

*Spanish Liberals Speak*  
*on the*  
*Counter-Revolution in Spain*

NICETO ALCALÁ ZAMORA  
ALEJANDRO LERROUX  
GREGORIO MARAÑÓN  
MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO  
PÍO BAROJA Y NESSI



San Francisco, California  
MCMXXXVII

Ayuntamiento de Madrid







SPANISH LIBERALS SPEAK  
on the  
COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN  
SPAIN

NICETO ALCALÁ ZAMORA  
ALEJANDRO LERROUX  
GREGORIO MARAÑÓN  
MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO  
PÍO BAROJA Y NESSI

Translated, Edited, and Published by the  
SPANISH RELIEF COMMITTEE  
San Francisco, California  
MCMXXXVII

SPANISH LIBRARY'S SPEAK  
COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN  
SPAIN

ALBERTO ALCALÁ ZAMORA  
ALEJANDRO LLERENA  
CRISTÓBAL MARÍN  
MIGUEL DE UNQUERO  
EL PRIMER VOTO

In this pamphlet are reproduced opinions on the Spanish civil war by five of Spain's leading liberals and intellectuals who are at the same time among the most outstanding figures of modern Spanish culture.

**NICETO ALCALÁ ZAMORA** was the first President and one of the founders of the Spanish Republic, and for many years a leader in the political life of the nation. Illegally removed from office by the Popular Front in April, 1936, he presents a vivid and accurate account of the last days of the Second Spanish Republic.

**ALEJANDRO LERROUX**, leader of the Spanish Radical Party and a former anti-clerical and political agitator, has been a dominant figure in Spanish political life since 1931. Climaxing fifty years of republican activity, he held several times the post of Premier during the Second Spanish Republic.

**GREGORIO MARAÑÓN**, President of the Spanish Academy of Medicine, is one of Spain's leading men of science, a distinguished scholar and author of numerous works on biology and sociology. He was one of the founders of the Spanish Republic.

**MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO**, Spain's leading philosopher and thinker, late President of the University of Salamanca, was an internationally known author and scholar, Spain's outstanding liberal, and one of the founders of the Spanish Republic.

**PÍO BAROJA** is the most distinguished novelist of contemporary Spain and one of Spain's outstanding radical thinkers.

## NICETO ALCALÁ ZAMORA

### THE BEGINNINGS OF THE POPULAR FRONT

In addressing for the first time the readers of the *Journal de Genève*, to whom I wish to extend my thanks and my cordial greetings, I well know the subject which they would have me discuss. Let it be understood, however, that I am avoiding discussion at the present time, due to the foolish inexperience of my sons, induced by the evil passions of the Leftists to plunge themselves into the furnace of the civil war. The Valencia government has thus provided itself against me with contraband arms; it has taken from me hostages beyond all price. By a supreme effort, my aching heart has finally recovered the fullness of its freedom. Not that of thought alone, but also that of writing and of action; action faithful to my convictions as a patriotic republican.

The first seven weeks of the Popular Front, the Azaña Cabinet of February 19 to April 7 of 1936, were the last of my presidency. During that period, one of the branches of the government, that over which I held control, still eluded the Popular Front. During the hundred days which followed, and which preceded the civil war, the onrush of anarchy found no more obstacles.

The strategy of the Popular Front revealed itself as double. In the Cortes its boldness was without restraint; in the Cabinet it remained weak, but intriguing.

The Popular Front rose to power on the 16th of February by means of an electoral procedure as absurd as it was unjust, one which grants to the relative majority, though it may be an absolute minority, an extraordinary preference. It was thus that in any district, the Popular Front, even though it had 30,000 less votes than the opposition, could nevertheless win ten out of thirteen seats, without having anywhere more than 2% more votes than the party which came next. This paradox was quite frequent.

It was believed at first that the Popular Front had been defeated. But five hours after the arrival of the first returns, it was clear that the Anarchists, so numerous, who up to that time had refrained from voting, had voted solidly. They wished to show their power, and

to demand the reward for their aid: the peace, and perhaps the very existence of the nation.

In spite of the aid of the Syndicalists, the Popular Front did not obtain legally more than slightly over 200 seats in a parliament of 473 deputies. It became the most important minority, but it did not have an absolute majority. It succeeded in obtaining it, however, by two quick moves.

First, from the 17th of February, as a matter of fact from the evening of the 16th, the Popular Front, without waiting for the completion of the counting of the votes, and the announcement of the results, which was to take place before the provincial committees of verification on the 20th, unleashed a campaign of disorder in the streets and clamored for power through violence. There was a crisis; many governors resigned. At the instigation of irresponsible ringleaders, the mobs took possession of the electoral certificates, and in many places the results were falsified.

Second, having thus obtained a majority, it was easy to make it a crushing one. Strengthened by a bizarre alliance with the reactionary Basques, the Popular Front appointed a committee in charge of the validation of parliamentary credentials, which acted in a purely arbitrary manner. All the election certificates of certain provinces in which the Right was victorious were annulled, and defeated candidates of the Left were declared elected. Many other deputies of the Right were expelled from Parliament. This whole procedure was not merely the blind passion of sectarian politics; it was the execution of a deliberate and widespread plan. Two ends were in view: to make of Parliament a Convention (after the manner of the French Revolution); to crush the opposition, and to hold in check the more moderate element of the Popular Front. From the moment the Leftist majority could get along without it, this element became the plaything of the worst folly.

