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Indalecio Prieto's Statement on The Capture of Teruel

"No other Army in the world would have fought under such conditions as did the Republican Army at Teruel"

Indalecio Prieto, Minister of National Defence, who, was present at the front during the operations which ended with the capture of Teruel by the Republican Army, issued the following statement:

"I have never been so deeply moved throughout this bloody war as I was yesterday when I saw the thousands of men, women and children leaving Teruel along the Sagunto highway. That stream of human beings pouring out of the conquered city made my heart tighten with a sadness that was greater than my joy over the victory. Amid the tragic silence of the night it resembled a parade of ghosts. The silence was broken by women weeping in anguish, and the tiny voices of children calling out for their mothers.

This spectacle brought vividly to my mind that immense trail of sorrow that the war leaves behind it. But on watching these people my conscience was quieted, for I am not in the least responsible for the calamity which Spain is suffering.

I saw it coming, and I did everything in my power to stop it, but all my efforts to prevent it were dashed to pieces by the blindness of those who did not believe that it would come. And when it came about I assumed a leading role in defense of the independence of my country, of the freedom of the Spanish people, and also, perhaps, of that of Europe.

If I were one of the men who provoked this war—even were I to taste the fruits of a final victory—the weight of responsibility for having caused a catastrophe, which will leave in Spain a long trail of sorrow and ruin, would certainly shatter my soul to pieces. History will not exonerate those men who initiated the military rebellion of July, 1936, from this monstrous crime. Of all the offensives which we have carried

out so far, that of Teruel is by far the most perfect. This is due, no doubt, to the better state of our Army, to the great improvement in the discipline and training of its men, which contributes greatly to increase the efficiency of soldiers possessing magnificent qualities. The first few days of the operations, under a blinding snowstorm, were terrible. I believe that no other Army in the world would have fought under such conditions. I could not remain for more than two minutes in the observation post—which was in the open air—from which I was watching the advance of our troops, because the freezing wind would not allow it. It was there where we received the news that some soldiers had died of cold.

The victory gained by our troops must have been a surprise to many people abroad who had made the mistake of writing out the death certificate of the Spanish Republic, wrongly supposing that our Army was incapable of any fruitful action. For this was, indeed, what fascist propaganda abroad claimed, and it seems that a great number of European politicians are simple enough to be impressed by this propaganda.

The operations represent a perfect coordination of planning, direction and accomplishment. They, moreover, reveal the fact that the Republican Army is under a magnificent technical direction, but they bring to light even more clearly that we possess marvelous soldiers whose endurance is made a hundredfold stronger by their faith in the ideal they are defending.

The Republican Army is today acting as a shock force for European democracy, which instead of repaying the Spanish people's cruel sacrifices with indifference, should render them their admiration and afford them help which hitherto they have denied them." — Fabra.

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MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Note Issued by Prieto Regarding the So-Called Blockade

On 23 December 1937 the Minister of National Defence issued the following note:

"As may be well appreciated the name of «myth» given to the supposed blockade of our coasts has not proved to be erroneous. Shipping has not been interfered with in the least by rebel warships, and, as for the threat of a blockade by mines, this has proved nothing more than a flight of fancy.

"Our mine-sweeping service, which has been operating along our coasts and at the entrance to our harbours for a long time past, is functioning with such regularity and efficiency that it completely eliminates all danger from mines.

"The rebels may sporadically and under cover of darkness try to lay a few isolated mines. These, however, are only found by our mine-sweepers and added to our own stock of mines.

"The most elemental reasons of prudence and discretion prevent us from explaining the manner in which the mine-sweeping service is organised. But it has to its credit many months of experience and this fact has enabled it, as we have previously shown, to guarantee the safety of shipping in our territorial waters."

All articles and items in this weekly may be reprinted

MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Note on the Capture of Teruel

On 24th December 1937 the Ministry of National Defence issued the following note:

"The operations which the Army of the Teruel Front has just carried out give rise, especially abroad, to the comments of technicians who are bewildered by the course events have taken and by the results of these operations. The Ministry of National Defence therefore considers it appropriate to say the following:

The High Command considered that the Army had reached a high enough standard to capture Teruel. This was, moreover, an absolute necessity, both in order to strengthen that front from a defensive point of view and to

have a better base for future operations.

The offensive had to be planned in the greatest secrecy and at the same time it had to be carried out with rapidity and audacity.

The preparation of this offensive necessitated the working out of all the plans in an atmosphere of secrecy and reserve. Following this the concentration of men and material had to be made without anyone noticing it.

All this was carried out in the greatest secrecy according to plan. A large number of men and a large quantity of material were mobilised without the enemy knowing a word about it. Strategic and tactical surprise was

thus complete and this accounted for a great saving of lives.

