

The Crime of Guernica



*"We refuse to condone
such atrocities by our silence"*

Ayuntamiento de Madrid

“It was not our militia who set fire to Guernica. If the oath of a Christian and a Basque Alcade has any value, I swear before God and history that German airplanes bombed viciously and cruelly our beloved town Guernica until they had wiped it off the earth.”

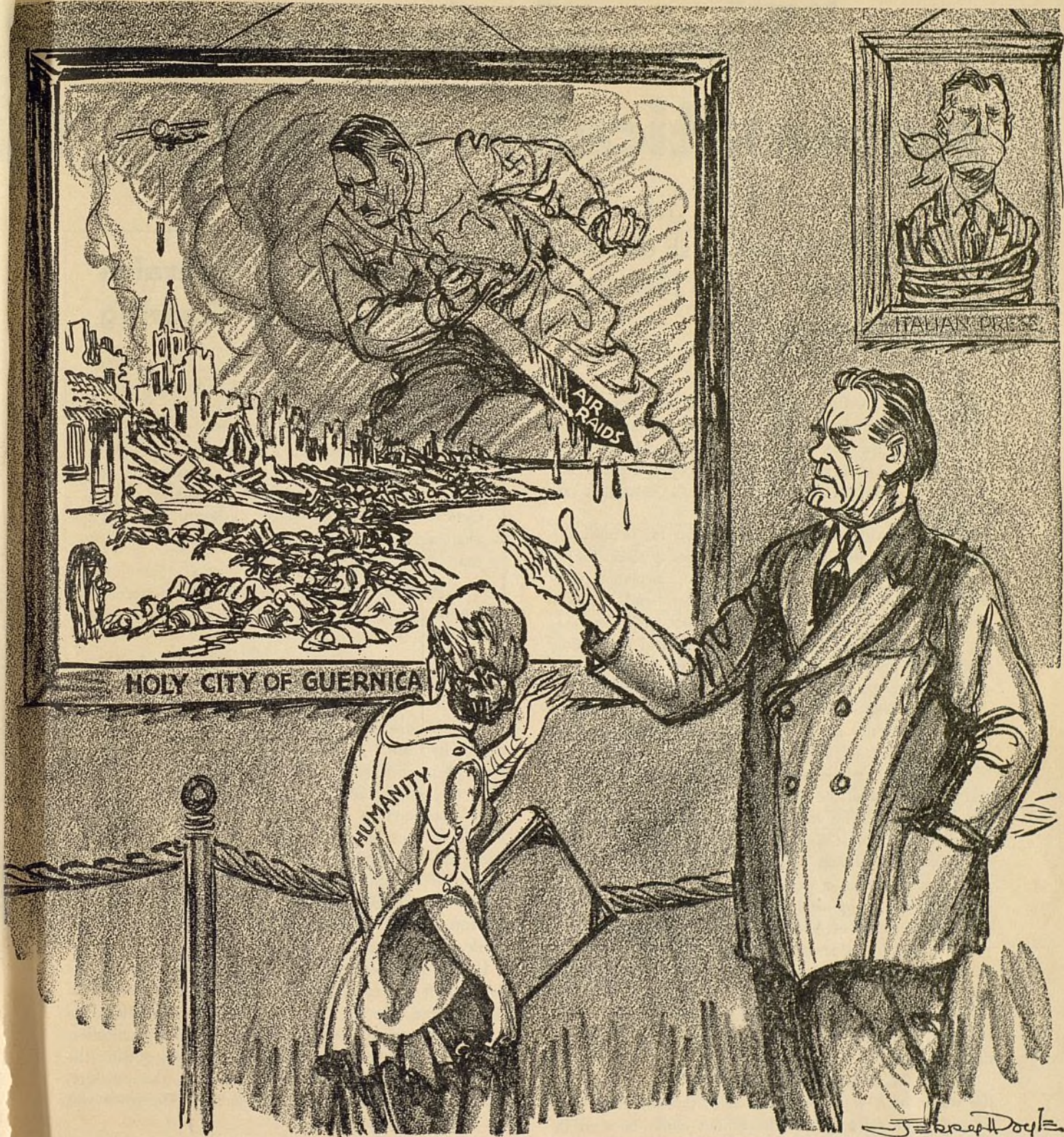
— *Rev. Father Eusebio de Arronategi,
Priest of the Church of Santa Maria in
Guernica, an eye-witness of the massacre.*

Cover: “Utter destruction of the Basque ‘Holy City’ of Guernica by Rebel bombers is shockingly brought home in this picture of one of the streets.” — Picture and caption by Acme.

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Ayuntamiento de Madrid



Jerry Doyle in *The New York Post*, May 11, 1937

"Here fascism presents to the world its masterpiece. It has hung upon the wall of civilization a painting that will never come down, never fade out of the memories of men . . ."

Senator William E. Borah.

"The whole town was slowly and systematically pounded to pieces . . ."

—From the first dispatch by G. L. Steer to The New York Times, April 28, 1937:

BILBAO, Spain, April 27.—Fire was completing today the destruction of Guernica, ancient town of the Basques and center of their cultural tradition, which was begun last evening by a terrible onslaught of General Francisco Franco's Insurgent air raiders.

The bombardment of this open town far behind the lines occupied precisely three and one-quarter hours. During that time a powerful fleet of airplanes, consisting of three German types—Junkers and Heinkel bombers and Heinkel fighters—did not cease unloading bombs weighing up to 1,000 pounds and two-pound aluminium incendiary projectiles. It is estimated that more than 3,000 of these projectiles were dropped.

Fighting planes meanwhile plunged low from above the center of the town to machine-gun those civilians who had taken refuge in the fields.

