career. From all these things it is clear that Aznar strives to minimize the roles of the legislative and judicial branches and intervenes actively in the economy on behalf of “friends.”

What you have in Spain 25 years after Franco's death is a society with full freedom of expression and clean elections, but with very little meaningful debate in the legislature, open scorn of the separation of powers, and the perfectly conscious creation from above of a new economic oligarchy. ■

## Shufer

Continued from page 10

move into electronic engineering, becoming the head of a lab at Memorial-Sloan Kettering Cancer Research Institute.

It was there, in about 1962, that my father had his final run-in with the FBI. He was walking to work one day, past what was then an FBI building at 69th Street, by 2nd or 3rd Avenue. “This guy comes bouncing out,” he says—and it was someone he'd never seen. “He says, ‘Hi, Max, how are you?’”

Then he just bounced away, and my father went on with rebuilding his life. ■

# High School Students Tour “Shouts from the Wall” Exhibit at Tufts

By Ann Fraser

Early in December, a group of advanced placement students in Spanish from Braintree High School in Massachusetts visited the “Shouts from the Wall” exhibit at Tufts University. Their teacher, Patricia Smith, always looking for field trips to stimulate her students and widen their experiences, found the collection of photographs and posters to be perfectly suited to the class's objective that had already included background study on the Spanish Civil War. The response of the students, mostly 16 or 17 years old, was enthusiastic. “I was simply blown away”, said Stephen

said that “By examining the photographs and posters, I began to feel for the soldiers involved in the war and for the people being tortured by it. The picture of the young man enduring his last few seconds of life was probably the most touching.” Or, as Meghan Joyce wrote, “I enjoyed most the ‘human touch’ [that the exhibit] gave the Spanish Civil War. Until now, this [...] seemed like a far-off event that had no effect on me.”

In thanking the staff of the museum for making the visit possible, the students summed up their reactions. Elyse Archila wrote, “You did a wonderful job of showing the sentiments

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*I enjoyed most the ‘human touch’ [that the exhibit] gave the Spanish Civil War. Until now, this [...] seemed like a far-off event that had no effect on me.”*

**Meghan Joyce**

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McCusker. Lisa Doria echoed, “I never thought that so much meaning and emotion could come from one poster.”

Several of the students were struck by the extreme youth of many of the combatants and the careful labeling of the photographs that gave each an identity. “It was unbelievable how many young people fought in the war for democracy and freedom. I especially liked the photos of the soldiers accompanied by their names. This exemplified the tragedy of the Guerra Civil,” wrote Marissa Ruozol. Another student, Ashley Hamilton,

of the time and of explaining what the Spanish Civil War was all about. Some of the photographs and posters on display were very moving. A few almost brought me to tears.” Her classmate, Michelle Keefe, concluded, “This [...] helped me to get a better idea of the war and the emotional scars it must have caused. Thank you for the exhibit.”

Our thanks, too, go to Patricia Smith and to all the other high school teachers who help us make “Shouts from the Wall” available and meaningful to young people all over the country. ■



The Vernet Concentration Camp 1944

# The Vernet Concentration Camp, 1939-1944

By Brigitte Thomas  
(translated by Ann Fraser)

**A**fter the fall of the Spanish Republic in 1939, 163,000 civilians and 300,000 Spanish Republican soldiers, as well as thousands of members of the International Brigades, sought refuge in France. The French government placed these anti-Fascist refugees in camps, either on the beaches of the Roussillon region or in the shadow of the Pyrenees Mountains in Gurs, le Vernet d'Ariege, and Rieucros.

A few months later, following the beginning of hostilities against Germany, French authorities rounded up many mostly German and Austrian refugees who had sought refuge in France and also sent them to the camps. Among them were many anti-Nazi intellectuals, such as Dita Parlo, the philosopher Hannah Arendt, and the writer Nina Gourfinkel, who were sent to Gurs; Walter Benjamin, Max Ernst, and Lion Feuchtwanger, who were confined to the camp at Milles; and Arthur Koestler, Max Aub, Rudolf Leonhard, Friedrich Wolf, Gustav Regler, Joseph Soos, and Garcia Vivancos, who, together with many others, were interned in the camp at Vernet.

In October 1940, the camp at Vernet was given a new role: it was designated to be a detention camp in which those elements considered “dangerous to national security and public welfare” were interned. Because of this, Spanish refugees, volunteers of the International Brigades, White Russians, Italian and German Fascists, common criminals, and foreign-born French anti-Fascists found themselves thrown together in confinement. Living conditions in the

camps were abysmal. In 1941, camp inmates revolted against the harsh conditions forced on them.