It was thus that the Cortes planned two parliamentary coups d'état. First, they declared themselves indissoluble for the remainder of the presidential term; second, they removed me from office. The last obstacle had been swept aside from the path of anarchy and all the violence of the civil war.

The Government allowed the mobs, the tools of agitators, to establish a dictatorship of the streets, as well as over the Govern-

ment itself. The official press itself declared, in a roundabout way which did not save its face in the least, that it was acting under pressure from the street. The Ministers thought that they were screening themselves behind a Draconian censorship. They even thought they could hide the truth from me. In vain. I reminded the Government of its role, of its duty.

Anxiety was increasing. Panic seized the stock exchange. Capital was withdrawn. The Cabinet finally decided to take some action. Towards the end of March it recalled the Governors of the provinces of Cádiz, Murcia, Granada, and Logroño, officials who had supinely allowed the burning of churches, private homes, political centers, and workshops before the eyes of a powerless and insensible public. Deplorable diplomatic incidents had taken place besides in Cádiz. At Logroño there had been a bloody and dangerous clash with the sentries of the artillery barracks. I lost all hope when I saw that the decrees recalling the four Governors had been drawn up with extraordinary deference towards those guilty; the Government was accepting resignations which had not been presented. I sent the decrees back to the Cabinet; the dry and point-blank prescription of an exemplary recall should at least have stimulated its energy. But it persisted in its feebleness. It admitted that the four Governors were guilty, but it did not wish to hurt the feelings of the Popular Front.

The régime was one of parliamentarism gone mad. And I had to submit to this Government, an emanation from the Cortes, the dissolution of which was so strictly limited by the Constitution.

These facts prove it: Parliament was bold, the Cabinet powerless; the essential trait of an exaggerated parliamentarism. The gravity of the situation lay in the fact that the régime was drifting towards an Anarchist demagogy. The extremists of the Popular Front, who ruled the streets, knew well how to get along without the Cabinet. The latter was nothing but a docile tool, the plaything of irresponsible power.

Niceto Alcalá Zamora

Former President of the Spanish Republic

**Journal de Genève**, Geneva; January 17, 1937.

## THE CORTES AND THE CABINET AGAINST A PRESIDENT

The first few weeks of a government that was powerless, the preliminary sessions of a parliament that knew no restraint; all this was sufficient to make me lose all hope. The two branches of government with which a constitution shackled to the whims of Parliament forced me to cooperate, and which I was powerless to change, had no sense of reality nor the slightest conception of their duty.

All I could do was to resort to the exercise of my prerogatives: first, to check beforehand as far as possible the anticipated excesses of the Cortes; second, to give advice to the Ministers, a thing which was useless, for they were no longer consulted; third, to indicate to the Government that I could no longer approve their revolutionary and unconstitutional decrees; fourth, to call upon the voters, as a last resort, by dissolving the Cortes (a procedure now rendered difficult by the obstacles just placed in its way by the Cortes itself).

However, the Popular Front, impatient, had decided to put an illegal end to my term, which was not supposed to expire, according to the Constitution, until December 11, 1937.

What did the Popular Front seek by my dismissal? The different factions in it all had different ideas, but they were of one accord on the method; I had to be eliminated.

The right wing of the Popular Front sought absolute power. The certainty of never relinquishing it led it to satisfy its material greed by placing all its leading lights in prominent posts; posts for which in most cases they were not in the least qualified, either in experience or in ability.

The extremist workers' organizations wanted a social revolution. They wanted to overthrow the constitutionally established government by means of one manoeuvre: new municipal elections. These were postponed upon my counsel. It was clear that I would not tolerate such an irregularity. To remove all hopes of this sort, I pronounced a solemn warning at the Cabinet meetings on the 2nd of April, undisturbed by the threat of an imminent assault by the street mobs.

Sr. Azaña was obsessed with one impelling desire: to be the chief

of the State. He knew that if he had to wait until December of 1937, he would lose all his chances of becoming President of Republic; public opinion was subject to very fickle changes. A swing to the Right was already evident and seemed assured for the future; the people were reacting against the excesses of the Popular Front. It was a fact beyond dispute that the régime could not be consolidated unless the first presidential term came to a normal end. That was a vital necessity.

Did Azaña expect to be the saviour of Spain and of the Republic in assuming a position the authority of which he himself had so violently shaken? The events that followed have shown that his election was an unprecedented catastrophe. One can, however, concede him one attenuating circumstance: the high esteem which his intelligence inspires in the minds of his numerous admirers.

What methods did Azaña employ in order to bring about my resignation?

He thought at first that he could force me to resign, and exhausted upon me the most revolting and the most unheard of types of provocation and threat.

Censorship had been imposed, censorship in the most effective, stringent, and insolent form which Spain has ever known. Nevertheless, in order to add strength to its attacks, the Government permitted and inspired threats of impeachment in the official press, and falsely attributed to me the declared intention that I would resign, ascribing to me statements as injurious as they were irreconcilable with the dignity of the Presidency.

In the province of Jaén, which I had always represented as a deputy, the mobs were stirred up against my family. Several of them were arrested; they were paraded in certain cities—a sad example of anarchy. When the innocence of my nephews had been vouched for by the Governor, they were advised to go into voluntary exile, since the authorities were no longer able to protect their lives.