Virtually the whole of Guernica was soon in flames. An exception was the historic Casa de Juntas with its rich archives of the Basque people, where the ancient Basque Parliament used to sit. The famous Oak of Guernica, a dried old stump of 600 years with young new shoots of this century, was also untouched. Here the Kings of Spain used to take an oath to respect the democratic rights of Vizcaya and in return received a promise of allegiance as suzerains with the democratic title of Senor de Vizcaya, not Rey de Vizcaya. [Lord, not King, of the province.] The noble parish church of Santa Maria was likewise undamaged except for the beautiful chapter house, which was struck by an incendiary bomb.

At 2 A.M. today, when the writer visited the town, the whole of it was a horrible sight, flaming from end to end. The reflection of the flames could be seen in the clouds of smoke above the mountains from ten miles away. Throughout the night houses were falling, until the streets were long heaps of red, impenetrable ruins.

Many survivors took the long trek from Guernica to

Air Attack on Guernica Attributed to Goering

"Indications available here in well-informed quarters are to the effect that Colonel General Hermann Goering, the Germany Air Minister, took the initiative in ordering that Guernica be bombed and destroyed. He intended to give a practical demonstration of what air warfare can achieve and vindicate some of his strategical and tactical conceptions, which hitherto had been challenged at times by the general staff of the German Army."

—From a statement by "Pertinax," foreign editor of the conservative *Echo de Paris*, April 29, 1937.

Bilbao in antique, solid-wheeled Basque farm carts drawn by oxen. The carts, piled high with such household possessions as could be saved from the conflagration, clogged the roads all night long. Other survivors were evacuated in government trucks, but many were forced to remain round the burning town, lying on mattresses or searching for lost children and other relatives. Fire brigades and the Basque motorized police, under the personal direction of the Basque Minister of the Interior, Mr. Monzon, and his wife, continued rescue work until dawn.

In the form of its execution and the scale of the destruction it wrought, no less than in the selection of its objective, the raid on Guernica is unparalleled in military history. Guernica was not a military objective. A factory producing war material that lay outside the town was untouched. Two barracks on the outskirts containing small forces were untouched. The town was not near the lines.

Demoralization Held Aim

The object of the bombardment seemingly was demoralization of the civil population and destruction of the cradle of the Basque race. This appreciation is

borne out by the facts, beginning with the day when the deed was done.

Yesterday was the customary Monday market day in Guernica for the surrounding countryside. At 4:30 P.M. when the market was full and peasants were still coming in, church bells rang an alarm for approaching airplanes and the population sought refuge in cellars and dugouts prepared following the bombing of the civilian population of Durango on March 31, which had opened General Emilio Mola's Rebel offensive in the north. The people are said to have shown good spirit. A Catholic priest took charge and perfect order was maintained.

Five minutes later a single German bomber appeared, circled over the town at a low altitude, then dropped six heavy bombs, apparently aiming at the railroad station. Bombs and a shower of grenades fell on a former institute and the houses and streets surrounding it. The airplane then left.

Five minutes later came a second bomber, which threw the same number of bombs on the center of the town. About a quarter of an hour later three Junkers 52s arrived to continue the work of demolition, and from then on the bombing grew in intensity and was continuous, ceasing only at the approach of dusk at 7:45 P.M.

The whole town of 7,000 inhabitants plus 3,000 refugees was slowly and systematically pounded to pieces. For a radius of five miles around, the raiders bombed separate caserios, or farmhouses. In the night these burned like little candles in the hills.

Deaths Put in Hundreds

It is impossible to state the total number of victims. In the hospital of José Finas, one of the first places bombed, all the forty-two wounded militia men it sheltered were killed. In a street leading down the hill from the Casa de Juntas, the writer saw a place where fifty persons, almost all women and children, were said to have been trapped under a mass of burning wreckage. Many were killed in the fields, and altogether the deaths may total several hundreds.

The tactics of the bombers, which may be interesting to students of the new military science, were as follows:

First, small parties of airplanes threw heavy bombs and hand grenades all over the town, choosing area

Historic Basque Town Wiped Out; Rebel Fliers Machine-Gun Civilians
Waves of German-Type Planes Flung Thousands of Bombs and Incendiary Projectiles on Guernica, Behind Lines, as Priests Bless Peasants Filling Town on Market Day
N.Y. Times April 28th
BILBAO, Spain, April 27.—Fire leting today the destruction of Guernica, ancient town of the Basque people, where the ancient Basque Parliament used to sit. The famous Oak of Guernica, a dried old stump with new shoots
By G. L. STEER
Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES

after area in orderly fashion. Next came the fighting machines, which swooped to machine-gun those who had run in panic from the dug-outs, some of which already had been penetrated by the 1,000-pound bombs, which make a hole twenty-five feet deep. Many of these people were killed as they ran. A large herd of sheep being brought to the market was also wiped out. The object of this move apparently was to drive the population underground again, for next as many as twelve bombers appeared at a time, dropping heavy and incendiary bombs upon the ruins.

The rhythm of this bombing of an open town was therefore logical—first, hand grenades and heavy bombs to stampede the population, then machine-gunning to drive them below, next heavy incendiary bombs to wreck houses and burn them over the victims.

Priests Pray for Crowds

The only counter-measures the Basques could employ—for they did not possess sufficient airplanes to face the Insurgent fleet—were those provided by the heroism of the Basque clergy. The clergymen blessed and prayed for kneeling crowds—Socialists, Anarchists and Communists in addition to the declared faithful—in crumbling dug-outs.

Tonight the hospitals of José Finas and Convento de Santa Clara were glowing heaps of embers, all churches except Santa Maria were destroyed and the few houses that still stood were doomed.

All the villages around Guernica, particularly Arteaga, Cortezubi, Murelago, Arbacegui and Boliver were bombed with the same intensity, while a little group of houses at the head of Guernica that had taken in refugees was machine-gunned for fifteen minutes.

"... 14 nuns... were machine-gunned as they ran across a convent garden ..."