The retaliation of the French Garde Mobile was brutal. Many of the leaders of the rebellion, among them Franz Dahlem, were turned over to the Nazis and deported to Mauthausen. The Italians were turned over to Mussolini and, between 1941 and 1943, 1,000 men, including 700

Continued on page 13



Vernet Camp Cemetery 1998

# Vernet

Continued from page 12

brigade members, were sent to the camp at Djelfa in North Africa.

The Vernet camp's designation changed once again in 1942. As Nazi leaders implemented the "final solution to the Jewish question," the responsibility of rounding up Jews was turned over to the French police and gendarmes under the authority of the Vichy government. Vernet, which up to this point had served as a detention center for political prisoners, now became the center of concentration for all Jews arrested in the region. From here, 1062 men, women, and children were deported to Auschwitz. The Germans evacuated the camp on June 30, 1944, transferring all those interned to Bordeaux and from there, on August 28, on the "Phantom Train" convoy to Dachau.

Originally founded in 1945, the Association of the Former Internees at Vernet d'Ariège resumed its activities in 1970 to save the sole surviving material testimony of the camp: the cemetery. In 1980 a permanent exhibition was installed at Vernet. Since 1994 many steps have been taken to place a monument on the camp site.

The aim of the association is to perpetuate the memory of all who were detained here, of their sacrifices in the fight against fascism, and of their ideals of peace and liberty. Much has already been accomplished. Groups of students, journalists and filmmakers from many countries are welcomed here every year. The association takes part in these encounters and debates and in the commemoration ceremonies. It also assists students and researchers, as well as relatives of former inmates, in studying the history of the camps.

For more information, contact us at AAI du camp du Vernet d'Ariège, 09700 Le Vernet d'Ariège, France. Or check our website at: <http://www.cc-pays-saverdun.fr/pages/vernet/accueil.htm> ❏



Members of the association of prisoners of the camp and their wives. Jose Artime, president of the association, second on the left.



Silvester "Pablov" Furlan, a Yugoslavian member of the IBs, in front of a monument in the cemetery.

# Wiltshire, England, Finds Local Link to Spanish Civil War

*In searching for an article in the Guardian, Andrew Lee came across the following story, first published on Saturday, October 14, 2000, in the Wiltshire Newsquest. In its small scale, it underscores just how widespread was the appeal of the Spanish Republic.*

A search by a Swindon author Brian Bridgeman for information about local people who fought in the Spanish Civil War led him to former railway worker Ken Gibbs and into an intriguing link between the [local rail-road] works and the struggle against General Franco's fascists.

Several Swindonians fought in Spain with Republicans who were attempting to repel Nationalists. But the evidence Brian found convinces him that ordinary working-class workers in Swindon also did their bit.

He believes that employees from the railway works were involved in an operation to convert a motor van into an armour-plated ambulance which was then sent to the Republicans.

Brian said: "In the early works there was this group of people who wanted to send aid to Spain but they were unpopular and called communists. At the time this sort of thing was frowned upon and people were secretive about what they did."

Now former railway worker Ken Gibbs has written to Mr. Bridgeman and told him how he can remember seeing the ambulance when he was a boy of six. Mr. Gibbs said: "I remember standing at the front gate of our house in Montague Street with my father waiting for something which turned out to be this ambulance which he said was going to Spain.

"As I recall the vehicle was probably an ordinary van that had been converted and was covered in places with steel sheet. I understand it had been financed by the local Communist Party and fitted out by them. "I clearly remember seeing it driving along the

road showing the people of the area what had been purchased and what was being done towards the medical requirements for the Spanish Republicans.

"It was a smallish van with red crosses painted on," said Mr. Gibbs, 71, of The Mall, Swindon. "My dad told me it was armour plated or reinforced with steel plates."

Mr. Gibbs, the fourth generation of his family to work in the rail works, said there was no evidence to suggest that the ambulance had been built in the works.

But there was a lot of support for the Communist Party in those days and it was likely that the skill and expertise of rail workers had been used to convert the vehicle. Mr. Gibbs said: "I believe the vehicle was purely a local effort and that it was probably driven to the coast, put on a container and shipped to Spain."

Mr. Bridgeman, who is a member of the Swindon Society is hoping other readers of the Evening Advertiser will recall seeing the ambulance or have information about it.

He is also interested in receiving information about men from Swindon and other parts of Wiltshire who actually fought in the Civil War.

Brian Bridgeman knows that there were at least eight Wiltshire men, including three or four from Swindon who fought in the War.

He says the men all fought between 1936 and 1939. He already knows quite a lot about one of them, the remarkable Prof. Ralph Bates who is now aged 101 and lives in New York with his second wife. [See Obituary, p. 20.] He was born in Morse Street on November 3, 1899, into a working class Swindon family. A gifted scholar he attended the Swindon and North Wilts Secondary School in Victoria Road and became fluent in French and Spanish.