The rapidity with which the offensive was carried out was up to the standard of the largest European armies.

One division attained its objective 12 kilometers away in the space of three hours. Two columns, which started from bases 20 kilometers apart, advanced in the direction ordered and met at the appointed place and at the appointed hour. In this way, within twelve hours of the commencement of the offensive, the enemy's line had been broken and the pinchers movement completed. Losses only amounted to 300.

In the territory thus occupied

were four villages — Concud, San Blas, La Cuca and Campillo — as well as several hamlets, all well fortified. The People's Army, by choosing the lines of least resistance, advanced 10 kilometers into the enemy's rear and left many of the enemy's forces to one side. These were later mopped up. The audacity of Brunete and the might of Belchite were thus combined in a single action. And all the attacking forces contributed to this.

In order to understand the true importance of this, one must bear in mind that in Campillo 200 prisoners were captured, including five officers and a battery of three-inch guns, and that in Concud and San Blas the number of prisoners was over 150 and another battery was captured.

At the same time as communications were cut with Teruel, another column attacked the enemy's lines from the south. It broke through them and began advancing on Teruel from the point at which the Republican lines had been nearest to that city.

The garrisons of the inactive front, in response to the orders

of the High Command, launched a general offensive 90 kilometers in length stretching from Campillo to Cerro Gordo. The old positions fell into the hands of soldiers who had remained for weeks on end in their trenches talking of partial attacks on Teruel, all of which had failed. The names of Pancho Villa, el Carrascalejo, the Hermitage, the Trench of Death, the Tooth of Villastar, La Roca, La Hoyuela will mean little to the reader, but for the soldiers they meant a world of emotions, a year of inactivity which has been overcome now merely by the giving of an order. The veteran soldier of an inactive front, confined to his trench or his cave of refuge, has suddenly acquired great confidence in himself.

Speaking of immediate military realities, the capture of Teruel gives us a city for the Republic; a stronger defensive front which diminishes dangerous threats; a junction of communications which lessens distances and makes manoeuvres easier, which raises the offensive capacity of the army and raises its morale."

Franco, Little General and Great Traitor

by A. Santana Fraguero (1)

I know Franco. I have seen him in Tenerife many times. His wife went regularly to the Bar Alemán (German Bar) with other ladies, and occasionally Franco came later to join her. Apart from his part in helping to direct from Madrid (it was said) the bloody repression in Asturias, very little was then known about him in Tenerife. He was just «the new General».

He sat outside the bar with the ladies, sometimes with other officers; but never talked much, only when he was spoken to. He was listless, with his mouth permanently open — as if he were suffering from adenoids — a blank expression on his face, indifferent to what was going on around him, except for the sharp, suspicious glances he darted here and there — even to those sitting at his table. On observing his dull mien at such a close range one was not surprised that he was famed for his ruthlessness and savagery in punishing his «legionarios» in Africa.

I also saw him in other places with his wife, and I do not exactly know up to this day why he roused my interest. His cold, calculating countenance produced a disturbing feeling in me. If he were casually observed when he was with his wife, Franco would give the impression that he was henpecked; but closer observation would promptly dispel this idea. It would appear, rather, that his wife's nature was a complementary part of his, in the same way as he seemed to be an outlet for impulses prompted by some peculiar streak in Señora Franco's nature. Whenever I saw them together, thoughts of Proust's M. and Mme. Vaugoubert involuntarily but persistently recurred to my mind.

It was not necessary to be a very keen observer to discern at once that the insignificant little general did not possess a very brilliant mind, but that at the very roots of his nature lay a tremendous amount of ambition, vanity and suspiciousness. These were the main attributes of his spiritual life.

The people of Tenerife had a proof of his «little intelligence» when he made the famous speech on board the French steamer. No doubt, Franco thought then that he would cause a great sensation. He would make his speech in French. He started off well enough: «Mesdames et Messieurs», but on trying to go farther he found himself unequal to the task, and he had to continue his speech in Spanish. He did not say much, at that. Only how friendly France and Spain were, that they had had friendly relations all the time, and that he hoped they would continue having them. That was all.

Shortly after his arrival in Tenerife, Franco was seized by fear that his life was in danger. He saw plots to take his life being hatched everywhere. He went to the People's Front Governor to ask for protection. The Governor obligingly provided a police escort for him. — Franco later repaid the obliging Governor by having him shot.

But Franco did not feel himself secure with only the police escort protecting his life. Perhaps he felt that the police would be effective only in scaring away burglars, but not in protecting his life. And he wanted to have it well protected — or perhaps his plotting allies did — although he did not then even suspect that he was to loom so high on the horizons of reactionary Spain.