—From the dispatch of G. L. Steer in The New York Times of April 30, 1937:

BILBAO, Spain, April 29.—Denial from German and Insurgent sources on the bombing of Guernica, historic Basque city, have merely further inflamed opinion here. Today's Bilbao communiqué refers to the bombing of not only Guernica but also Durango, Eibar, Bolibar, Arbacegui, Arteaga and three or four other places between Mundaca Inlet and the Guipuzcoan front.

All except Eibar were non-military objectives and all were attacked by three types of German bombers, of which the Junkers Ju52 3/m and the Heinkel He51 are known to have been in action since last Summer while the fast, light bomber Heinkel He111 first appeared in Spanish skies early in April.

These bombings of civilian populations have been carried out in two periods corresponding with Insurgent General Emilio Mola's two separate offensives on the Basque front. The repeated bombings of Durango at the beginning of the month aimed at reducing the morale of the "rear guard" for the advance on Ochandiano. The bombings of the circle of villages just destroyed, of which Guernica was the most westerly, was meant to prepare the way for an infantry thrust toward Guernica from Mount Oiz, which, it is believed, the Insurgents were carrying out today, though with a small force.

Planes Fly Over Bilbao

All the time airplanes have flown over Bilbao, occasionally dropping bombs on the center of the city, but more often attacking the riverside and the village of Galdacano near the limit of the city's fortifications. In all these raids Junkers and Heinkel bombers circle at length over the population for the moral effect produced.

Today fifteen bombers flew over Bilbao, bombing sporadically, and Galdacano for the first time was attacked with the same incendiary bombs that had destroyed Guernica and Eibar.

For a half hour this afternoon Galdacano was under attack by twenty-two bombers and six pursuit planes. A few heavy bombs in addition to the numerous incen-

diary bombs were dropped. Many incendiary bombs did not explode. They were marked, like those that destroyed Guernica, with a German eagle and a 1936 mark of the Rheindorf factory. Because of the scattered nature of the village, which is strung out along a main road, only twelve houses were burned to the ground.

This military method has been associated regularly with another effort—an effort to modify the evil effect that it is bound to have on foreign opinion. This is the dissemination of false news and the unrestricted use of propaganda.

Thus, although Durango is full of bomb holes, all churches have holed roofs, every house in wide circles around the churches is shattered from attic to floor, the dead numbered 200 (including 14 nuns who were machine-gunned as they ran across a convent garden), and every wall is nicked with dozens of machine-gun bullets, it is blandly asserted that this is the work of a "Marxist mob," which does not exist in Viscaya Province.

Planes Called "Black Birds"

When Eibar was burned this was described by the Insurgents as the work of Asturian miners, who never have been quartered in the Eibar sector, and when Guernica was reduced to ashes they alleged that the fire had been started by the anarchist militia—aided presumably by the clergy, who led the hopeless work of rescue and with whom the writer talked. Their story was different, however, from that of the Insurgents, the authors of the damage having been referred to as "pajaros negros," or black birds, the current Spanish phrases for the great Junkers bombers the Spaniards know so well.

Denials published by Salamanca on the bombing of Guernica continue to fill the Bilbao press with indignation. The Basque government this afternoon published the following note on the subject:

"We are ready to receive all commissions, persons or institutions who desire to investigate on their own account the deeds that have been done in Basque territory. Our gates are open and for our part we wish to state our fervent wish that these proofs should be made as fully as possible in order that the world may know in all its details the act of utter savagery of which the Basque people has been the object in the destruction of its cities, and the active and direct part taken in it by certain European nations."

Francisco Denies 'Heroic Flyers' Razed Holy City

N.Y. Herald Tribune, April 30
Rebel General Says Basques
Burned Guernica, Then
Issued a 'Diabolical' Lie

Bids Press to Visit Ruins

No Planes in Flight on Day
of Disaster, He Asserts

By The United Press
SALAMANCA, Spain, April 29.—
Rebel General Francisco Franco to-
night invited foreign correspondents
to visit the "village . . ."

German Envoy Calls Guernica Attack Justified

N.Y. Herald Tribune, May 5
Non-Intervention Group
Split by Ribbentrop's
Defense of Destruction

Soviet Delegate Is Angry

Leftists and Fascists Take
Sides in the Exchange

Copyright, 1937, The United Press
LONDON, May 4.—Leftist-Fascist
enmity flared here late today when
Joachim von Ribbentrop, German
bassador to Great Brita-

Captured Nazi Admits Bombs Razed Guernica

N.Y. Herald Tribune, May 14
Flyer Downed by Basques
Enlisted at Berlin After
Non-Intervention Treaty

Says Bilbao Must Fall

Ordered to Shoot Everything
That Moved, He Relates

By James M. Minifie
By Wireless to the Herald Tribune
Copyright, 1937, New York Tribune Inc.
BILBAC, Spain, May 13.—A Nazi
Storm Trooper, who left Germany
to serve the Spanish rebel air force
more than a month after the inter-
national non-intervention agree-
ment was reached at London, was
captured by loyalists today when
his Heinkel chaser plane was shot
down near Larrabezua.

The flyer, Joachim Hans Wandel,
balled out of his flaming plane at
1,000 feet after a bullet from an
armored car had pierced his gasoline
tank. He landed well behind the
Basque lines with nothing more
than a bruised head. He was im-
mediately brought to Bilbao for of-
ficial questioning, after which the
correspondents interviewed him.

"Shoot Everything That Moves"
The German prisoner told the
correspondents frankly that he and
the other Rebel flyers had orders to
"shoot everything that moved" at
the front, and when asked to define
the front he said, "nearly to Bilbao."
He added that the Basque capital
undoubtedly would be bombed
"when they have to do so for mili-
tary reasons."

Among other things, Wandel ad-
mitted that Guernica, Basque "holy
city" northeast of Bilbao, had been
destroyed by bombing. [The Rebels
have denied that Guernica was razed
by bombing planes, most of them of
German make, as reported from all
other sources, and have contended
that the Basques themselves set it
afire when they abandoned the city.]
His own squadron, based at Vitoria,
Wandel said, comprised six Germans
and two Italians. He said there were
three similar squadrons there but he
did not know the total number of
planes. Their commanders were
Germans who had taken Spanish
nationality, he said, but he did not
know when.