I resisted still. These revolting methods did not shake my convictions in the least. Elected to the Presidency without having solicited it, I understood all the dangers of the situation, dangers in

which civil war was brewing. This war I sought to prevent, and I could not endure that it be attributed to my weakness.

On April 17, Sr. Martínez Barrios, the President of the Cortes, having come to an understanding with Sr. Azaña, still Premier, was the first to advise me to resign. He brought to my attention a danger: the mobs were in control of the streets, and they might invade my home. For I was living there still, a president in the Swiss manner, without armed guards, like an ordinary citizen with my family.

I flatly refused to resign. Threats and provocations were in vain. The Cortes decided to remove me from office.

Niceto Alcalá Zamora

Former President of the Spanish Republic.

*Journal de Genève*, Geneva; February 13, 1937.

#### HOW I WAS REMOVED FROM OFFICE

In its preliminary sessions, during the validating of parliamentary credentials, the Cortes had been practically converted into a National Convention. As soon as it had definitely convened, it decided to dismiss me by means of a coup d'état. To begin with, the Cortes of its own authority considered and settled a matter which exceeded its powers and hinted of the future: it declared itself indissoluble during my presidential term. This precaution was taken in order to prevent me from dissolving the Cortes before the next session, which was set for April 7. This precaution was inadequate from a legal point of view; the Cortes had no right to make itself the judge of my prerogatives towards it. My presidential acts were subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and not to the vote of the nation. The precaution was rather useless anyway; far from limiting my course of action, it furnished me, in case I had wished to ignore it and defend my rights, the plea of provocation, of a coup d'état, against which I could act accordingly.

However, I had decided not to use such means, even to defend my rights. I did not wish to be the cause of a civil war, nor did I want my country to believe that I was acting in the interest of per-

sonal ambition. I sacrificed my own rights in order to assure peace. I accepted this injustice, and submitted to the Cortes.

The Cortes, however, had not received the resignation which Martínez Barrios, in connivance with Sr. Azaña, had asked me to present. Thereupon the majority decided to remove me from office. Invoking Article 81 of the Constitution, Parliament punished me for having dissolved the Cortes, its Rightist predecessor. In other words, the Leftists, exhibiting an unbelievable absurdity, declared unnecessary the dissolution, which I had ordered at their demand, and to which they owed their power.

The dissolution had been, moreover, definitely approved by the nation, since it had just elected a Cortes entirely different from the one preceding. The Radical Party, which formerly had a hundred deputies, found itself reduced to six seats. The Republican Left increased from 10 to 125 deputies; the Catalan Lliga gave way before the Esquerra. The Socialists nearly doubled their seats; from 60 they rose to 115; the Communists rose from 1 to 15. And yet the Leftists condemned the dissolution, while avowing cynically in their resolution that this censure had only one purpose: to remove me from the Presidency of the Republic.

One wonders why the Cortes sought such tortuous and contradictory paths, instead of taking the legal highway of the Supreme Court (Article 85 of the Constitution). They would have been able to impeach me directly and openly, as Article 82 of the Constitution gave them the right. But there did not exist sufficient charges against me as President. If the Leftists had appealed to the Supreme Court, which was still independent, they would have run the risk of seeing themselves automatically overruled and dissolved without presidential decree, as was provided by Article 85 of the Constitution.

Still other considerations influenced their arbitrary conduct. In order to impeach me in the Cortes, it would have been necessary to bring together a quorum of three-fifths of the total membership, while a simple majority was sufficient for a dismissal in consequence of a censure. The Cortes finally decided to conduct the voting orally, thus exerting a pressure of publicity upon consciences which could have otherwise rebelled against such a crying injustice.

In order to fully appreciate the meaning of this vote of April 7, which removed me from the Presidency, one should consult the stenographic record of the speeches, and in particular that of the Syndicalist Pabón. This deputy, as cynical as he was truthful, declared that the vote of the majority, to which he would adhere, brutally violated the law. But he added, not without logic, that it was precisely the duty of an Anarchist deputy to destroy the strength and the very existence of laws, beginning with the Constitution itself.

To me, this removal was only slightly disturbing. But as for the Republic, the Constitution, and Spain itself? The civil war shall answer for that.

Niceto Alcalá Zamora

Former President of the Spanish Republic

*Journal de Genève*, Geneva; March 9, 1937.

## ALEJANDRO LERROUX

### THE TRAGIC DESTINY OF THE SPANISH REPUBLIC

The tenseness of the situation in Spain was becoming intolerable. The time had come when either the Communists and their allies or the conservative forces of the country would have to take the initiative, for such a situation could not last.

Since the illusory electoral triumph gained in February by the Popular Front, Spain was the scene of the most criminal violence, for which no one was punished. In Madrid, assassinations and arson were common, even in open daylight. Not only did the Government fail to exercise the slightest repression, but the most elementary measures of precaution were disregarded.

• • •

On the 13th of July, Calvo Sotelo was assassinated. The next day I was informed that the army had organized a conspiracy. I did not believe it. On the morning of the 16th, my informer confirmed the news to me in a more precise manner, advising me not to stay in Madrid any longer. If he did not succeed in convincing me, he nevertheless impressed me, and I decided to make preparations for one of my customary short trips to some seaside resort. At nightfall, another friend brought me exact details of the conspiracy; as he asked for the greatest secrecy, I did not doubt for a moment more. My wife was informed immediately, and we decided to leave Madrid, convinced that the uprising of which we were informed would not fail to triumph in two or three days.

