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Émilienne Morin

Our Victory

17 November 1938

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I am not betraying Durruti's legacy when I say that he remained the intrepid anarchist of his early years up to the last moment of his life. It's not superfluous to invoke this, since it's no secret that various political groups have tried to appropriate the undeniable prestige of the hero of Aragón and Madrid for their own purposes.

They've tried to make him into a *great soldier*, who was convinced of the need for an iron discipline and even welcomed the militarization of the militias, which was already being talked about in November 1936. His final words—"we renounce everything except victory"—have become the fighters' mantra, but each one interprets them according to the needs of his organization or party.

I don't want to begin a debate, because these aren't times for polemics, but in the midst of the contradictions and confusion borne of war, allow me, as a witness, to say what I think. When Durruti spoke of victory, he meant, *without any possible doubt*, the victory of the Popular Militias over the fascist hordes, since he rejected the idea of a military victory of a bourgeois republic that didn't lead to social transformation.

I heard him say so many times: “It wouldn’t be worth dressing up like soldiers to be governed by the Republicans of 1931 again. We accept concessions, but we won’t forget that we have to carry out the war and the *revolution* simultaneously.”

Durruti never forgot his years as a hunted militant. The dramatic persecutions suffered by the CNT and FAI were etched in letters of blood in his memory. He didn’t trust the Republican politicians in the slightest and refused to describe men like Azaña as anti-fascists.

In a word, he believed that the Spanish bourgeoisie that supported the Republican cause would not miss the opportunity to unscrupulously undermine, even in the middle of war, the proletariat’s revolutionary conquests. Regrettably, events show that he was right...

Durruti was disgusted and horrified by the growing bureaucratism. In the famous speech that he gave in Barcelona before leaving for Madrid, he shouted the alarm about the corruption beginning to appear in the rearguard and denounced that bureaucratic parasitism. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough. . . and the bureaucratism of the conformists spread shamelessly...

But Durruti’s thought, his soul, if you’ll permit me the expression, still lives in the heart of the Spanish proletariat, which has not, despite his martyrdom, forgotten his message. And that is why we have faith in the revolutionary potential of the Iberian workers, who will one day free themselves from their so-called “leaders.” Let the disorder of the French Popular Front make our Spanish brothers reflect: they should not have high hopes for help from Europe’s “great democracies.” The prevailing affection for the combatants of liberty is nothing more than a passive and teary sentimentalism.

We can’t achieve the victory to which Durruti alluded—*our victory*—without help from the French proletariat, freed from the tutelage of its parties and beyond all nationalist considerations. We haven’t lost the hope that French workers will under-

stand their class duty and break the “truce” that their “leaders” have preached to them for so long.