Wandel said it was "great fun go-
ing after cars on the road"—a no-
tion which did not appeal very much
to the sense of humor of corre-
spondents who, willy-nilly, have to
"ride in those cars sometimes."

FRANCO SELF-EXPOSED

FRANCO'S DENIAL

"It can be proved at any time that the National (Rebel) aviation did not fly Monday over Guernica or elsewhere on the Basque front owing to the fog."—General Francisco Franco in *The New York Herald Tribune* of April 30, 1937.

FRANCO'S CONFESSION

"It would not have been surprising if Nationalist (Rebel) planes had marked Guernica as an objective. . . . It is possible a few bombs fell upon Guernica during the days when our airplanes were operating against objectives of military importance."—General Francisco Franco in *The New York Times* of May 4, 1937.

THE LONDON TIMES ON THE BOMBING OF GUERNICA

"Responsibility for the destruction of Guernica and of some hundreds of its civilian population has not yet been definitely brought home to any one. But the truth is beginning to emerge. In an official communique from Salamanca, published in *The Times* yesterday, Insurgent headquarters had noticeably shifted their ground.

"The communique dismissed the bombardment as 'a comparatively minor event,' but it did not repeat Franco's original assertions that, owing to rain and mist, no Nationalist aircraft left the ground on the northern front during the afternoon of the bombardment. It did repeat former denials that the town ever was bombarded at all;

but these can hardly have been meant to be taken seriously. . . .

"Moreover, it is now in fact admitted that bombers were in action 'intermittently over a period of three hours'; and this figure corresponds with the original account given by our special correspondent in Bilbao, which Berlin describes as a fabrication.

"Independent reports also established beyond doubt that the air-craft engaged in bombing and machine-gunning the defenseless inhabitants of Guernica were of German make and that several unexploded incendiary bombs had been recovered bearing the stamp of a German factory."—From *The London Times*, May 5, 1937.

"General Franco burned Guernica, and the Basques will never forget ..."

—G. L. Steer in *The New York Times* of May 5, 1937:

BILBAO, Spain, May 4.—The statement issued by Nationalist [Rebel] headquarters that Guernica was destroyed by "Red incendiaries" is false.

It was disproved tonight over the radio by the Rev. Father Arronategi, the Mayor of Guernica, and other witnesses. Father Arronategi, whose brother died in the bombardment, said over the Bilbao radio:

"It was not our militia who set fire to Guernica. If the oath of a Christian and a Basque Alcade has any value I swear before God and history that German airplanes bombed viciously and cruelly our beloved town of Guernica until they had wiped it off the earth."

Refugees' Stories of Raid

I interviewed more than twenty refugees on the outskirts of Guernica on the night of its destruction. Except in minor details about the number of planes which destroyed Guernica, their stories tallied on every point.

Between 4:30 and 7:45 on the evening of April 26 Guernica was destroyed by airplanes, most of which could be distinguished as belonging to the enemy, while Catholic priests were able to describe the well-known Junkers type which was responsible for the heaviest vandalism.

That afternoon about 4:30 I was machine-gunned by six German Heinkel He51 fighters in the village of Arbacegui, eight miles southwest of Guernica. This village had just been bombed heavily by Junkers Ju52/3m and Heinkel He111 planes. After machine-gunning me for what seemed about fifteen minutes they flew off in the direction of Guernica.

Later I saw single bombers of the type of the Heinkel He111 also flying in the direction of Guernica and heard the distant sound of the bombardment.

Since that afternoon German aviation has been bombing all the villages between Guernica and Markina, including Arbacegui, Guerricaiz, Bolibar, Arteaga, Cortezubi and Mendata, and the roads are being machine-gunned.

I returned home as soon as the adventure was over. In Bilbao I first heard about 7 o'clock that Guernica had been bombarded. There were no details as communications had been cut early in the bombardment,

and for some time the seriousness of it was not known here.

Appeal for Aid Sent Out

Only when the bombardment was well over and flames were mounting over every other house did urgent appeals come to Bilbao for Red Cross ambulances and fire engines. All transport in the town was shattered by the bombardment, and the local police had to walk to the nearest telephone post to speak to Bilbao.

This was about 9 o'clock and newspaper men, who had finished their day's work, heard the news about 10 o'clock and immediately motored to Guernica.

The sights we saw and the conversations we had with the Basques there have already been described. The direct evidence that Guernica was destroyed by aerial bombardment was as follows:

First—The town and roofs that had not yet burned had many bomb holes which weren't there when I visited Guernica the day before. Trees were snapped off or their foliage had been torn away by bomb splinters. I collected several of these bomb splinters. They are exactly the same metal as the bombs lately used by the Rebels' German aviation on the front line. Of incendiary bombs a journalist colleague with me picked up three, all German, made in 1936. One has been sent to London by the British consul.

Every one in town knew that a number of women and children had been trapped in a bomb refuge in the street below the Casa de Juntas and it must be clear to the meanest intelligence that women and children do not enter bomb refuges under houses which are being burned down by "reds."

A church was burning—altar, pulpit and all—with a hole in the roof where a bomb had entered. But the priest who was helping to evacuate the poor who had lost their homes forgot to tell me his church had been wrecked from that peculiar angle by anarchists. Indeed it mystifies me still that Reds should have blasted a hole through the roof to do their work when it would have been far easier to push past the front door.

Buildings Were Shattered

I was in Guernica until 1:30 in the morning, but sniff where I might I could not catch the odor of gasoline. Nor were the houses merely burned as I saw Irun burn. They were shattered through roof and walls before being burned. That is why large parts of Guernica are not a shell but an ash heap.

The next day I returned to visit the ruined hospital,

which was surrounded with bomb holes. There were forty dead there, of whom I saw fourteen laid out, mostly women freshly dead and known by name to the Guernicans who were with me.