• • •

My intention was to stay at San Rafael for a few days before leaving for Portugal. But after a family consultation it was decided that I should leave the next day. Early in the morning on the 17th, I started out with the inspector and my chauffeur, who had been with me for 26 years.

• • •

On the 19th, the Portuguese press reported briefly that a military revolt was understood to have been launched in the Spanish zone

of Morocco. And soon we began to hear of the first fighting; I speak of the battle of Alto de León, in the Sierra de Guadarrama, a mile and a half from my country home . . .

The evening of the 11th of August, a taxi stopped in front of the door of my hotel, and my family stepped out, sparingly dressed, without any baggage; only a few packages wrapped in handkerchiefs or newspapers, like a tribe of fugitive gypsies. Fatigue and sorrow were drawn upon their countenances.

. . .

And still, not all of my family are safe. There are some from whom I have had no news since the outbreak of the revolution. As for my friends, I tremble to think of them. Of some there is authentic news. It is known with certainty that Salazar Alonso was "tried" and condemned to death by one of those mock tribunals, formed in large part by unworthy professionals who have remained out of cowardice in the service of the Reds, and in part by common people without qualification or responsibility. No one was there to defend him; Barriobero and Botella-Asensi refused to aid him. He defended himself, like the brave man that he was, and his defense was splendid . . .

. . .

Numerous are those of whom there is no news, and of whom I am afraid to receive it. The persecution of the Radical Party has been merciless. In the province of Valencia not only have all the Radical deputies been assassinated, but in certain villages all the members of the Radical Party have been exterminated. In Malaga and Alicante there has been a veritable hunt of Radicals. The bloody contribution of the Spanish Radical Party has far surpassed that of the Church and perhaps that of the Civil Guard, so savagely sacrificed.

. . .

I hardly recognize myself. Each man is a world. Mine is in ruins, like my country; sombre, sad, and deceived, like the Republic. I am undergoing a profound spiritual crisis, and in spite of myself, I am revising all that up to now has constituted my faith, the substance of my political conviction.

My soul has not changed. It nourishes as ever two unextinguishable loves, my country and the Republic. But I have begun to reflect on them, and I ask myself if the country and the Republic are well represented, if the nation has been well served by governments which have not succeeded in raising the moral and intellectual condition of the individual, in technically organizing production, in distributing it equitably, in suppressing the division of society into antagonistic classes, in making misery and strikes disappear . . . I ask whether it will not be necessary to destroy the present state in order to renovate it completely, or whether it will suffice to open a parenthesis and suspend the intervention of the many in the management of public affairs; to restrain individual liberties in order to subordinate them to the supreme interest of the nation, and to concentrate all the powers of a people, who refuse to sink into anarchy or perish in impotence, in the hands of one authority, a dictatorship, which would apply itself immediately to the task and would not close the parenthesis until after having succeeded in reestablishing material order, social tranquillity, the prestige of the law, the discipline of work without class struggle, justice without privilege . . .

Since the month of July, the problem has been decided for me without hesitation; for, not being able to side with those who are betraying a Republic bound hands and feet to anarchy, I had to be on the side of those who took up arms to fight them.

My age is known. I have consecrated more than fifty years to public life. Journalist, I have never written except in republican newspapers. Propagandist, never have I mounted a rostrum that was not republican. Political leader, I have had no other discipline than that of the republicans. Party chief, I have never mingled myself with forces other than republican. Parliamentary leader, my campaigns have always been republican, and I never let myself be seduced by the offers of participation emanating from the governments of the Monarchy. So that the Republic might triumph, I have labored more and asked less than anyone. And when it had triumphed, I did not claim any post, but accepted that which was offered me, one which permitted me to preside at Geneva over the League of Nations. I refused the Presidency of the Cabinet during the crisis of the Provisional Government. Elected to the Con-

stituent Cortes in seven districts, and having obtained the highest number of votes in Madrid, I presented the seats which I had won to other parties. Finally, I declined the offer that was made to me to declare my candidature for the Presidency of the Republic. My political life is an inflexibly straight line. I was eighteen years old when I began to write in the newspapers proclaiming my republican faith . . .

And all my work of voluntary sacrifice, marked throughout the length of my life by persecutions, trials, imprisonments, and exiles, was to be rendered sterile at the moment when the revolution would supervene. Because for me, the Republic is the nation, the people, democracy, liberty, justice, peace, order, fertile labor; social, moral, and political progress under the authority of a respected, stable, and firm executive power.

But at one stroke everything gives way; there is no parliament, no democracy, no liberty, no justice, no order, no peace. Then what is left of the Republic? And the nation? For the nation cannot be this savage horde that robs, pillages, and assassinatees under the pretext of social equality; nor this band of elementary intellectuals who direct it, and who, preferring that the work of twenty centuries of civilization be reduced to nothingness, do not have the heroism to perish with it, nor the greatness nor the nobility to assume their responsibilities. Before resorting to flight, sure of impunity, they pillage the national treasury and sack private property, leaving behind them as prey for gunfire and fodder for the cannon a miserable herd, which will have to pay with its own blood.

Against all this, is there anything else to do but "cast a veil over the statue of liberty" and accept the dictatorship?

More than half a century consecrated to the service of the same ideal. To have risked many times my life, and many times my liberty, to defend it.

