

# SPANISH INFORMATION

## SERVICE texts

## and documents

WEEKLY RÉSUMÉ OF OUR DAILY "SERVICIO ESPAÑOL DE INFORMACION"

No. 3

Barcelona, December, 24 1937

556, Av. 14 Abril

### THE MILITARY SITUATION

# THE CAPTURE OF TERUEL

The fall of Teruel on the afternoon of December 21st was the climax of the operations which the Republican Army has been carrying out for the past week.

This Army, taking the rebels completely by surprise when it launched an attack on the morning of December 15th, has like clockwork, day by day, carried through the plans of the General Staff. Most dramatic of all, perhaps, were the operations during the first day when, in the bare space of ten hours of daylight at once their disposal, the two columns entrusted with carrying out the pinchers movement simultaneously from the north-east and south-west, established contact with one another half-way between Campillo and Concul. This movement, which enclosed the rebel soldiers in a circle of iron, sealed the fate of Teruel. The planning of operations was no less brilliant than the way in which they were carried out. Teruel, in the fortification of which German technicians have lent their greatest skill, was thought to be almost impregnable. Yet the Republican Army carried through the whole operation with far fewer losses than in any previous large-scale attack. The secret of this was that, with perhaps the single exception of Concul, none of the strongly fortified rebel positions was attacked from the front. The Republican command singled out all the weak spots in the insurgent line of defence and drove their wedges deep into the enemy's rear. The strongholds of the enemy were thus isolated and fell with little difficulty when attacked from behind. In this way, during the seven days of the offensive, position after position fell into the hands of the Republicans, while the circle of insurgent territory round the city itself grew smaller and smaller. Finally, there remained nothing but Teruel and two heights, Santa Bárbara and El Mansueto, immediately to the east. The final operation consisted of driving a wedge between Teruel and these positions. The town was entered by the Republicans simultaneously from the north, north-west, and south.

The successful attack which ended in the capture of Teruel is the culminating point of the growth, or shall we say coming of age, of the Spanish People's Army. It is the logical consequence of experience

gained in the Casa de Campo, Segovia, Brunete and Belchite. In each of these attacks the young Republican Army displayed more strength, more agility and greater cohesion than in the preceding one. In the counter-offensives at Guadalajara and Pozoblanco this Army was capable of routing an exhausted and badly-generalised Italian army. It has now completed its development and has proved itself capable of gaining all its objectives in a first-class battle in which it is itself the attacker. A clear indication of this is that not a single non-Spaniard took part in the attack at Teruel and not a single reserve was brought into action.

The offensive was planned and directed by Colonel Saravia, who in the autumn of this year was placed in charge of the Republican Army on the Teruel front, and by General Rojo, Chief of the General Staff. Both these men were members of the old Spanish army and remained loyal to the Republic. On Tuesday, as soon as the Government received news of the capture of Teruel, they wired to Saravia conferring on him the rank of General. Saravia and Rojo are the only two men to have been made generals during the present war.

From a military point of view the holding of Teruel by the rebels had long been an error. If at first it was a dangerous salient which chance or, to be more accurate, the treachery of the civil guards placed in the hands of the rebels at the very beginning of the rebellion, a salient which threatened to cut Republican communications along the Mediterranean coast, it later became a menace to the rebels themselves. This was borne out by their attempt of July last to broaden the salient and is now proved beyond all doubt by the success of the present Republican offensive. For moral reasons, however, Franco had no other course than to maintain Teruel, whatever the cost. For, by talking of a break through to the coast on that front, he had boasted the name of Teruel so that it was on the lips of all, both in rebel territory and abroad; and he could not withdraw his troops and leave Teruel to the Republicans, whatever the cost in men and material. For the same reason, once Teruel was surrounded and cut off by the Republican troops, Franco was forced to sacri-

This year Dr. Negrin will be able to wish the foreign correspondents a very Merry Xmas when he receives them in Teruel.

fice thousands of his best troops in a vain attempt to break through and relieve the beleaguered city. In one break through and relieve the beleaguered city. In one ruel, delivered along the plain near Concul, they formed a perfect target for Republican artillery on the heights and were driven back in disorder after losing what is conservatively estimated at forty per cent of their forces.

Besides the tremendous stimulating effect it will have on the morale of the Republican Army and the people behind the Government lines, the capture of Teruel is of great strategic importance to the loyalists. It places in their hands a new, shorter road to Madrid, and thus enables them to transfer troops and material from the Aragon front to the Madrid front or vice versa much more rapidly. The distance from Alcañiz, the central point of communications for a large section of the Aragon front, to Madrid is 70 miles shorter via Teruel than via Valencia; and 85 miles shorter from Alcañiz to Guadalajara.