They had not been killed by gasoline. All except two had bomb wounds. Those two had bullet wounds. I was asked if I cared to see the rest, but the sight was not a pleasant one and I refused.

The same day Bilbao published a list of more than fifty persons from Guernica who were being treated for bomb wounds in Bilbao.

It is obvious that the five days between the Insurgent occupation of Guernica and the issuance of their communiqué charging the work was done by "Red incendiaries" has given time enough for careful thinking and industrious masonry in the ruined town. When journalists are led in on a conducted tour more than half a week after the Insurgent infantry arrived, the telltale holes in the streets can have been filled in and obliging witnesses provided.

But the fact remains that General Francisco Franco burned Guernica, and the Basques will never forget. It may, indeed, turn out to be his greatest blunder of the war.

—James M. Minifie in The New York Herald Tribune of May 6, 1937:

BILBAO, Spain, May 5.—In a radio broadcast to the world, the Basque government last night accused Germans of responsibility for the destruction a week ago of Guernica, "Holy City" of the Basques.

Jesus Maria de Leizaola, Minister of Culture, declared:

"The rebels say their planes did not fly over Guernica. They are right. They were German planes. Proofs are afforded by German aviators recently captured . . . Theirs were the planes, bombs and pilots which destroyed Guernica. Guernica was devastated by German men and machines. On our front all the air attacks have been by Germans."

The Basques are holding prisoner a number of German pilots, who have testified to the exclusive use of German machines and pilots on this front.

This correspondent has seen a photostat copy of a passport of one of them named Hans Sobotka, who was killed when his plane was brought down at Zaratmo. It was issued at Berlin on April 5, 1937, number 117-37.

Many Planes in Raid

A visa permitting the holder to travel to and through Spain was issued on the same day by the office of the Police President of Berlin. This fact alone proves that

Sobotka's passport was issued for the specific purpose of enabling him to come to Spain with the cognizance of the German authorities.

The actual destruction of Guernica was described by Jose de Labauria, Mayor of the city, who was an eye-witness. The first bombs were dropped by a single plane, he said, but it was soon followed by many others.

"Bombers and pursuit planes came in large numbers," the Mayor said. "They scattered bombs and bullets broadcast. Incendiary bombs fell by the hundreds.

"It is impossible to describe the horror of that moment. Wounded, dead, prayers, cries and weeping. For an hour, two hours, three hours, there fell steel and flames which burned and destroyed. When a human being, driven mad, rushed into the street for air the chasers found him and machine-gunned him. Women, children and old men were shot down like animals.

Priest Corroborates Story

"This is the truth of the tragedy. I swear before God and man, as a Mayor and Christian, that the destruction of our dear town was exclusively the work of foreign aviation."

Don Eusebio de Arronategi, priest of the Church of Santa Maria in Guernica, who also was an eyewitness, corroborated the other radio speakers.

Their accounts tallied with eyewitness narratives obtained by this correspondent today from people with American connections, about whose reliability there can be no question. Their names or further identification are not given, lest they fall into rebel hands.

One girl, whose father is known to this correspondent, ran to the window when the first plane appeared, exclaiming: "Look, mother, how pretty it is!"

When the plane dropped bombs, mother and daughter fled to a refuge. The sidewalks were littered with broken glass from the force of the explosions. They huddled for three and a half hours in their refuge, expecting the end at any moment.

A priest was there with them. All knelt in prayer while the priest pronounced a benediction.

One Counted Twenty-six Planes

Another man, who watched the destruction of the city from a neighboring hill-top, said he had counted as many as twenty-six planes at one time. . . .

"The most impressive thing was the fearful silence. Nobody was shouting or crying. I suppose it is that way when death is at hand. There was silence except for the roar of the flames after the planes had gone."

This statement reflects the antagonism aroused among even the rebels' supporters by the destruction of Guernica, and explains the desperate attempt by Salamanca, Insurgent headquarters, to create the legend that it was done by the Basques themselves.

There can be no question about the facts of the bombardment.

Women and Children F

IN EVERY great struggle there comes a point where minor issues are sloughed away, where confusion vanishes, and a single event throws a clear white light over everything. That point has come in Spain. It is no longer possible for any human being with a heart in his breast or a head on his shoulders coolly to debate the pros and cons of Loyalists versus Rebels.

For what is now happening there is the ruthless, cold-blooded, vicious extermination of one of the rare peoples of the earth—the Basques. It is an extermination which beggars every description of war, which violates every convention which has been set by man as an inhibition against his own ruthlessness for one hundred years or more. To sit by and not to protest with all the breath in one's body reads one out of the ranks of civilized and Christian society.

WHAT IS HAPPENING is Homeric. It has the elements of the loftiest Greek tragedy, of the terrible dramas which purge the soul with pity. No one knows whence the Basques came.

All we know is that this little people is one of the few rare and absolutely pure races left in Europe, having a beautiful language and literature, beautiful bodies and faces, a people proud, independent and free, whose history is as old as Europe's, and who, during all its centuries, have minded their own business, tilling the soil, building a domestic architecture of purest design and exquisite proportion, and churches which are among the gems of civilization.

They are Catholics of deepest piety, and Ignatius Loyola, founder of that most intellectual of Catholic orders, the Society of Jesus, is their son. They are great sailors. Their grace and pride is expressed in some of the world's most handsome dances and in a remarkable music.

They play a beautiful game of their invention, which visitors to Havana have seen: *Pelote Basque*, or *Jai-Alai*.

Astride two frontiers, they have never been subjected. Their allegiance to the Spanish crown was given in return for its allegiance to them, and the promise under oath that their own laws and customs would be respected. They have never had a nobility. For every Basque has been a democrat and every Basque has felt himself a nobleman.

From their poor mountainous provinces, year by year, their sons have emigrated to be great colonizers. They are the best and most constructive of all the immigrants to the Argentine. Poor, proud and hospitable, every stranger who has visited them loves them. They have adorned the human race and done it no evil.