Must I renounce this creed? I do not think that a more painful and more tragic question was ever asked of the Sphinx of Thebes . . .

No, I do not renounce this creed! From the examination of conscience to which I have subjected myself, I have emerged comforted with a new conviction: that the dictatorship can be the

salvation of the country and the Republic. It is in this spirit that I henceforth direct my conduct.

I therefore declare: we are not witnessing a military rebellion. The army has not broken its discipline; it is trying to reestablish a discipline which antipatriotic treason and criminal anarchy have destroyed; it has not rebelled against the law, but to uphold the law, because law and authority require it; not against the people, but for the salvation of the people. We are not concerned in the slightest with merely another military pronunciamiento, but with a national uprising as sacred and legitimate as that of the Independence in 1808. It is even more sacred, for here it is not only a matter of political independence, but also of social and economic organization, of the home, of property, of culture, of conscience, of life; in short, of all the civilization of an entire history.

When the army rose in arms, it was already identified with the people, and the people placed themselves deliberately on its side, without distinction of class or ideology. The people and the army have mingled their blood from the first day, and that blood has sealed a pact of sacrifice and of abnegation on the altar of the nation.

The intervention of foreign elements and international revolutionary organizations on the side of the social revolution justifies the national and nationalistic character of this uprising. Spain is in danger. The nation which enlarged the limits of the earth, which populated a continent, and which has lighted a constellation of nations guaranteeing the rejuvenation of humanity—this nation is in danger. To hesitate to come to its aid is to renounce one's quality as a Spaniard and to commit the offense of treason.

One does not hesitate in the face of danger. One acts or obeys. Only one leader, and in his hands all power, all resources, all assistance.

We, the old guard, and I the first of them, behind. In front, the mind that directs and the youth that acts.

Youth in the vanguard, bearing arms; energy and voluntary obedience in its heart; in its soul the law, in its mind the nation.

And I? I shall continue here; until when, I know not. Giving to the Nationalist cause the negative service of not disturbing it.

I do not belong in the least to that legion of political "caciques" who are reborn or resurrected in whatever sun is the warmer. Nor am I one of those who place themselves in the path of the conqueror to solicit a reward or a simple smile of promise. That which I have been, I have won on my feet, not on my knees; with dignity, not with base force. The hour of repose will have already tolled for me.

Alejandro Lerroux

**L'Illustration**, Paris; January 30, 1937.

## GREGORIO MARAÑÓN

### THE PAINFUL CONFESSION OF GREGORIO MARAÑÓN FOUNDER OF THE SPANISH REPUBLIC INTERVIEWED IN PARIS BY LOUIS ROUBAUD

The biologist Gregorio Marañón, President of the Academy of Medicine of Madrid, is famous not only for his discoveries and studies on the endocrine glands (his **Problem of the Sexes**, published in several languages . . . , has given him a reputation as a scientific thinker and essayist); he is not satisfied merely to probe the secrets of life in the laboratory, but also participates in all human and social affairs. Gregorio Marañón, deputy in the Cortes, was one of the founders of the Republic. He was the originator and the sponsor of the law which gave the women of his country the right to vote.

• • •

"The truth? It is an act of contrition.

"Yes, I was deceived. I was mistaken. Outside of a few people who favor the Communists, all the intellectuals of Spain speak with me, think as I do, have had to flee for their lives as I did from Loyalist Spain.

"As a scientist I am forced to recognize my error.

"It was our fault. The revolution was of our own making. We asked for it; we prepared it; it sprang from our strongest reactions against the outrages to which freedom of thought had been subjected. The execution of Ferrer filled me with indignation. The Monarchy delivered its own death-blow with the execution of Ferrer. From the blood of another martyr, the journalist Sirval, assassinated in prison during the bloody conflict in Asturias, the Popular Front two years later was to draw strength for its propaganda.

"Of course we were already, because of our intellectual standing, the representatives of progress against the old historic Spain, but Ferrer and Sirval furnished us with the decisive sentimental argument which turned our judgment.

"What has happened since then? You know. I know even better; I saw it. 30,000 Ferrers, guilty of freedom of thought, were shot without trial. 5,000 Sirvals were murdered in jail with hand-grenades.

"Every day they are killing thousands of men and women, simply because they are suspected of having independent opinions.

"In me, these acts produce the same reactions. I did not wait for such murders to sever my connections with stupid assassins, savage fanatics, who hate all science and intelligence.

"When Calvo Sotelo was assassinated, with the consent and the knowledge of all, by three police captains, I wrote to my friend

"I am through . . . forever!"

Marcelino Domingo, one of the leaders of the Popular Front:

"From then on I knew that I was in danger. One morning I read in Largo Caballero's newspaper enormous headlines that read:

"If you want to know who Gregorio Marañón is, look for him in the lists of the Fascists."

"It was a death sentence.

"As a matter of fact, this official sheet publishes its orders of execution in this form. And the assassins, quickly aroused, rival each other in promptness and zeal.

"All those whom I saw thus designated were assassinated a few hours after the edition appeared.

"Fortunately, since the Government had left Madrid, I was able to take advantage of a moment of confusion. I found refuge in the Polish Embassy. The details of my flight are of little interest.

"You can well appreciate the bitter irony of the whole situation when I tell you that the same Largo Caballero who was now condemning to death the former prisoner of Primo de Rivera had occupied, under the Military Dictatorship, while I was in a prison cell, a highly paid position in the Council of State."

