

Why I shot a Royalist

Germaine Berton

1923

Amongst the enemies of the proletariat, I have always had a particular hatred for the Royalists and their agents provocateurs; I could hardly contain my anger when I recalled the abject attitude of MM. Maurras and Daudet towards workers' organisations. The articles and the media campaign by the Action Française in 1920 through which the King's Camelots became strike breakers; the incessant call to violence; the shameful slander of some Anarchists and Communists; the threats of repression and fascism. Towards the end of 1922 I was pushed to the limit, I would have been a coward if I hadn't had the courage to express, in my own way, my rancour and my disgust.

At that time, while Poincaré was busy with the invasion of the Ruhr, the Royalists were actively preparing their social war, hiding their resentment and their unhealthy appetites under a hypocritical jingoism of dubious taste. The facts prove this. It is none other than the Action Française who demanded the arrest of French Syndicalists and Communists with whom they had old affairs to settle; it is the Action Française who demanded the lifting of the parliamentary immunity of the Deputy Cachin; it is them, lastly, who never stopped, in their columns, to stir up hatreds in the attempt of creating fascist politics, – Daudet was the main instigator of all this. I recalled his entire life spent fighting workers' organisations. This is when I decided to kill him.

I am not insensitive, and I had to overcome great reluctance before killing a human being, even my enemy.

However, in no way do I regret the act I committed and my conscience feels no remorse. Because, in killing the leader of the King's Camelots, I only obeyed my heart, torn by the suffering of all unfortunate proletarians, hounded and enslaved pariahs.

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Retrieved on 10th September 2021 from forgottenanarchism.wordpress.com
Published in *Le Flambeau*, Algiers.

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