The capture of Teruel and the surrounding territory leaves the Republicans with a net gain of hundreds of square miles of territory, rich in coal and iron, so necessary for the development of their war industries, as well as with one of the richest timber areas in Spain. At the moment of writing these words insurgent prisoners are being conveyed by hundreds from Teruel to Sagunto and Valencia. So rapid was the operation of surrounding the city that barely a man escaped. And all the arms and munitions which the rebels had accumulated there fell into the hands of the Republicans.

It will be recalled that when Dr. Negrin received the foreign journalists, following the Government's move to Barcelona, he was asked by an English correspondent where he would next receive them. And Dr. Negrin, who among his other accomplishments speaks English fluently, answered: «I don't really know. But perhaps I shall receive you in Saragossa.»

Well, the reception will not take place in Saragossa, but this year Dr. Negrin will be able to wish the foreign correspondents a very Merry Christmas when he receives them in Teruel.

### President Azaña in his recent speech at Madrid

#### THE ARMY OF THE PEOPLE

They said there was a foreign army in Madrid in order to explain to some extent the marvellous spectacle of this people who do not wish to be the victims of despotism. You know well that this is not so. There is an Army now; a year ago there was not even that. A year ago there was nothing more than the people of Madrid, who were determined not to be sacrificed, and, who, in every way they could, with their finger nails and their teeth, barred the road to their capital. But today there is an Army, a Spanish Army, a republican Army, an Army of the Spanish State, an Army of the Spanish Republic. This Army has arisen from among the people, and was formed by those fighting even before its formation was decreed by order of the

Government. In this Army are united the professional and technical experience of those admirable officers who remained faithful to their duty, to the Republic, and to their patriotism, and those new people who, coming from the trenches, the workshop or the factory, have known how to raise themselves and to become worthy to take a part in the direction of the fight for the freedom of Spain. Praise to those of both these types of men who give their blood and their labour for the defence of the freedom of Spain.

The same phenomenon which occurred in the morale and spirit of Madrid, where since the beginning of the siege no one has used an excessive word nor made an inelegant gesture, this same marvellous phenomenon has appeared in the ranks of the Army.

From a letter published in the «New York Times» signed by Professor JOHN DEWEY and about 200 American clergymen and replying to one issued by Spanish rebel prelates

The pastoral letter reveals that the Spanish Episcopate, in attacking the Popular Front Government as Communistic, is actually voicing its opposition to any form of democratic government in Spain. «We would be the first to regret», the prelates say, «that the irresponsible autocracy of a parliament should be replaced by the yet more terrible one of a dictatorship without roots in the nation». Thus they speak of parliamentary government as «irresponsible autocracy». They seem, moreover, to oppose only certain kinds of dictatorships, those «without roots in the nation». Does this mean that the Spanish hierarchy will rest content only

when the Republic has been overthrown, the Constitution repealed, the Bourbons restored and a new De Rivera dictatorship established?

The bitterness of the Spanish hierarchy toward these things was perhaps most bluntly expressed by Cardinal Pedro Segura y Saenz, former Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of all Spain. In a sermon delivered late in April, 1931, he said: «May the Republic be cursed». Shortly after this incident he fled to Rome, where he remained as a member of the curia in the Vatican until his recent return to insurgent Spain.



# SOCIAL CLEANING

by Antonio Ruiz Vilaplana

The military «movement» manifested an unfathomable degree of pitiless ferocity.

While many falangist and the fanatic Navarrese went in good faith to «make war» at the front, the reactionary forces who were masters of the villages and cities in rebel territory initiated an era of tragic repression.

The day following the declaration of martial law all labor and leftist leaders in Burgos and nearby towns were arrested and later shot. These reprisals were taken both against present leaders and against those who had previously been on the boards of these organizations. The records were seized and all the members were arrested and judged amidst the prevailing political heat and passion.

Some of them, however, were able to escape, taking to the woods or simply hiding at home.

I remember quite well the case of ex-sergeant Quintana. At some previous time he had been president of the Casa del Pueblo (People's House); but he had accepted this post under the pressure of friends, for he had never been a «man of action».

Quintana witnessed the shooting of a beggar who had not been quick enough to cry «Viva España» when he was ordered. The shooting occurred right in front of Quintana's house. He was scared and ran next door to his mother's to hide. He was taken out of his hiding place a few days later by the civil guard, who brutally pushed him out while his mother cried hysterically.

—It is Quintana! cried the guards as they led him through the city. He was hiding under his mother's bed. And they laughed and made the people laugh at that poor man's fear. His had been a childish act. He had sought motherly protection, not a means of escape.