Professor Gregorio Marañón speaks with sadness. The writer wishes to know whether his criticism is purely negative, or whether his abhorrence of the revolutionaries carried him over to the side of the Nationalists.

"The present situation does not allow a neutral stand," he answers. The die is cast. The victory of Franco is certain. And it will fulfill all my hopes. In any case, the two régimes cannot be compared. The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, under which I suffered both in body and in person, was a benevolent dictatorship compared to the Red tyranny. Those intellectuals who were lucky

enough to be in the territory controlled by the Nationalists were neither threatened with death nor forced into exile.

"See it for yourself. In all the hotels of Paris and the other great cities of France, you will find Spanish politicians who fled from their country. They all fled from Red Spain. Not one of them found it necessary to flee from Nationalist Spain."

The illustrious savant concludes with energy: "Only one thing matters; that Spain, Europe, and the human race rid themselves of a reign of blood, an institution of murder, the advent of which we now accuse ourselves of having prepared, through a tragic blindness."

• • •

This is the opinion of one of the outstanding figures of modern Spanish culture on the most painful and tragic of conflicts, and he assured me that he spoke not only in his own name, but also in the name of the great majority of the intellectuals of Spain.

Louis Roubaud

Paris

February 21, 1937

**El Comercio**, Lima, Peru; March 19, 1937.

## MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO

### LETTER TO A BELGIAN SOCIALIST

Salamanca,  
August 10, 1936.

My dear friend:

I hope that you will not be offended by my still calling you "My dear friend", even though it seems that many things separate us. I am informed today in a letter from Belgium that you censure very severely my attitude with regard to certain events now taking place. Yesterday I was with the Republican Government, and now I am no longer. Could it be this, perhaps, that saddens you? How clearly I understand that you may have an opinion different from mine on these things! There is nothing I love so much as freedom of thought.

If in spite of all this I call you "dear friend", it is because I suppose that you believe, as I do, that friendship between two men should be above political contingencies. We have not met very often, but often enough to know each other a little. A mutual friend tells me that you enjoy considerable prestige in your country. Knowing you to be modest, I do not doubt that your merits are what have advanced you. This is what I esteem in you, and little do I care about the opinions you may hold regarding men and things.

In your last letter, of some two years ago, you wrote: "My dear Unamuno". At that time we both thought in the same way; we were both very much of the Left. And I still am very much of the Left; be assured of that. And you are not? It is a pity; I assure you that I am very sorry.

Today, as yesterday, I believe that the well-being of the people can be secured only by profound reforms. But it is necessary to ascertain who is capable of effecting these reforms, that is to say, capable of truly effecting them, for the good of the common weal. Those whom I followed in the beginning have not succeeded. I had hoped to aid them by helping in the elaboration of their doctrines. I came to acquire, as you know, the reputation of being a great thinker, of which reputation I do not (in confidence) feel proud.

All these efforts were in vain. And it is this that has decided me

to join myself with those whom I had not ceased fighting up to now. Could it be inconstancy on my part?

Perhaps one could pick out many faults which I really have, but I maintain that this one, inconstancy, would never forgive my having betrayed the spiritual friendship, so to speak, which unites us, and this is the real reason why I continue to call you very sincerely "My dear friend". I am certain that upon reading this letter you will see it proved once again that two hearts can continue beating in unison even when the minds have ceased to be in accord.

Perhaps this statement about two hearts may make you smile. But we Spaniards, even under the austere gown of the professor or the savant, remain men of feeling. We do not know what it is to be one of those calloused individuals who suppress their feelings, and we retain within ourselves a reserve of emotion which at times can draw forth tears. Yes, I wish to confess it; I have wept.

I have wept, because a great tragedy has overtaken my country. Spain is becoming red, and blood is flowing; and do you know what this means? It means that in every Spanish home there dwells pain and anguish. And I, who believed that I was working for the good of my people, I too bear responsibility for this catastrophe. I was one of those who wanted to save mankind without knowing man.

I do not doubt that there were many who were eager to spread this news. "Unamuno has betrayed us. He has repudiated ignominiously the sovereign concept of Marxist democracy out of opportunism or simply out of fear."

No, do not allow this legend to propagate. I know that I have been discussed in the newspapers of your land, and judged very severely in some of them. They are within their rights. But I too have the right to seek truth and welfare. I do not blush when I have to confess that I have been mistaken, and what I regret is having deceived so many others. This is what should be said, and if that were a humiliation, I would accept it, as doubtless you would also.

I am telling you all this because I consider it a duty. I know that when I address myself to you I am speaking to a man of sincerity and good will. I am not asking you to publish this message, which will reach you with difficulty through Valladolid and Pamplona.

When it arrives at its destination, this terrible war will have perhaps found its outcome. It will be a lesson which will not be forgotten for many generations.

I do not say this because I may have come to alter by habits. No, I have suffered neither in person nor in property. Fortune is often unjust. I see around me an immense grief for which I am responsible. People are dying, suffering, seeing their fortunes crumble or their modest savings disappear. Nothing like this has happened to me. In the eyes of those who cannot scrutinize my soul, I am a man of privilege. And perhaps you, my dear friend, may conclude that if I have changed sides, it was above all to save myself from certain dangers. Do not believe it.