He started his working life, just as

his father had done, as a fitter in the railworks. But he left Swindon in the 1920's to work as a docker in Spain and later a travelling mechanic.

Ralph's strong socialist leanings led him to take a front-line role in the Spanish Civil War which started in 1936. He had always been interested in Spanish Republican politics and later became a captain in the Loyalist Army and International Brigade, Madrid sector.

When Franco's forces were victorious he escaped to America where he later became Professor of Literature at New York University.

Ralph's memories include recollections of mobs of anarchists armed with clubs wrapped in barbed wire battling with soldiers.

Brian has also managed to find out some details about Ronald H Bates. Ralph's brother, who also went to fight in Spain from his home in Quarry Road. Apparently Mr. Bates returned to Britain in December 1938 and is then believed to have gone to live in Reading.

Another Swindon fighter was Percival Williams who lived in Theobald Street and died of his wounds in Spain in 1938.

Mr. Bridgeman said a wreath bearing Spanish National colours was laid at his memorial in Whitworth Road Cemetery in 1986.

Other Wiltshire men who joined the war included James Albrington from Salisbury who was one of the first volunteers to join the International Brigade, Harold Cosh from Westbury and Eric Edney from Wootton Rivers, near Marlborough.

Anyone who knows anything about the ambulance or about the men who fought in the war are asked to contact Mr. Bridgeman at 69, Sandringham Road, Swindon, SN3 IHT. ■

# ALBA's New Planned Giving Program

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Taking a strong step to ensure the continuation of its activities long into the future, ALBA is initiating a new program called "planned giving." This program provides an extraordinary way to **make a gift, increase income and slice the donor's tax bill—all in one transaction!**

The charitable gift annuity program was created for our many friends who have expressed a desire to make a significant gift, while still retaining income from the gift during their lifetime. A charitable gift annuity gives you additional retirement income, while affording you the satisfaction of supporting ALBA's continuing educational programs and its traditions of fighting for social justice and against fascism.

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80	9.2%	\$920	\$571	\$349	\$4,858
75	8.2%	\$820	\$461	\$359	\$4,474
70	7.5%	\$750	\$379	\$371	\$4,128
65	7.0%	\$700	\$318	\$382	\$3,803
60	6.6%	\$660	\$272	\$388	\$3,556

\*The tax-free income and taxable income are presented for the first year of the annuity payments and are based on a \$10,000 gift of cash. These calculations are for illustration purposes only and should not be considered legal, accounting or other professional advice. Your actual benefits may vary depending on the timing and funding of the gift.



## Antonio Elorza & Marta Bizcarrondo, *Queridos Camaradas La Internacional Comunista y España, 1919-1939*

(Barcelona: Planeta, 1999) 532 pp.

By Helen Graham

This important study by Elorza and Bizcarrondo, two leading historians of the Spanish left, is the first to use Soviet archival sources to produce an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the Communist International (Comintern) and the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) in the key decade of the 1930s. “Key” above all, of course, because it exploded into the civil war that would for a time turn Spain into the center of Soviet foreign policy attention, while also molding the PCE as a unique example of the Comintern’s strategy of inter-class alliance against fascism: the Popular Front.

This book is a must for anyone interested in the history of the Spanish left in the 1930s or the Republic at war. But I should make clear what it does and does not provide lest readers be disappointed. Its specific focus on Comintern-PCE relations means that, logically, it has little to say about Soviet-Republican inter-governmental contacts—even though these rapidly became the crucial level of political and policy exchange once reciprocal diplomatic representation was functioning by the autumn of 1936. Nor does the study say much about the International Brigades, since they would also develop specific organizational channels separate from those of the Comintern. On the plus side, the authors’ archival research (chiefly Comintern-based, although there is some data from other Soviet archives) presents a compelling picture of the coup-induced chaos of the first

months of the war, which engulfed all players on the Republican side, including the PCE.

And just like the Republicans themselves, who were living from crisis to crisis in these first months, so too Stalin’s policy on Spain is best understood in terms of emergency planning—as new research is now indicating. Stalin saw Republican resistance as an advanced defense of Soviet frontiers, whose vulnerability remained his main preoccupation throughout the 1930s. This underlay the Comintern’s concern from the start with the primacy of the Republican war effort. The Republic had to be kept afloat, but preferably without unduly antagonizing Britain and France, whose diplomatic support Stalin was courting in the hope of a collective security alliance against expansionist Nazi Germany. The Soviet leadership was also aware that any overt assistance on its part to the Republic would justify the escalation of Fascist aid to Franco’s rebels—an escalation with which it could never compete. (Hence, ironically, the Soviet Union’s initial preparedness to sign up to the British-inspired pact of non-intervention that was to do so much damage over the long term to the Republic’s ability to acquire war materiel.)