Quintana was shot a few days later after they obtained from him a suitable declaration. I was destined to hear the story from his old mother a few days later when I went to her wretched house on official business.

The secretary of the local Left Republican Party, a strong, optimistic young chap by the name of Plácido, whose room was next to mine in the hotel, and who a few days before was discussing with me matters of little import relating to the province, also fled crazed by the sight of incidents of this nature.

He spent several days without any food, hiding in a stable on the Miraflores road, right across from the cavalry barracks. His relatives knew where he was; but the terror which hung over the city was such, that they did not venture to go out to take him some food.

Plácido came out of his hiding place a week later starving and terrified looking more like a corpse than like a human being. He gave himself up to the sentinel, saying:

—Shoot me, but I cannot stand it any longer.

He was immediately taken to prison, and although the only crime he had committed was the fact that he was a left republican, he was also shot.

His four lively children, at play on the balcony next to mine in the hotel, reminded me constantly of this tragedy.

Towns like Villadiego, Aranda de Duero, Castrojeriz, and above all Miranda de Duero, an important railroad town, suffered the toll taken by this program of social cleaning more heavily.

If a man was simply accused by any one of being a «leftist», thus arousing the slightest suspicion in the mind of a rebel leader, it was sufficient to have this man shot without the benefit of a trial. Sometimes groups of four, five, six, were shot; but as a general rule the executions were individual.

We were able to ascertain by checking up on other cases in other towns that the manner in which executions were carried out did not differ much from one place to another. At any time during the night armed groups went to the houses of the men who were «put on the spot», and amidst hysterical weeping of scared relatives the men were taken out to the fields and shot. The next day the respective judges were called upon to pick up the corpses as an official routine. The corpses always presented the same wounds: six or seven rifle shots, and two or three other shots through the temples or through the eyes.

\*\*\*

The first case in which I was called upon to render my official services was that of a peasant from Sasamon who was found dead in a wheat field near the Burgos cemetery. He was poorly dressed, relatively young, dark and strong. His face was horribly disfigured by rifle shots.

No one ventured to identify him. Only a piece of soiled, crumpled paper was found in one of his pockets. A message was scribbled on this piece of paper: «Tell all comrades and flee quickly. They beat us brutally and as they see themselves lost they act like barbarians.»

This piece of soiled paper was attached to the sum-

mary, and the veracity of its contents was proved later by the coroner's investigation. Evidence of a brutal beating was found on the corpse. «The body was badly broken», briefly stated the coroner's report.

\*\*\*

Another day it was the corpses of a man and his two sons, one twelve years old and the other fifteen. He was the mayor of a nearby town who paid frequent visits to the «Juzgado» (Court) to which I was secretary. The three corpses were found on the road to Santander, about one kilometer from Burgos. They were not lying by the road, as was usually the case, but a little to one side on a path leading to an abandoned convent.

The police were notified by the priest of another nearby town, and the case was then remitted to the court.

We were stopped near the place by a repulsive odor; but finally arrived where the three corpses were lying. They had not been discovered before, because a little nearby hill prevented their being seen from the road.

The three corpses formed a tragic group. The two boys—I should, rather say the two children—were together in an apparent embrace. The coroner said that they had also been beaten. Their father was a little farther away. He was horribly mutilated, and had apparently been cut to pieces with a machete. The sight was repellent. It could be certainly inferred from the situation of the corpses that the poor man had witnessed the beating and subsequent death of his two young boys before he was himself tortured and shot.

The peace officer who accompanied us, although he was used to similar sights, was visibly impressed. He said to me:

—These are his two little boys. They assisted him in his office. Do you remember the corpse we picked up the day before yesterday at Frandovine? Well, that was his eldest son. He was the secretary of the Town Hall.

\*\*\*

The corpse of one of the Silk Factory's foremen was found near that factory on September 17. He was the brother of one of the court attendants, and very well known in town.

He was handcuffed and bore signs of having been badly beaten he still had in his pocket the fork and spoon furnished him in prison, whence he was taken the night before to be shot.

The terror preying on the people was such, that his own brother did not dare identify him officially though it meant that the widow could not collect his salary at the factory. The dead man's relatives believed that if they took steps to identify him officially, they might also be arrested and killed.

Cases of unidentified dead found on the roads piled up every day. This was the situation not only in my district, but also throughout the province, so that it became one of the court staff's principal worries. We did not, of course, make any comments openly for fear of what might happen to us; but in private we expressed our anxieties and apprehensions. Fear had made hypocrites of us all.

One day I was working in court, and a judge from a nearby town came into my office. He was very impulsive, but a good man at heart.