History had shown me the image of a great and splendid Spain. I felt the grief of its decadence. I thought that it was necessary to invoke Marxist democracy to raise it. I thought that an ancient tradition of Christian civilization could be substituted with impunity and even with profit by the dogma of the most "progressive" materialism. I fought for this reform. I knew prison and exile. But I wanted to go through to the end. One day I greeted joyfully the advent of the Spanish Republic. It was the dawn of a new era. Spain was going to live again! But Spain has been close to death.

In a very short time Marxism succeeded in dividing the citizens. I have seen what the class struggle is; a reign of hatred and of envy which the worst passions unleash. We have known a period of pillage and murder. Our civilization was going to be destroyed.

You can probably understand the irresistible impulse which today is driving the Spanish people to expel those who have deceived them. This impulse grows between blood and suffering. What will become of it tomorrow, next month?

Here it is you whom I address, you, who are still with "them". I do not wish to doubt your good faith. But will you not perhaps feel remorseful the day when the homes of your country will be in flames, when the sons of your land will kill one another, and all because you had sown hatred in their hearts?

Miguel de Unamuno

**La Esfera**, Caracas, Venezuela; January 3, 1937.

## PÍO BAROJA

### THOSE WHO ARE TO BLAME FOR THE SPANISH TRAGEDY

Whoever observes Spanish life will be able to see that the present disasters now overtaking the country have their origin in certain types of ambitious people—orators, professors, and mediocre journalists—who, taking advantage of the movements of the era, have brought about, in collaboration with a deluded portion of the people, a movement which they have not been able to direct and which has failed within their own hands.

In five years of Republican rule all these vain and inept pedants have been haphazardly tinkering with Spain until they have plunged her into her present wretched condition.

And the most curious fact is that these stupid, cowardly, and untalented people have decided that they are not in the least responsible for this condition. As the Spaniard believes in words and hollow phrases, and he has been told that his Republican and Socialist rulers have been flawless, he has begun to wonder who could be responsible for the present disaster. He is already finding them; always, however, making exceptions of the exalted figures of his chiefs. And these remain, for a few poor fools, in the pantheon of heroes.

The Leftists can give us many, though more or less vague, explanations for their political failures.

The bourgeois liberalism of the 19th century, according to them, has been one of the causes. Culture, when it is slightly above average, is a detriment to the Socialists. The last century should have paid no attention to eminent men like Nietzsche or Pasteur, but rather it should have thought about the proletariat, and nursed it and tended it. But why? Nobody can state definitely the amount and type of culture necessary to satisfy human needs; it is quite possible that in any era of history the people living in it may be convinced that what they consider necessary is sufficient.

We also hear Socialists speak, with pedantry and self-confidence, of the fact that we should not allow ourselves to be influenced by sentimentality, whereas their whole theory is nothing more than the result of a common and vulgar emotionalism. The most complete

manifestation of that sentimentality in Republican Spain has been wrapped up in legal formulae. The word "rights" has charmed the people. People have talked about the right to live, the right to die, the rights of children, the rights of old men, the right not to be bitten by fleas. People have not talked about the right to stupidity, although that is what has mostly been put into practice. The minds of the people have been fed on this juridical rubbish. The majority do not seem to care whether these rights are realized or not; all they want to do is talk about them.

• •

To criticize all the anomalies and stupidities of Socialism in practice is considered pernicious and an evidence of misplaced liberalism. According to the disciples of Lenin, liberalism has failed. I believe that liberalism has failed among the stupid. It is naturally easier to follow the doctrines of a Socialist catechism than to comprehend the Critique of Pure Reason. It is easier to affirm than to reason and think.

One of the hatreds of Marxist journalists is that ghost generation which is called in Spain the "generation of '98". It is something which, were it not so petty, would be laughable. In the first place, there is no "generation of '98". There never has been one. And even if there were one, it has certainly never distinguished itself in public life. We writers alluded to when that generation is mentioned have never intervened in politics, nor have we ever been able to have any influence on the public, who have scarcely read our books.

The other day I heard some remarks unfavorable to the "generation of '98" uttered by several young men, almost all of them with good salaries, in the Spanish Embassy in Paris. I pointed out that all their arguments were false, that they were defending deceivers and wire-pullers in order to attack us writers, who were not in the least responsible for the march of events. I, for my part, have never received any money from the state; salary, commissions, or paid travel. I have lived in a retired manner; but that makes no difference to those well-paid young men in the Embassy.

For those parasites it is nobler to be paid than not; to keep away from danger when trouble arises is very natural, very legitimate,

and very socialistic. At the present time, chiefs and minor chiefs are leaving Madrid to escape from danger. But they are not only leaving Madrid; they are leaving with salaries. Some go to embassies in which they are not wanted. Others are charged with tightening the bonds with the proletariat of other countries. "Azaña is fleeing to Barcelona too," they will say. All that is very fine. Why should they expose their precious lives? The other day I said to some people who had just arrived from Madrid, "You are certainly lucky in being able to escape from Madrid at a time like this."

"We have not escaped; we were sent on a mission."

"All the better; you have escaped with salaries."

To the Leftists this sort of thing seems perfectly all right. It would be another matter if any of them had written novels or works of history. Then they would deserve prison or shooting.

Thus it was that the Madrid newspaper "Claridad", a paper of solemn pedants, relating that I had been arrested in Navarre by Carlists, displayed a certain philanthropic and Socialistic regret that I was not shot.