The way the Comintern stepped in to coordinate the mobilization of volunteer fighters for the Republic provides a perfect example of Soviet caution. As Elorza and Bizcarrondo indicate, the International Brigades were far from being a “Comintern Army” (i.e., an instrument for the political domination of the Republic). They were shock troops, part of

Stalin’s emergency planning. The Comintern provided the vital organizational mechanism that made it possible systematically to channel to Spain the military expertise of the international left in order to stave off imminent Republican defeat in the autumn of 1936. But the political and social motives that took the brigaders to Spain were as complex as those of the first volunteers who had gone to Spain without organizational back-up. Seen in their full historical context, the brigades were no more Stalin’s invention than was the dynamic of European Popular Front itself.

In keeping with Stalin’s overriding objective of collective security, his view of the PCE was also far more instrumental than is generally perceived. The party was to be an instrument for buttressing the Republic, however, not for taking power. (These things were by no means synonymous in the context of the Spanish Civil War.) What Stalin wanted from the PCE was for it to throw itself into organizing all-out mobilization for modern industrial war. The party was learning fast here anyway—not least through the mutually beneficial working relationship it had forged with so many of the Republic’s professional army officers.

The PCE’s championing of mass war mobilization would cause a head-on collision with the Socialist prime minister, Largo Caballero, who did not really grasp why this was required—or, indeed, what was required. Moreover, having himself planned for years the “historic” re-absorption of the PCE into his own

*continued on page 17*

# Book Review



socialist movement, Largo correctly surmised that the PCE saw its new wartime role as a means of achieving the opposite. Incorrectly, however, Largo attributed this strategy to Stalin. But as Elorza and Bizcarrondo show, Comintern instructions from late 1936 and early 1937 sought to rein in the PCE's political ambitions. These ambitions were encouraged, it's true, by Vittorio Codovila, the Comintern's man in Spain. But he had "gone native" years before—so much, then, for the Comintern's iron discipline. In the famous May 1937 cabinet crisis, Stalin wanted Largo to stay on as prime minister, aware that his reputation as an old radical was immensely valuable in keeping the anarcho-sindicalist CNT's key manpower on board the war effort. But the republicans and parliamentary socialists in Spain had other ideas and were determined to seize the opportunity to get rid of Largo, whom they considered a loose political cannon. The PCE, of course, had its own reasons for going along with this. All in all, then, the Comintern material reinforces something I have long argued (on the basis of other Spanish sources): the outcome of the May cabinet crisis was determined by domestic political forces. The Comintern remained on the sidelines, while the PCE was an ensemble player, not the master puppeteer.

In parts, then, *Queridos camaradas* contributes usefully to destabilizing the still-prevalent monolithic reading of the PCE's role in the Spanish Civil War (conspiracy-laden, "demonic," and so on). But the value of this is substantially undermined by the authors' failure to offer any real analysis of the Spanish communist movement as a national force—that is, as an integral part of the complex history of the Spanish (and above all the Catalan) left in the 1920s and 30s. There is no reason why this could not have been done within the framework of the book. To paint the picture so com-

pletely from one set of sources—even if these are as important as the Comintern's—inevitably means that too many other stories, influences and actors—individual and collective—get left out of the account.

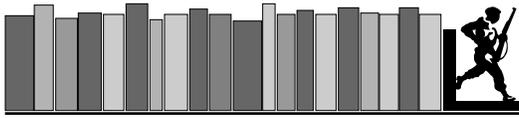
Elorza and Bizcarrondo claim quite bluntly that the Spanish Communists have no history of their own because they were bound by a supranational political discipline to the Comintern. But the evidence in *Queridos camaradas* belies this simplistic assertion. We already know from E. H. Carr that the Comintern was a creaky, ramshackle affair. Here we see how the Spanish Civil War severely tested its meager resources. The huge scale of practical demands meant the PCE's own leadership cadres had to take the strain. And, like it or not, in a fast-moving war that meant they were also taking political initiatives, becoming, in some ways, a real leadership. Communication between Spain and Moscow was slow and often out of synch. As Tim Rees has recently pointed out, the Spanish Politburo was often effectively on its own in situations that demanded rapid political responses. In short, the imperatives of the war (which, in this book, seems often to be little more than a distant backdrop for the political action) molded the PCE and its political perspectives as much as did the "Stalinist political culture" frequently mentioned by the authors.