—I wish you would do me a favor, he said to me. It is to put through at once for me these requisitorial letters.

—And you bring them yourself, I asked, because it surprised me. It was customary to send them by post.

—This is a very urgent matter, said his companion who was a civil guard.

The presence of the civil guard made me suspicious, and I examined the papers very carefully. They were in perfect legal order. It was a court order to release at once eighteen men who were in the local prison. Our court was only required to notify the prisoners, as their case came under the jurisdiction of another court.

I knew for a certainty that the men in question had not committed any crime. They had been arrested for having radical ideas, and the hurry to have them released aroused my suspicion.

Nevertheless, we legalized the papers, and I went to the prison with the judge and the civil guard to notify the prisoners of their release.

The conversation which took place between the warden and the officer made matters clear to me.

—We are taking these birds right now, he said. We have a truck waiting outside.

—A good catch, isn't it? said the warden.

I understood at once what the fate of those poor fellows would be, and why they were being so hurriedly released.

As the poor men passed through my office signing the orders for their release, they were handcuffed and loaded on the truck. It was too much for me. I asked

Ayuntamiento de Madrid

my assistant to carry on for me, and I went out accompanied by the judge who brought the requisitorial letters.

—This is horrible; he said visibly affected. As in my district where nothing has happened, absolutely nothing has happened, and they have already murdered six hundred in the same manner!

I was unable to say anything in response.

—And they are not satisfied with the men we have there. They have to take them from other prisons, they are doing with these poor chaps. I had not given orders to release them before, because I knew what would happen to them as soon as they went out. But this officer came to see me personally, and I could not hold out any longer. One cannot oppose them much because one may get killed oneself!

I was so deeply affected that I could not answer anything. He went on talking.

—I could not get out of it. I had to do it. But I cannot stand it any longer. Tomorrow I'll ask for vacation, and as soon as I come I'll enlist and go to the front. Anything will be better than this... What a pity that the movement has come to this. Who have believed that it was going to be like this! No, they are taking these poor chaps who have done nothing at all!, he said excitedly. I had nothing, nothing at all for which I could even arrest them! I had kept them in prison merely to save their lives!... and now before very long, they will be in «the ditch».

I pretended to be unmoved. He explained to me that in the outskirts of his town they had opened a large ditch, and there they buried the men they executed.

—That isn't so bad, after all!, he concluded. At least we shall be spared the trouble of finding unidentified corpses every day. This was something terrible at the beginning!...

\*\*\*

A ragged, disheveled woman came into court one day, screaming hysterically. Two peace officers went to intervene and took hold of her by force to oust her.

—Who was she? I asked them.

—Oh! «Zapaterin's» wife. You do remember «Zapaterin», the one who was found dead by the crematorium?, they replied.

Yes, I remembered him. «Zapaterin» was very popular in Burgos. He was a poor shoemaker, who barely eked out a living repairing shoes. I was told that he was sixty seven years old.

Shortly after my arrival in Burgos somebody, as a joke, introduced «Zapaterin» to me saying that he was Largo Caballero's personal representative in Burgos. I considered this at the time to be an offensive rustic joke.

I pitied the poor old man. His conversation at once showed that age had weakened his mind. He was like a child. I was so affected that I endeavored through the influence of a friend to have him admitted into an asylum.

We encountered some difficulties in having him admitted. It seemed that he had a bad reputation. His young days he had been an anarchist, perhaps «active element»; but now that he was so old and nothing was left of his former self except a somewhat crazy gesticulating habit and a few hackneyed phrases which were intended to be revolutionary but in reality were rendered more grotesque when he uttered them.

His old work yielded him a more reduced income every day. The people, especially the women, even some women in high positions who seemed to have no mind of their own—boycotted the poor old man.

We were about to have him admitted into the asylum when the military uprising occurred.

I had almost forgotten all about the poor old man, but my friend took a real interest in him and kept urging me to have him admitted lest he might be arrested.

—Don't be absurd, I said to him. Who is going to bother that poor old man?

—You don't know these people, he said.

My friend was so insistent that we decided to visit together a falangist leader in order to accelerate the old man's admittance into the asylum where he would be safe from arrest.

The falangist leader was very obliging to us, and was also concerned that «Zapaterin» would not be there.

My friend and myself were quieted by his assurances; but scarcely fifteen days had elapsed—on October 9, 1936, I remember it well—when among a number of corpses which were found buried, and which were exhumed, everybody identified «Zapaterin».

«Zapaterin», the feeble minded old man, died, he had never suspected he would die: a martyr for his ideals.