THIS WEEK airplanes, reputedly German, loaded with bombs, armed with machine guns, mobilized to save a cause which has been lost since Italian soldiers scattered in a new *Caporetto* at Brihuega on the Guadajajara front, and set out, not to *conquer* the Basque country, but to exterminate its population.

The most vivid account comes to us from the correspondent of the London *Times*, in a description of the bombing attack on Guernica. There was nothing haphazard about that attack. It was planned with coolness and intelligence—inhuman intelligence.

Guernica is a little town of 7,000 containing, in addition, at the time of the bombing, 3,000 refugees. It is not a part of any front. A factory producing war material, lying outside the town, was carefully avoided. The conquerors, no doubt, wished to preserve it for themselves.

The attack proceeded as follows—study it carefully, for this is the new technique of warfare, the new military “science.” The day was Monday. That is market day in Guernica, when it is certain that the women with their children around them will be in the streets, in the market center of the town.

First, small parties of airplanes threw heavy bombs and hand grenades all over the town, choosing area after area, in the most orderly fashion. The bombs tore holes twenty-five feet deep and brought down buildings over the heads of their inhabitants.

As the population scattered in panic the planes swooped low and opened machine-gun fire on the running people, whether they were men or women or children. Even a herd of sheep coming to market was mowed off the face of the earth. As the people dove into cellars and under shelter the planes again flew high and dropped incendiary bombs, and the village flared with fire. And in the midst of this carnage men aloft saw priests kneeling by the dead and dying, administering extreme unction. Those fleeing were machine-gunned along the roads—women and children.

en First

—By Dorothy Thompson in her column, "On the Record", in The New York Herald Tribune of April 30, 1937:

Good God! The game laws of most of our States prohibit the shooting of birds from airplanes. It is unsportsmanlike. Guernica had no anti-aircraft guns. The democratic nations do not believe in "intervention." Instead, we sell copper to Germany and oil to Italy!

—o—

THIS IS FASCIST warfare. I mean Fascist. There has been terror on both sides of this war. This is a civil war, and a war of terror. But I have watched the dispatches as they have come across the cable desks and there is no record of the Loyalists bombing civilians. If they did there is no record. There is an inhuman logic in this technique. One defeats the soldiers at the front, not by blowing out their hearts, but by breaking their hearts. For what do men fight? For their wives and their children. But if the wives and the children are to be sacrificed will they not submit? It is the psychology of the kidnapper to whom the victim cries, "Give me my child alive and I will do anything!"

—o—

AH, BUT THAT IS not what the men of the Basque country have said! This morning—I write on Thursday—a cry goes up from those men. It is not a cry for arms. It is not a cry for allies. It is addressed to Britain, and to America, and to France, and to all nations, with ships on the seas, who still love human liberty. And they say:



The picture: a baby victim of fascist bombardment.

—o—

"Take our women and children away! Take away our mothers with unborn children in their wombs, take away our little boys and our little girls! Land them somewhere, anywhere, that our breed may not die out, and the life that we have begotten may go on! And then we will fight, here alone on these rocks, to the last breath, to the last man."

—o—

THERE IS AN OAK in Guernica, which is called the tree of God. It has stood for 600 years, and from its stump new sprouts are shooting. The bombardment which racked away women and children and youths and old men never touched this tree.

Under it the kings of Spain took the oath to respect the democratic rights of Vizcaya and were answered with the oath of the Basques, pledging allegiance to the senor, the Lord, but not the king of this province. For the Basques gave obedience to an equal, knowing that men must acknowledge leadership, but they gave subservience to no man.

Were the spirit alive in that symbol still alive throughout the world, nations would not sit by meekly, but there would arise from all civilized countries, through their governments, a protest which even the Fascist dictatorships could not ignore. For, believe it or not, there are such things in the world as morality, as law, as conscience, as a noble concept of humanity, which, once awake, are stronger than all ideologies.

(Copyright, 1937, New York Herald Tribune.)

"We denounce the crime of in the name of

AN APPEAL TO THE CONSCIENCE OF HUMANITY

"The ancient Basque City of Guernica has been razed to the ground by Fascist Insurgent airplanes. Unfortified and unarmed, its houses, churches and defenseless inhabitants—10,000 men, women and children, including refugees—were bombed and machine gunned for nearly four hours without ceasing. The toll of slaughtered innocents exceeds 800 persons. This is the crime of Guernica. And this is the unspeakable crime of war on women and children, waged with a brutality and callousness unparalleled in modern times.

"The massacre of Guernica has been confirmed in all its horror by such survivors as Canon Alberto Onandia of Valladolid Cathedral and by foreign correspondents. One of them, a distinguished staff member of the *London Times*, described the machine-gunning of helpless civilians, and added: "The only counter measure the Basques could employ—for they did not possess sufficient airplanes to face the insurgent fleet—were those provided by the heroism of the Basque clergy. The clergymen blessed and prayed for kneeling crowds—Socialists, Anarchists and Communists, in addition to the declared faithful—in crumbling dug-outs' (built for safety from air raids).

"Will the prayers of Guernica's dead and dying go unanswered? Or will 300,000 civilians, women and children soon meet a similar fate in Bilbao without the voices of civilized people being raised in overwhelming protest?

"We refuse to condone such atrocities by our silence. We do not attempt to assess the contending causes which now struggle for mastery in Spain, but we do insist that this ruthless aerial warfare upon women and children stands outside the pale of morality and of civilization. We insist that there is no such thing as partisanship where this kind of mass murder occurs or is permitted to occur. We denounce the monstrous crime of Guernica in the name of justice and humanity. We demand a revival of that noble world conscience which manifested itself in the days of the persecution of the Jews in Russia and again when the Armenian people lay prostrate before the Turks.

"For these reasons we call upon all men of good will to protest this immense crime in the name of all that is sacred to human morality and human decency—and in the name of Almighty God."