Many of the attitudes and behaviors commonly attributed to the PCE's Stalinism can equally well be explained as stemming from ingrained clientelist political attitudes that spanned the political spectrum in Spain. Political culture isn't susceptible to rapid change—and the Republic was only five years old when it was catapulted into the war. At its start many organizations saw a big influx of new members with low levels of political education. Moreover, the war (and civil war at that) inevitably bru-

talized politics by upping the stakes at the same time as it removed certain organizational constraints against political violence. None of this means that we should discount Stalinism as an explanatory framework, but rather that we should be more precise about what we mean and assess it as one influence among others. As Elorza and Bizcarrondo show, Stalinist discipline was by 1938-39 keeping the lid on growing tensions inside the PCE. (Some—including in the Politburo—felt Popular Frontism was being taken too far and was stripping the party of its communist identity to ever less good effect.) Writing the PCE's political history—and even more its pivotal social history—means taking on board the party's relationship with the Comintern, but also looking beyond it.

This is particularly important, too, if we are to understand the complexity of the events of May 1937 in Barcelona, during which many different conflicts within the Spanish left were played out on the city street—as I myself have tried to show elsewhere. Elorza and Bizcarrondo suggest that the dearth of material in the Comintern archives about these events indicates a prior cull. Such may indeed have occurred. But whether what was culled was some specific blueprint for the repression of the POUM—as the authors appear to think—seems to me to be more dubious. The ideological campaign against "Trotskyism" was undoubtedly prepared in Moscow—and the reasons for this are perceptively rehearsed by the authors. But the preparation and implementation of the POUM repression had far more to do with the PCE and the PSUC than with the NKVD (Soviet intelligence service). Nor can these three be conflated by some facile reference to "Stalinist discipline." The political axes that remained to be ground—in particular between the

Continued on page 19



# ALBA Books and Publications are now available on line: [www.alba-valb.org](http://www.alba-valb.org) or mail order from Cody's Books (1-800-995-1180).

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# Join us in a cause that will never die

Over two decades ago four veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade— Bill Susman, Leonard Lamb, Oscar Hunter and Morris Brier — created a new organization: ALBA, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, bringing in a group of scholars interested in the Spanish Civil War and the International Brigades.

From the outset, one of ALBA's main tasks was to help manage and expand the Spanish Civil War archive housed at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Explicit in this undertaking were the educational goals of preserving, disseminating and transmitting to future generations the history and lessons of the Spanish Civil War and of the International Brigades.

To carry out these goals ALBA, in collaboration with VALB, publishes *The Volunteer*. ALBA also collaborates on the production of books, films and videos, maintains a website at [www.alba-valb.org](http://www.alba-valb.org), helps send exhibitions of photographs, documents and artwork throughout the United States and Canada, and organizes conferences and seminars on the Spanish Civil War and on the role of the

International Brigades in that conflict and afterward. ALBA has established the George Watt Memorial prizes for the best college and graduate school essays on these subjects and has designed a widely-used Spanish Civil War high school and college curriculum.

In the coming months and years ALBA will greatly expand its activity. To do so effectively ALBA must have

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- I would also like to receive a list of books, pamphlets and videos available at discount.
- I would like to have ALBA's poster exhibit, *Shouts from the Wall*, in my locality. Please send information.
- I would like to have ALBA's photo exhibit, *The Aura of the Cause*, in my locality. Please send information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose an additional donation of \_\_\_\_\_. I wish  do not wish  to have this donation acknowledged in *The Volunteer*.

Please mail to: ALBA, 799 Broadway, Room 227, New York, NY 10003

## Book Review

Continued from page 17

various brands of Catalan communist and socialist parties—had been many years in the making. What happened during and after May 1937 was never as simple as “orders from the Comintern.” As in other grim episodes in the Republic's history, there were many reasons why.

*Queridos camaradas* is an important study that yields many insights into the complexities of the PCE at war. But the analysis is uneven and sometimes blinkered. At times it comes close to endorsing the demonization beloved of anti-communist conspiracy theorists—even though there seems nothing in the authors' empirical evi-

dence to explain this curious swerve. ■

Helen Graham teaches history at Royal Holloway, University of London.

web site:  
[www.alba-valb.org](http://www.alba-valb.org)

## Letters

Dear Alba,

I am searching for information about Henryck Trojan, a member of the Dabrowski Brigade, who arrived in Spain from Palestine in May 1937 and fought until the end. Repatriated with the British volunteers to London, he was returned to Palestine. Later in 1942 he joined the British army and served in the Middle East forces until the end of WWII. Can anyone help me or direct me to Polish groups that could?