\*\*\*

On November 24th. the court was notified that two unidentified corpses were lying on the drill-

(Continued on page 3)



# EDUCATION UNDER THE REPUBLIC

In spite of the terrible war which is lashing the country, the Spanish Republic is anxiously taking steps to assure all children adequate education

## New System of Primary Education

The new plan provides for a standard weekly timetable which must be observed by all national teachers.

In order to have a clear understanding of the need for this reform which has just been brought about by the Ministry of Education, it must be borne in mind that the system hitherto in force dated from the year 1909 and had not been modified since that date. The only change was the suppression of religious teaching following the advent of the Republic. In all other subjects teachers of to-day had to follow the instructions laid down by the monarchy 28 years ago. Moreover, Spain was in this respect an exception. In better organised countries schools are governed by laws and precepts which give education a nation-wide character, and which regulate the work of the teachers and assure that every citizen acquires a minimum of culture. Our schools, our teachers did not have these laws and pre-

cepts and thus lacked a criterion for their work suited to the social and cultural needs of Spain.

A new criterion is now established in our schools by a recent decree of the Ministry of Education. This decree lays down the subjects which are to be taught in all the schools and the time to be devoted to each subject.

There are some features in the new plan which are worthy of mention because they represent a real step forward in Spanish school life, which now becomes one of the most advanced in Europe.

Due importance is given to the Spanish language. Before learning grammar, children must first learn to speak, to read and to write as a necessary basis for the knowledge of their language. Our literature will be studied by recitation exercises and by reading the works of the great Spanish writers. The children will be given exercises so as to learn to express themselves freely and correctly.

Another interesting aspect is the importance given to the knowledge of the

surroundings in which the child lives. The natural surroundings, the study of the things and the beings among which the child lives and the social atmosphere. Visits to places of work are made obligatory: factories, workshops, mines, large industrial centres, so as to place the school in contact with the realities of the lives of the workers and with the means of production. On this basis a new subject in the plan of primary studies is created: economic and social knowledge, which has hitherto been absent from the school curriculum.

Preferential attention will be paid to practical work and to manual labour, which will form the basis of all school work. In this way the child will be familiarised from the very beginning with the methods and tools of work and will acquire a feeling of unity of effort in production and a conscience of his future social destiny.

History will be given a new orientation. Its content will be revised so as to determine the decisive part played by the people in every great event in history.

Great attention will be paid to athletics. There will not only be a regular period for drill every day, but once a week an entire afternoon will be devoted to athletics, games and sports so as to assure the healthy corporal development of the children.

Religious teaching and moral teaching given in the form of dogmas, which were completely useless, are suppressed. But the teachers will be encouraged to create an atmosphere of uprightness, cleanliness and honesty in order to influence the behaviour of the children. The children will also be shown the example of those men who by their works and their lives have contributed to make the peoples happier, freer and more progressive.

Without doubt this new form of primary education which has now been initiated by the Ministry of Education will have a most decisive influence on the progress of our schools and on the preparation of future generations for the work of reconstructing Spain which will have to be undertaken after our victory. (Las Noticias, Barcelona, nov. 27-37.)

## PADRE DANIEL PASIERO RUIZ

### An eyewitness of foreign invasion in the Asturias

**«If the rebels invoke the name of Christ — this old priest states — they are only scoffing at him, and invoke it only to lure honest people to condone their crimes»**

The sad caravan of old men, women and children chased out of their homes.

This old priest still trembles today when he recalls to his mind the images of what he witnessed in Santander and the Asturias, of his little village invaded by wild looking foreign soldiers.

Two days before he left his village, the guns of the rebels—harbingers of death and destruction—were booming not far distant. The fire tornado was approaching. Terrified groups of old men and women and children came running down the narrow paths. They had already come face to face with barbarism, and fled terrified not knowing where they were going.

Padre Antonio Perles was murdered by the Rebels!

The fugitives who came to the village were surprised to find father Daniel there.

—Don Daniel! What are you doing here, why don't run away at once?, they said.

—Why should I flee?, he asked in surprise. I have not harmed any one.

—Because the fascists will kill you when they get here. They killed father Antonio Perles in the other village, they said. And they will do the same to you.

—They have killed him!

The women told father Pasiero how his old friend was killed. They saw it happen. Some one informed the fascists that father Antonio Perles, who had fled from Santander with another priest—they referred to father Daniel Pasiero Ruiz—had come to the Asturias. Both priests were accused of having been in many hospitals looking after wounded republican soldiers. The rebels found out where father Perles was. The women said that the rebel soldiers took father Perles from his house, shouting at him, pushing him, scoffing at him, and then they took him out to the fields and shot him.