These distinguished Americans have signed this appeal:

Miss Grace Abbott, social worker, of Chicago.

Representative Thomas R. Amlie, of Wisconsin.

President James Rowland Angell, of Yale.

Bishop James Chamberlain Baker of the Methodist Episcopal Diocese of San Francisco, Calif.

Newton D. Baker, former Secretary of War.

Dr. Charles A. Beard, historian.

Albert W. Beaven, president of Colgate-Rochester Theological Seminary.

Governor Elmer A. Benson of Minnesota.

Representative John T. Bernard, of Minnesota.

Senator Homer T. Bone, of Washington.

General and Mrs. Ballington Booth of the Volunteers of America.

Senator Wm. E. Borah, of Idaho.

Mrs. Arthur Brin of Minneapolis.

Van Wyck Brooks, winner of the 1937 Pulitzer Prize for history.

The Rev. Dr. George A. Buttrick, of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, N. Y.

Dr. Walter B. Cannon, of the Harvard Medical School.

Senator Arthur Capper, of Kansas.

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, feminist leader.

The Rev. Dr. Allan Knight Chalmers of the Broadway Tabernacle Church, New York City.

Senator Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri.

J. Reuben Clark, Jr., First Counselor of Church of Latter Day Saints of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Dr. Albert Buckner Coe, of the First Congregational Church, Oak Park, Ill.

Dr. Harvey Cushing, of the Yale Medical School.

Clarence Darrow, lawyer.

Dr. Stephen Duggan, director of the Institute of International Education, New York.

President Clarence A. Dykstra of the University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Albert E. Einstein.

of Guernica of justice and humanity"

Dr. Haven Emerson, of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University.
Dr. Charles G. Fenwick of Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
Edward A. Filene, of Boston.
Representative Hamilton Fish, Jr. of New York.
The Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, of the Riverside Church, New York.
Rev. Dr. James H. Franklin, President of Crozer Theological Seminary, Chester, Pa.
Bishop James E. Freeman, of Washington, D. C.
Dr. Christian Gauss, dean of Princeton University.
Albert F. Gilmore, former president of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, of "Mother Church," in Boston.
Senator Carter Glass, of Virginia.
President Frank P. Graham of the University of North Carolina.
William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor.
The Rev. Dr. Ivan Lee Holt, of St. Louis.
Rabbi Edward L. Israel, of Har Sinai Congregation, Baltimore.
Commodore Ernest Lee Jahncke, former Assistant Secretary of the Navy.
The Rev. Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones, president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.
The Rev. Dr. Rufus M. Jones, of Haverford, Pa.
Alfred M. Landon, of Kansas.
The Rev. Dr. John H. Lathrop, of the First Unitarian Congregationalist Church, Brooklyn.
Bishop William Lawrence of Massachusetts.
Governor Herbert H. Lehman, of New York.
Louis E. Kirstein, Boston merchant.
Judge Julian W. Mack, of New York.
President John A. Mackay of the Princeton Theological Seminary.
Rabbi Louis L. Mann, of Sinai Temple, Chicago.
Bishop William T. Manning, of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of New York.
Bishop Francis J. McConnell, of New York.
Dr. W. O. Mendenhall, president of Whittier College, Whittier, Calif.
Dr. John R. Mott, President of the International Missionary Council.
President W. A. Neilson of Smith College, Northampton, Mass.
Governor Harry W. Nice of Maryland.
Senator Gerald P. Nye, of North Dakota.

Representative Caroline O'Day, of New York.
William Church Osborn, president of the Children's Aid Society of New York.
Bishop Edward L. Parsons, of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of California.
The Rev. Dr. Harold C. Phillips, of the First Baptist Church, Cleveland.
Former Governor Gifford Pinchot, of Pennsylvania.
The Rev. Dr. Daniel A. Poling, of the Baptist Temple, Philadelphia.
Mrs. Frances F. Cleveland Preston, of Princeton, N. J., widow of President Grover Cleveland.
Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, of Oyster Bay, L. I.
Dr. Bela Schick, of the Rockefeller Institute, New York.
Dr. Henry E. Sigerist, director, Institute of Medical History, Johns Hopkins University.
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, of The Temple, Cleveland.
The Rev. Dr. Ralph W. Sockman, of Christ Methodist Episcopal Church, New York City.
James M. Speers, of New York, director of the Committee for Christian German Refugees.
Miss Estelle Sternberger, executive secretary of World Peaceways, New York.
Bishop George Craig Stewart, of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.
Henry L. Stimson, former Secretary of State.
Bishop Ernest M. Stires, of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Long Island.
Leland Stowe, of the *New York Herald Tribune*.
Charles P. Taft, 2d, Cincinnati attorney, son of President William Howard Taft.
Representative Henry G. Teigan, of Minnesota.
Senator Elmer Thomas, of Oklahoma.
Dorothy Thompson, special writer for the *New York Herald Tribune*.
The Rev. Dr. Ernest F. Tittle of Evanston, Ill.
Samuel Untermeyer, New York lawyer.
Senator Robert Wagner, of New York.
Miss Lillian Wald, founder of Henry Street Settlement, New York.
Frank P. Walsh, New York lawyer.
President Ray Lyman Wilbur, of Leland Stanford University.
Dr. Charles-Edward Armory Winslow, of the Yale Medical School.
Dr. Stephen S. Wise, of the Free Synagogue, New York.
William Allen White, editor of the *Emporia Gazette*.
President Mary E. Wooley, of Mount Holyoke College.

The Massacre of Guernica as Seen by

Mass Murder in Guernica

"Wholesale arson and mass murder, committed by Rebel airplanes of German type Monday afternoon and early evening, left the ancient Basque capital, Guernica—except for the historic Casa de Juntas, where the Viscayan Parliament used to meet—a smoldering ruin. With utter ferocity and scientific thoroughness, the incendiary and explosive bombs and machine guns of the Junker and Heinkel planes destroyed this center of Basque culture and political tradition.