Thanks

Amirah Inglis

PO Box 5

O'Connor ACT 2602

Australia Phone: 02-62488-580

# Added to Memory's Roster

## The Year 2000 Roster of Departed Lincoln Veterans

January

Arthur Munday and  
Joseph Luftig

February

Sam Schiff

March

Herman Carl Riffe, Sam  
Mende

April

Ben Goldring, William  
Pike

May

Sam Gonshak, Saul  
Friedburg, Mark Alper

June

Anthony Mackay;

August

Al Gottlieb

October

Leslie Kish, Louis Gayle

November

Al Tanz

December

Morris Stamm

## Alfred L. Tanz (1906-2000)

Al Tanz, one of the original volunteers in the Lincoln Battalion, died November 29, 2000, at the age of 94. He was also one of seven volunteers who were repatriated to the U.S. in 1938 and then returned to Spain for a



Al Tanz

second tour of duty.

Al was born in New York City to Austrian parents, attended City College, and graduated from New York Law School. As a member of the International Labor Defense, he was one of the lawyers who assisted Bill Bailey and others charged with tearing down the Nazi swastika from the *Bremen* in New York harbor in 1935.

In December 1936, Al sailed aboard the *SS Normandie* from New York with 95 other volunteers, the first Americans to form the Lincoln Battalion. With the rank of lieutenant, he served as quartermaster on the Jarama and Brunete fronts, then as a representative to the International Brigades headquarters in Barcelona. In the spring of 1938, he returned to the U.S. to participate in activities to gain public support of the Spanish Republic. But in the summer of 1938, as the Lincolns prepared for the Ebro offensive, Al volunteered to return to Spain. He served with the machine gun company and was wounded twice in the Sierra Caballes. He returned home in December 1938.

After the war, Al performed pro bono legal work for the vets and participated in the American Labor Party in New York. He was also one of the original organizers of the National

Lawyers Guild.

When the U.S. entered World War II, Al enlisted in the army and was recruited by Wild Bill Donovan for service in the Office of Strategic Services. He parachuted into France prior to D-Day, preparing for the U.S. invasion. He served with the army all the way to Berlin, participating with the Corps of Engineers during the Battle of the Bulge, and earning promotion to captain. He also took part in the liberation of the Nordhausen concentration camp and witnessed the arrival of the first Russian troops into Berlin.

In recent years, Al resided in El Cerrito, California, with his wife Freda and regularly participated in San Francisco Bay Area activities. ▀

## Ralph Bates

Ralph Bates, the last of the fabled British writers involved in the Spanish Civil War, died in New York City on Sunday, November 26, 2000, at the age of 101. Unlike many of his contemporaries and fellow writers, Bates chose not only to write about life, but to live it fully. Rather than become involved in armchair debates over the "active life" and the glorification of men of action, Bates, himself a hardy, adven-

PHOTO RICHARD BERMACK



# Added to Memory's Roster



turesome man, enlisted as a soldier in World War I, worked as a fitter in the Swindon works of the Great Western Railway, a street cleaner in Paris, and a worker in the Barcelona harbor, and still found the energy and time to write.

Bates also differed from many of the other writers who went to Spain and wrote about it in that he was intimately involved in the Republican cause. Before the Spanish Civil War he was an organizer for the Unión General de Trabajadores, and he should be known to most readers of *The Volunteer* as its first editor. Briefly married to Winifred Bates, who served as a "responsible" for the International Brigade nurses, he was sent to the United States to conduct propaganda and organize support for the Republic. During one of those appearances in 1937, he met his future wife, Eve.

Bates' membership in various Communist parties is not clear. His son Jonathan said his father was sent to the U.S. because of conflicts with the Party in Spain over its policies and vision for the future. He was close to the leader of the CPGB, Harry Pollitt, and in a conversation with me last year he still spoke very highly of Pollitt, but not so highly of the CPUSA and its cadre. He was not impressed with the CPUSA, nor its members with him. Many of the obituaries write that Bates left the party in 1939 because of the Hitler Stalin Pact, but he was never really a joiner nor a follower, but rather a man of action and energy.

Unlike Hugh Slater (*The Heretics*) or Esmond Romilly (*Boadilla*), who wrote novels based on their experiences during the Spanish Civil War, Bates did not. There is a strong short novella, "The 43rd Division," and a few short stories that deal with the war, but no novel. Interested readers will be more than content with two powerful novels of Spain published before the war, *Lean Men: An Episode in a Life* (1934 Great Britain / 1935 U.S.)



Ralph Bates addressing the troops in Spain.

and *The Olive Field* (1935/1936). Based on Bates' experiences as a harbor worker, *Lean Men* deals with the struggles of workers both against the state and employers and amongst themselves between competing left ideologies. *The Olive Field* grew out of his experiences in participating in the failed risings of 1934. There is an earlier Spanish novel, *Sierra* (1933), but I am not familiar enough with it to write about it. *The Miraculous Horde* (1939) (published in the U.S. as *Sirocco*) contains Bates' Spanish Civil War fiction. His last published novel, *The Dolphin in the Wood*, was published in 1950. He continued to write, if not to publish, and there is some hope of "desk drawer" material possibly appearing in the near future.