—You must flee, they told father Daniel. They will do the same to you if they get hold of you.

The terrified caravan, increased by inhabitants of this village who joined them in the flight, went on their uncertain road. The rebel guns were booming nearer. They could see reflected on the hills the flames from nearby villages set on fire by the rebels.

Father Daniel also fled to find a secure place to hide. He was old and could not go very far. The life of this quiet old man was threatened. A wave of destruction was approaching, preying on weak, defenseless people.

Asturians shot before the Italian flag. Night was already falling on the terrified villages. Father Pasiero Ruiz was hiding in a shep-

herd's cave, and he saw the Moors, the Italians, the requetés and falangists, who compose the «nationalist» Army, advancing. He saw the tanks, the guns, the soldiers shouting in foreign languages advancing on the village, which was surrounded.

The soldiers spoke Italian and cursed because they found no inhabitants in the humble shacks on which to satisfy their murderous instincts. Amongst them were some Navarrese and falangists, who showed an attitude of humble servility towards the foreigners.

Three trucks loaded with Asturian prisoners stopped by the cemetery. The prisoners were ordered to climb down. They were tied up in pairs, and were lined up against the walls of the cemetery to await their death.

A few hours later the old priest heard the terrified shrieks of the prisoners. The new day dawned on the tragic pile of corpses.

Father Daniel Pasiero Ruiz excused himself from giving boring details about his flight to Gijón and later to France, and about his arrival in loyal territory. People who helped him to escape are still in rebel territory, and their lives would be endangered by giving details.

He is living amongst relatives now in a town near Valencia. He says he is thankful, to be on the republican side, and he shudders when he recalls the horrible scenes of which he was a witness in Asturias and Santander.

—And those fascists dare call themselves Christians!, he said. I allow you to tell the world that I, myself, a Spanish catholic priest, firmly state after witnessing the horrible cruelty of the rebels, that they are not Christians and can never be Christians. They are only scoffing at the name of Christ when they invoke it, and invoke it only to lure honest credulous people to condone their crimes.

—I am immensely gratified that I have found peace and respect in Republican Spain.

## Notes on the situation in the rebel zone

The most important political event of the past few days in the rebel zone was an assembly held in the Monastery of Huelgas, in Burgos, at which Franco and the Councillors of Falange Española Tradicionalista (the Spanish fascist organisation) were present. In the assembly the rebel General took the following oath:

«Before God I swear to devote myself to the Unity, Greatness, and Liberty of Spain. I swear to live in brotherhood with the Spanish Traditionalist Falanx, and to lead it as its Head.» After the ceremony the first ordinary Council of the Falanx met and appointed Raimundo Fernández Cuesta to the post of General Secretary. Cuesta immediately granted Franco the right of appointing the members who are to form the political governing board of this organisation which, it seems, will assume the functions of governing rebel Spain. The Council, composed of 50 members, will be an advisory board, which will give advice whenever Franco demands it.

This monopolisation of political affairs by the Falanx has brought about underground manoeuvres, rumours, and press campaigns against the organisation of the Falangists. In reference to these intrigues, Fermín Ysardiaga, a priest and national councillor of the Falanx, made the following statement in a public assembly that was held in Vigo: «At present the Falanx is silent, and it is silent when around it there is so much noise. I would like to say to the old press, that in the new State it shall not have any power»... «The Falanx does not care whether there is talk of sharpened nails (internal dissension); the Falanx is ready to set up the National-Syndicalist State at all costs, against wind and tide...» Father Ysardiaga then urges the Falangists to be on guard against these base intrigues in the following words: «Falanx of Galicia, arise, be-

cause to arise is to be on guard with a weapon in your hands.»

Franco has signed a decree containing the regulations for the application of the compulsory mobilisation of Spanish women. «The women», the order states, «shall be awarded due honours, but they shall be obliged to lead the disciplined and dignified life which is befitting to all those who serve the Nation directly.» The Service shall last six months, but the chiefs can order it to be extended for one, two, or three years. Punishments are applicable throughout the duration of the service.

The progress of the economy of the rebel zone is described in a note published by the Governor of Córdoba in which he states that the autumn sowing did not take place in his province «because of the rain storms, and because serious difficulties have arisen» and he adds that these difficulties have not as yet been overcome.

Recently, the High Commissariat of Morocco reported that certain intrigues were going on with the aim of provoking disturbances in the French authorities of this so-called international plot, and of planning to bomb Ceuta in conjunction with certain left-wingers and of taking advantage of the resulting confusion to carry out a number of audacious coups. Agence Espagne reports that the natives who have relatives fighting in Spain took part in important demonstrations in the international city of Tangiers, crying «Death to Franco!», whom they called an assassin and accused of having betrayed the Moors. The police had to be called out to break up the demonstration. The movement extended to Tetuán, Melilla, Larache, and Xauen, where, according to the reports of the Agence Espagne, fighting took place between the natives and the troops and hand grenades and machine-guns were employed.