From the conservative side, we writers enjoy a similar hostility, although not so intense. I have been accused of wanting to "Bolshevize" Spain and of working in favor of Communism. I, who have always been an opponent of Communism! But that does not seem to matter either. Accusations are always made of what is considered worst and most hateful. The fact that the majority of the old Spanish writers are hated indicates our neutrality. We sympathize neither with the Right nor with the Left.

At the present time independent people are not acceptable. One must be either a Fascist or a Communist. This lack of compromise, united to the plebeian and rancorous background of Spanish politicians, engenders hatred.

• • •

A few weeks ago there was talk in the Spanish Embassy in Paris that several of us who had taken refuge in the College of Spain in the University City should be thrown out into the street; I was the especial object of this consideration.

It seems that the first prize in the lottery is not enough. They want, in addition, the others to rot in jail or in the poorhouse. This, instead of being human, is wretched. These Socialists and Communists can concentrate within them the hatreds of all the sects . . .

In order to remove guilt from themselves and justify their complete failure, the Spanish Socialists have invented a series of fables, each one more absurd than the other. Among them is the guilt of the writers. According to them, we have given the Spanish people, especially the bourgeoisie, a sense of criticism and of disobedience; we have cultivated Anarchism, which has so angered the Socialists, and which at the present time is with them in the Government. These poor Socialists do not understand that a large part of their old, mediocre Utopian dreams are exploding against a majority of the Spanish people, who still have lucidity and a certain ironic sense of life.

We are not to blame for their having shown themselves to be so stupid, so vulgar, and so incompetent when in power.

We are not to blame for the fact that there have come into prominence among republicans and Socialists people devoted to graft, who have made fortunes and grabbed salaries and distinguished themselves by their illicit wire-pulling, and who, when they have displayed some talent, it has been to flee from danger, running away with state salaries to fill missions and embassies abroad.

Their argument is that if they lose, we all lose. This is not logical. The politician plays his game. If he wins, he is exalted; if he loses, he has to pay for it. They are trying to make it otherwise. If they win, they want to be exalted; but if they lose, they want to drag us all down with them.

Pío Baroja

Paris  
December, 1936

**La Esfera**, Caracas, Venezuela; January 3, 1937.

I do not know whether it is worth the trouble at this moment, when nothing is heard in Spain but the roar of cannon and the crackling of rifles and machine-guns, for a mere writer to give an explanation of his ideas, which, I see, are being inaccurately appraised.

I am not one who writes systematically. My thinking has always been directed towards seeing things as they are.

Months before the advent of the Republic it surprised me that the majority of the writers and professors of Madrid, Ortega y Gasset, Unamuno, Azorín, Marañón, etc., did not see that in the wake of the Republic there had to come an attempt at social revolution and Communism, in part directed from Moscow.

To me it was practically a mathematical fact. I often used to say to my friends, "If the bourgeois Republic comes, it will either have to shoot down the street mobs or ally itself with them."

And all those to whom I said this accused me of being a pessimist or a reactionary.

• • •

At the beginning, Marcelino Domingo, that pedantic school-teacher, promised that they were going to imitate Thiers and establish a conservative republic similar to that of France after the war of 1870. They themselves do not know what they have done. They have been merely dragged along by the waters of the stream, without knowing whither.

First it was necessary to establish a Constituent Cortes. All the politicians were anxious for the moment to arrive in which they might distinguish themselves and make a show of their oratory. The great oratorical contest ended in a ridiculous constitution, Spain's 13th. There was nothing in that constitution that could be carried out. The important thing was that everyone make a show of himself and give brilliant speeches, surrounded by stenographers, like Antonio Maura.

Parliamentarism has shown us nothing beyond the fact that it offers a good opportunity for climbers and ambitious people trying to make a name for themselves. After the great political and parliamentary struggle, matters went from bad to worse, and it was a

### AN EXPLANATION

common sight to see ministers, subsecretaries, and deputies putting on all kinds of airs and racing around in expensive automobiles with chorus-girls and maids in continuous orgies of amusement and dissipation.

These back-door playboys did not have the interest of the nation at heart, but their own success, and to attain that success in the eyes of the public, they seemed willing to do almost anything . . . In such an atmosphere of excitement is there any possibility of doing anything in earnest? Even the things people said were nonsensical. A Socialist councilman of Madrid assured us that prehistory is a reactionary science. He might just as well have said that geometry is communistic. And all this parliamentary clamor has been played up by the press, chiefly because the news-reports of the uproars taking place in Parliament are assets that require little expenditure.

• • •

The offices of the Agrarian Reform had three or four hundred salaried employees; and for each one of them there was a Ford automobile, "in order that he might tour Spain and study it first-hand." Marcelino Domingo never attended the meetings of the Agrarian Reform, for which he expressed so much affection in public. Perhaps he had to write his wonderful dramas in the Ministry.

All this false veneer and all this lying which, if not engendered by the Republic, has been given life by it, has plunged the people, believing it a great thing, into a life and death struggle . . . These fictions, nursed by a mediocre press, form a tumor which appears to be of great value to many of the people who believe that they are defending with it the civilization and the future of Spain.

It is to be hoped that this tumor, formed by lies, will be cut out as soon as possible by the sword of the army.

Pío Baroja

Paris

March, 1937

*La Esfera*, Caracas, Venezuela; April 8, 1937.