Bates' novels and short stories are unfortunately out of print, despite the unceasing efforts of Eve Bates to interest publishers in them. Sadly, the power of Bates' fiction writing, the topics he writes about, and the honesty and commitment he brought to them are not of interest to American trade publishers undergoing yet another serious crisis. But for his British background and foreign settings, I think he would be a candidate for the wonderful series published by

the University of Illinois, the Radical Novel Reconsidered ([www.press.uillinois.edu/series/rnr.html](http://www.press.uillinois.edu/series/rnr.html)). For now, those who want to read his novels will have to borrow them from their local library, probably on loan from another library.

Bates briefly lived in Mexico and summered in Greece, but the United States became his home after 1941. He taught writing at New York University from 1948 until his retirement in 1968. Bates refused to testify before the House Un American Activities Committee in the 1950s. He lived in New York until his death.

Bates is survived by Eve and their son Jonathan. ▀

—Andrew H. Lee

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## Samuel S. Schiff 1911-2000

Samuel S. Schiff, a Lincoln vet, died on February 19, 2000, after a long illness. He served in several battles in Spain and was wounded at Belchite. He then drove an ambulance.

He was born outside of Minsk in 1911, in what is now Belarus, and came to the U.S. with his family in 1923. Within a few years he moved to New York City, where he worked as a locksmith and took up photography before going to Spain. In 1941 he married Isabelle Pendleton, who many vets knew as "Norah" (and our family knew as "Pen") from her volunteer work for the vets.

Like many other vets, Sam joined the merchant marines and served in the Pacific during World War II. After returning to New York, he became a lithographer. He and Pen built a three-room rustic cabin in Washington, New Hampshire, in the late 1940s and spent parts of many summers there. While they did not have children of their own, my brother and I and cousins worshiped them and learned from them, as did many others. They taught

Continued on page 22



# Added to Memory's Roster



## Sam Schiff

Continued from page 21

us about life and instilled values the vets have stood for. They both stayed involved with the vets and were well known to those who worked in the VALB office and at the vets' functions.

Pen died in October 1998, and Sam declined rapidly after her death. He leaves his sister (my mother), Ester S. Rom, my father, Philip, my brother, Louis (Shelley and Jason), and me (and Suzanne), cousins, and countless "borrowed relatives," all of us who learned so much from Sam and Pen and revere their memories. ❏

—Alan Jay Rom

## Pedro Mateo Merino

The last commander of the 35th International Division, Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Mateo Merino, passed away in his home outside of Madrid on November 19, 2000. During the Ebro offensive the 35th International Division included the 11th (Thaelmann), 13th (Dombrowsky) and 15th (Lincoln) International Brigades.

I had the opportunity of meeting Pedro Mateo Merino during the 1st International Forum on the International Brigades organized by the "Amigos" in Getafe last November. I remember he was delighted to meet once again his former subordinate, "El Lobo," Milt Wolff.

During the Forum, Mateo Merino stressed a fact he felt has often been overlooked: from a very early date, but especially during the Ebro campaign, the "International Brigades" were mainly composed of Spanish soldiers with a numerical minority of foreign volunteers. This fact came to light once again during the inauguration of the monument in Corbera on October 14, where Spanish veterans of the International Brigades far outnumbered those hailing from abroad.

In recent years Mateo Merino was



Sam Schiff in Spain 1938

an enthusiastic supporter of all initiatives to recover the historic memory of the Republic. He leaves many friends behind in Spain and abroad. For more details on his incredible experiences, see his memoirs (in Spanish), *Por vuestra libertad y la nuestra* (Madrid: Editorial Disenso, 1986) ISBN 84-398-7450-2. ❏

—Robert Coale

## Leslie Kish (1910-2000)

Leslie Kish, a member of the Hungarian battalion of the Dombrowski Brigade and the John Brown Battery and an internationally known statistician, died in Ann Arbor, Michigan on October 7, 2000.

Kish, born in Poprad in the Slovakian portion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1910, came to the United States with his family in 1925. He left in the middle of his senior year at City College to fight in

Spain, beginning his voyage on February 20, 1937, on the *Ile de France* to Le Havre and then from southern France to Barcelona on the *Ciudad de Barcelona*. At brigade headquarters in Albacete he joined a crowd of Hungarians who formed a battalion in the Dombrowski Brigade. A lifelong gourmand, he was attracted to the Hungarians because "they told me they ate better." He was wounded at the battle of Huesca in June 1937, and while recuperating from his wounds, met up with a group of American, Canadian and British volunteers who were forming the John Brown Battery. He served with that artillery battery until repatriation in October 1938.