**All articles and items  
in this weekly  
may be reprinted**



# Extracts from a letter published in the "New York Times" signed by Professor JOHN DEWEY and about 200 American Clergymen replying to one issued by Spanish rebel prelates

All that the Spanish prelates can say about the deep-seated social and economic abuses that led to the overthrow of a feudalistic monarchy is the passing reference to «some negligence in the accomplishment of duties of justice and charity». Certainly it would seem that there was more than this to say about social and economic maladjustments, that kept Spain, in spite of its enormous wealth in resources and fertile land, a country of near starvation for millions, with the largest percentage of illiteracy and the lowest standard of living of any country in Europe. The blindness of the hierarchy to social evils, as revealed in this letter, tends to support the many charges made against the Church in Spain.

—We cannot but observe with amazement the Spanish hierarchy's appeal to the «law of nations» in a situation where the German and Italian allies of General Franco have disregarded and violated at random the most solemn precepts of international law. This appeal is marked by the same partisan treatment of the actualities, which characterizes the entire pastoral letter.

Official mass executions, such as occurred at Badajoz, and are now promised by Franco in Santander, have never been part of the Spanish Government's policy. At the beginning of this year the government issued a decree declaring the lives of all prisoners sacred. This has been exemplified by the treatment of the prisoners taken at Cerro de los Angeles and of the Italian prisoners taken at Guadalajara. Furthermore, its recent decree protecting priests and nuns is only the latest evidence of its desire to preserve order and individual liberties. On the other hand, the Franco regime, conceived in a spirit of Fascism and resting primarily on the aid of German and Italian Fascists, has encouraged violence, as all Fascist regimes encourage it. It is a recognized and openly preached part of the Fascist doctrine. Violence on the Rebel side has not been mob violence. It has been violence deliberately directed by the military-Fascist leaders.

Nor do we expect clerics, who are themselves on the territory of and in the power of the Franco regime, to discuss objectively the religious toleration provid-

ed for by law on Loyalist territory, as contrasted with the fact that Franco allows religious liberty only to Catholics sympathetic to Fascism.

The attitude of the Rebel leadership toward civil and religious liberties was plainly, if unpleasantly, stated by General Miguel Cabanellas of the Rebel High Command, and former President of the Burgos Junta. «Our enemy», he said, «is a strange company of ordinary criminals, anarchists, communists, illiterates and prostitutes... Spain will be governed in a fashion which will make it impossible for power ever again to fall in the hands of dirty politicians, Freemasons and similar parasites of human society». The General was but elaborating on a statement made by Gil Robles, leader of Catholic Action, when he said, in 1933, «We shall clean Spain of Masons and Jews.»

We think it extremely regrettable that religion should have been made an issue in the rebellion. It is clear that the Spanish conflict is between the forces of democracy and social progress, on the one hand, and the forces of special privilege and their Fascist allies, on the other. Mussolini even publicly boasts of the fall of Santander as an achievement of his Blackshirt Fascists. It is unfortunate that the Spanish hierarchy should thus be made to appear as the apologists for reaction and Fascism. We are loath to believe that this pastoral letter definitely expresses the position of the Catholic Church on the armed rebellion against, and the Fascist invasion of, Republican Spain. Certainly the hierarchy can hardly expect to gain sympathy here either for itself or for the Catholic religion with a declaration that treats with contempt principles that are the precious heritage of the American people.

Not one word about the murder of priests and nuns in Rebel territory, of the systematic destruction of the Protestant missions which have grown up in Spain since the Republic was established, of the execution of many Protestant ministers by the Rebels, of the destruction of the religious sanctuary of Begoña in the Basque country.

M. Jacques Maritain, whom even the London Tablet, the wellknown Catholic

organ, calls «balanced and soundly orthodox», has raised his voice in protest against the frightful massacre of Loyalists by the Rebels at Badajoz. «It is sacrilege», says M. Maritain, «to shoot, as at Badajoz, hundreds of mes.»