"None of the other atrocities of this sanguinary civil war has been more conclusively attested than this latest example of ruthlessness . . .

"Against the terrorism of fire and destruction from the skies were pitted the quiet courage and deep faith of the people and their priests."

The New York Times, April 29, 1937

The Attack Upon the Basques

"Why does Franco, who claims merely to be defending the Church and attacking Communism, war on the Basque provinces and war on them in so merciless and bloody a fashion, slaying women and children with a ferocity that has shocked the civilized world? . . .

"The truth is—and the bloody attack on the Basques proves it—that the Fascist Rebels are concerned not with religion but with the perpetuation of special privilege, with the overthrow of democracy and with the seizure by the Germans and Italians of Spain's mineral wealth—notably the iron of the Basque country."

The New York Post, May 4, 1937

Mass Slaughter in Spain

"Certainly the previous annals of modern warfare offer nothing so shocking as this massacre. The fleet of Rebel planes, furnished by Franco's Nazi allies, rained death upon the undefended town for more than three hours. Flyers used machine guns to shoot down fleeing civilians in the fields. More than 800 persons were killed and fire set by incendiary bombs completed the devastation.

"The attack was a deliberate effort at terrorism . . . The same tactics are in use at Madrid, where Rebel artillery almost daily rakes the city with shrapnel fire and kills scores of civilians . . . The Rebel raids have time and again centered on humble villages, on workmen's quarters, on food lines, on congregations at mass, on hospitals."

The New York Herald Tribune, April 29, 1937

A Blow to Fascist Hopes

"The ruthless destruction of Guernica, following on the heels of numerous other Fascist atrocities, has outraged the conscience of the civilized world. Whatever crimes the Loyalists have committed pale by contrast with the concentrated terrorism whereby Franco and his Italo-German backers seek to reduce the Spanish people to a state of permanent slavery.

"Even should Franco win, there is now small chance that his tyranny would be recognized as a government by the United States, or by any other civilized nation. His capacity for brute destruction may still be almost unlimited. But as a ruler of Spain acceptable to democratic nations he and his agents are impossible."

The Washington (D.C.) Post, May 1, 1937

For "Civilization"

"Guernica in ruins gives an idea of the civilizing and uplifting mission which General Franco, with his Moorish, German and Italian allies, is carrying on in Spain . . . It is difficult to see how Spain will be content to be ruled by a faction guilty of such cold-blooded and hideous slaughter of its fellow-Spaniards."

The Baltimore Sun, April 29, 1937

A New Symbol of War's Horror

"Not since the rape of Belgium in the late summer of 1914 has there been such ghastly carnage of peaceful folk as is told in news dispatches of the bombing of Guernica, Holy City of the Basques . . .

"The world stands aghast at the appalling sacrifice of peaceful civilians at Guernica. This is war at its unmitigated worst, the slaughter of noncombatants. The world knows who the war-makers are, knows who the dictators are, knows what nations are arming and building for future mass-murder."

The Philadelphia (Pa.) Inquirer, May 1, 1937

An End to Inhumanity

"With the whole world knowing that Italian and German Fascism's might is playing a major role in the wanton destruction, the only moral stand the world can take is a demand that the two nations of fascism not only cease and desist henceforward, but immediately withdraw all support of men and munitions from the rebels."

The Burlington (N.C.) Times, April 28, 1937

en by the Press

Fascism Reveals Itself

"Guernica is Fascism's message to the world . . . It was not by accident that Fascist airplanes skimmed and twisted over a field where unarmed men, women and children were running in helpless terror, and laid them low with screaming machine gun bullets . . . This was not the work of Spaniards, but of Fascist invaders giving the non-Fascist world a foretaste of what is in store for it . . ."

"The rest of humanity watches in a sort of stupefied horror, or is led by special fear or partialities to ignore the wider doom that is being planned. The shadow of Berlin, Rome and Tokio overspreads the world."

The St. Louis (Mo.) Star-Times, April 28, 1937

Vultures Over Spain

"The Canon Alberto Onaindia, a Spanish priest, has reached Biarritz, on the Franco-Spanish frontier, and has given the first description of the destruction of Guernica, holy city of the Spanish Basques . . . His account of the fall of Guernica is significant because of the emphasis upon the part played by German aviators in producing carnage."

The Trenton (N.J.) Gazette, May 3, 1937

Piteous Plea—For Naught

". . . calculated to make the blood of democratic peoples boil against the mad slaughter that the fascist invaders—Spanish, Italian, and German alike—are inflicting upon not only combatants but noncombatants as well in this holocaust of horror . . ."

The Burlington (N.C.) Times, April 29, 1937

What the World's Coming To

"Even a world whose tastes were formed by the Great War finds in the slaughter of the innocent Basques a little more than it can stomach. Here are no irresponsible atrocity stories . . . This Fascist ferocity goes back to the ages of barbarian invasion."

The Boston (Mass.) Morning Globe, April 30, 1937

"A Wave of Revulsion"

"Reports of wanton slaughter of innocent noncombatants in Guernica brought a wave of revulsion in every country that considers itself civilized . . ."

The Pittsburgh, (Pa.) Post, May 1, 1937

PRACTICE

General Goering reported pleased with German plane performance in Spain.

NEWS ITEM



C. D. Batchelor in *The New York Daily News, May 7, 1937*

Ruthless Gen. Franco

"This ruthlessness of Franco toward children, even Red children, will make most Americans sick."

The New York Daily News, May 7, 1937

Totalitarian War

"With a consuming fury that has taken women and children, the sick and the aged, and even helpless sheep and cattle for its victims, the high command of the Spanish Rebels' northern army is laying waste the Basque country as it pushes its advance on Bilbao . . . All churches save one were destroyed. Two hospitals went up in flames. Only a few houses were left standing . . ."

The Wilmington (Del.) News, April 29, 1937