Kish, who was an army air corps meteorologist during WWII, went to the University of Michigan in 1947, where he was one of the founders of its Survey Research Center. After earning his advanced degrees in mathematical statistics and sociology, he became one of the world's foremost experts in sampling, with his magnum opus, *Statistical Sampling*, a landmark publication. He was president of the American Statistical Association and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Royal Statistical Society of England, among his innumerable honors. Although he retired in 1981, he maintained an active research and consulting program, traveling to China as recently as last year to offer his expertise. He also attended the 1996 reunion in Spain. A most charming and cosmopolitan fellow with wide-ranging interests, he was always deeply involved in progressive politics on the local, national, and international level. For almost 20 years, Kish had been an active member of the vets group centered around Wayne State University's VALB Scholarship Fund.

Kish is survived by Rhea, his wife of 53 years, his daughters Carla and Andrea, and a granddaughter. ❏

—Mel Small



# Contributions



■ Al Amery in memory of Rudy Haber, \$20 ■ Charles Bayor in memory of Harold Chaleff, \$25 ■ Saul Birnbaum, in memory of Sam Gonshak, \$15 ■ Adele and Sam Braude in honor of Harold Chaleff, \$50 ■ Fred Constancia and David Warren in honor of Arthur Munday, \$50 ■ Thomas C. Doerner in memory of Dr. Robbins and Dr. Solenberger, \$100 ■ Faiga Duncan in memory of Lowell Duncan, \$25 ■ Margo Feinberg and Fred Ross in memory of Helen Freeman Feinberg, \$100 ■ Miriam Gittelsohn, in honor of Harold Chaleff, \$25 ■ Juan Maria Gomez Ortiz in memory of Oliver Law, \$20 ■ Roy Gutierrez, in memory of Morris Stamm, \$25 ■ Dr. Aaron Hilkevitch, in memory of my Spanish Chief, Neurosurgeon Dr. Advito Ley Gomez (whose father was a Francoist), \$250 ■ Charlotte Hrach in honor of Morris Stamm, \$20 ■ Jack and Erica Karan in honor of Ben Wainfield's 50th birthday, \$100 ■ Cathy Klein in memory of Harry and Mollie Klein, Rose and Jeff Perlman, George and Margie Watt, \$100 ■ Patricia Morrall in honor of Marvin Nelson, \$25 ■ Zachary Murphy in memory of Al Chisholm, \$50 ■ Susan Nobel in memory of Dr. John Simon and Dr. Seymour Robbins, \$50 ■ Mary Pappas in memory of Nicholas Pappas, \$20 ■ Polly Pearlman in memory of Al Tanz, \$25 ■ Alan Jay and Esther S. Rom in memory of Samuel S. Schiff, \$75 ■ Dorothy Shtob in honor of Ben Weinfield's 80th birthday, \$25 ■ Linda Stamm in loving memory of Morris Stamm, who persisted in "The Good Fight," \$100 ■

## ALBA'S TRAVELING EXHIBITIONS

### SHOUTS FROM THE WALL

### THE AURA OF THE CAUSE

#### Riverside, CA

March 15, 2001-April 30,  
 2001  
 Sweeney Art Gallery  
 University of California  
 Riverside CA 92521  
 For information contact  
 Katherine Warren  
 909-787-3755

#### Lawrence, KS

January 19 - March 10, 2002  
 Spencer Museum of Art  
 University of Kansas  
 Lawrence, KS 66045

ALBA's photographic exhibit, *The Aura of the Cause*, has been shown at the Puffin Room in New York City, the University of California-San Diego, the Salvador Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, FL, the Fonda Del Sol Visual Center in Washington, DC, and the University of Illinois. This exhibit, curated by Professor Cary Nelson of the University of Illinois, consists of hundreds of photographs of the Lincoln Brigaders, other international volunteers and their Spanish comrades, in training and at rest, among the Spanish villages and in battle. For further information about *The Aura of the Cause* exhibit, and its companion exhibit, *Shouts From The Wall*, posters from the Spanish Civil War, contact ALBA's executive secretary, Diane Fraher, 212-598-0968. Both exhibits are available for museum and art gallery showings.

### BRING THESE EXHIBITS TO YOUR LOCALITY

Contact Diane Fraher, ALBA executive secretary: 212-598-0968; Fax: 212-529-4603

# Bay Area Reunion

Feb 25 In Madrid and

**Mississippi** A Salute to the

Civil Rights Struggle with

**Robert Moses & Pasiones**

Songs of the Spanish Civil

War by Michael Smith and

Jamie O'Reilly

# New York Reunion

April 29 Featuring Studs

**Terkel and Pasiones**

## **The Volunteer**

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New York, NY 10003

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