The prelates justify their repudiation of the 1936 elections by asserting that the results were corrupt because of «governmental connivance», but they fail to mention the rather relevant fact that the Conservative Right was in control of both the government and the election machinery. After the suppression of the Asturian miners in 1934 the Republicans, with the exception of a few members, left the Cortes. The Centrist-Rightist government, headed by the Conservative, Manuel Portela Valladares, controlled the new elections of 1936, which returned a Republican majority to the Cortes. After the constitution of the new Cortes a number of election districts were thrown out on account of irregularities (which also happened under former Conservative regimes), but even without the contested seats there was a majority for the Popular Front, which thus gained control of the Cortes, the constituted authority. Actually the victory of the Popular Front was won despite the «governmental connivance», despite hostile pressure from a large part of the clergy, and despite the fact that the reactionary government under Lerroux and Gil Robles had imprisoned some thirty thousand liberals and progressives, including many of the leaders of the Popular Front parties.

Is it possible that the prelates, in repudiating the 1936 elections, are not condemning the election machinery so much

as they are the results? Is it possible that they are willing to abide by democratic procedure only so long as their candidates win? Whatever the case may be, it is clear that the hierarchy, in attempting to nullify the Popular Front victory of 1936, is arrogating to itself a power superior to that of the Spanish Government and its Constitution. By so doing it is not only jeopardizing orderly and legal government, but promoting the very lawlessness of which it so bitterly complains. Moreover, we believe that religion and the dignity of the Church must suffer irreparably when its leaders become pawns in the game of politics.

To excuse their inconsistency, the prelates offer an ingenious argument. They assert that the victory of the People's Front parties in the elections of February 1936, came about «through governmental connivance which overrode the people's will, forming a political machine in conflict with the majority of the nation». They then make the shocking declaration that «the war, therefore, is like an armed plebiscite». By such reasoning, they attempt to convince the world of the respectability and legitimacy of the present rebellion. If the war is simply a «plebiscite», are Franco's Nazis, Moors and Italians then simply imported voters? «What right have these foreign troops», asks Professor James T. Shotwell in The New York Times, «to cast their votes in the blood and iron ballots that blotted out Basque liberties?» An «armed plebiscite» is an obvious absurdity, sinister in the contempt it reflects for democratic procedure.

## German Sausages for Franco Spain

An indication of how many foreigners—and what kind of foreigners—there are in Franco's Spain just now can be gained from the Press.

On November 9 the Heraldo de Aragon gave an account of the opening of an Italian hospital. Among the guests were a Col. Casinelli, of the «Nationalist Aviation», and a Lt.-Col. Satattone who, it appears, is Medical Officer of Health for Saragossa. The building was blessed by the Italian priest Serafini.

But that was an Italian hospital, you say. Well, what about these advertisements in the A B C of Seville for October 31: «German couple, without children, would like board residence»; «German couple, without children want small flat»; «Two brothers, German, want bedrooms»; and last but certainly not least, «Sausage-maker wanted, specialist in German sausages».

(And they still CRY «Arriba España!»).

## SOCIAL CLEANING...

(Continued from page 2)

grounds, which were at a distance of three kilometers from the city. They were also used for official executions.

We were about to start. A lieutenant-colonel who was a military judge attached to the Fifth Division came to visit us officially on a confidential matter.

He came about «that affair». They had found a brakeman of the Santander Mediterráneo Railroad, who was a member of the Socialist Party, and his daughter, who was famed for her beauty, dead on the drilling grounds. The girl had been raped before she was killed, and it was convenient to hush the matter up, for the family of the deceased were well-known and the affair would cause a bad impression in town if it were given publicity.

The military judge deplored that such things occurred, that only barbarians could commit such crimes; but for the sake of «el glorioso movimiento nacional» (the glorious national movement) he decided that this particular case must be referred to a military court, and that no publicity must be given it.

We acceded to such a demand, as we considered that the case really came under the scope of a military court. But we found out later that they did not bother to hold an inquest, but had merely ordered the corpses to be secretly buried, and that was the end of the case.

\*\*\*

Our functions were becoming burdensome. More «Unidentified corpses» were found each day. Our performances to «cover formalities», without holding inquests on any cases, were really ridiculous and humiliating.

At last we decided to complain to one of the principal leaders of the «movement».

—But we are cleaning the rearguard, he said. It is only natural to be excessive in some cases. Nevertheless, what you have been telling me is serious enough, and things cannot continue like this. They will have to come to an end. I shall issue severe orders tomorrow so that things may be done in a different way. They must be «well buried». It is imperative that no more corpses be found lying around like that.

Ayuntamiento de Madrid

On taking leave, we had to smile and «respectfully» shake the hand which that personality graciously extended to us.

From the book «Doy Fe...» (I Certify...) by Antonio Ruiz Vilaplana, Secretary of a Law Court in Burgos, who recently escaped from rebel territory. This book has just been published in Paris.

All articles and items in this weekly may be reprinted