He therefore selected six of his most trusted officers to act as his bodyguard.

When Franco went out at night, they greatly exaggerated the precautions taken against would-be killers. An officer in civilian clothes waited for him at the entrance of the Comandancia. Another officer was stationed in the middle of the Plaza de Weyler, another at the corner of Fermín Galán and Callao de Lima Streets, and so forth. Then the officers would move ahead by turns to take the next corner until Franco reached the Royal Victoria cinema.

All these precautions were, to a great extent, merely a publicity stunt. —The campaign of lies against the People's Front Government was already in full swing—. The reactionary faction wished to demonstrate how their good men were constantly persecuted and their lives threatened. But Franco's bad conscience and his suspicious nature also accounted for it. Franco was conscious of his profound aversion for the workers. He knew, also, that the people, especially the workers, hated him as much as he hated them. But neither the workers nor the Republican elements took Franco very seriously until he became too much of a nuisance.

Perhaps obeying orders from his allies in the Peninsula, Franco sent his officers to seize the leftist papers which came from Madrid when they contained something disagreeable to them. Whenever he had an opportunity, he would provoke the workers.

On May first he set up machine guns at strategic points in Puerto de la Cruz and at the Army's headquarters in Santa Cruz to have the May Day parade mowed down with machine gun fire. Had the artillery regiment responded, Franco would have done it. Later when some young socialists were returning from an excursion, he ordered the officer in command at Orotava not to let them pass. He had the soldiers out ready to shoot the young people down, and had not it been for the energetic intervention of the Mayor of Orotava, Sr. Manuel González, a bloody affray would have taken place.

As a reprisal for these provoking acts, a few young fellows threw inkwells at the screen when they were showing at the Royal Victoria cinema a picture of the foreign legion in which Franco was the hero. Army officers and the reactionary faction were greatly incensed by this outrage and demanded that the «culprits» be found out and severely punished.

But officially neither the workers nor the Republican authorities did anything to molest Franco. He was left alone with his plots and counterplots.

Franco's ambition did not prompt him to aspire to such heights as he does today. Moreover, his political ideas seemed to be nil. Franco would have been satisfied with being the pet general of the nation. He became a general when he was still very young, he probably thought, because he was able. He wanted, therefore, to be considered — as he considered himself — the best Spanish general. The facts have proved that Franco did not care much whether it was under the Republic or under the Monarchy. All he wanted was to be «the pet general».

Franco, once he starts off in pursuit of an object of his ambition, will not hesitate even to commit

treason and murder, if he has to, in order to satisfy his ambitious nature. Although he went on plotting with his reactionary allies, Franco was highly suspicious of them. He feared that in case they won, they would not place him at the head of the government. They would certainly choose Sanjurjo or Goded, or another so he started to make plans of his own on the side.

He wrote a letter to the then Prime Minister, Casares Quiroga, telling him of the officers' disgust with the Republic, that the officers might be plotting against the Republic, and that a man of prestige and influence with the officers was needed to appease them, and that he himself, Franco, was the man. He offered his services to the «Frente Popular». He asked to be transferred to Madrid and made sole chief of the Army. As his services were not accepted, he turned fiercely against the Republic.

When Franco assumed the leadership of the rebellion in Morocco, he had designs of his own, for he did not trust his allies, and he was determined not to be merely their instrument. He wanted to be the master himself.

Fortunately for the reactionary faction, what Franco was planning to grab for himself, by force if need be, came easily into his hands with the removal of Sanjurjo, Fanjul and Goded. By a capricious twist of chance Franco was brought to the foreground and made head of the rebellion. He then placed himself at the disposal of the reactionary faction and the fascist powers, and he himself became a fascist over-night.

With his ambition and vanity whetted, he became a marionette in the hands of the publicity men sent to Spain by Germany and Italy. He had formerly proclaimed himself «the saviour of the Republic», but he changed when told that he was the saviour of Spain, not the Republic. He acceded. Then he was told that he was saving Europe, and the world and civilization and culture — almost everything on this god's earth — and he merrily accepted the role assigned to him.

All this suited his ambitious nature and his vanity. He pictured himself as head of a future Spanish Empire with great possessions and surrounded by loving subjects. He became so much imbued with this idea that he did not care how much of Spain he gave away to Germany and Italy, or how many thousands of Spanish men, women and children were murdered, as long as he was made the boss of the future Spanish Empire.

His ambition plus his lack of a clear intelligence, allowed him to be bamboozled still further, and made him to still aspire loftier things.

It was whispered in religious circles that a divine will must be behind the tragic removal of Sanjurjo, Fanjul, Goded and then Mola. The Lord employs such incomprehensible and mysterious ways of manifesting his will that one never knows! Perhaps He destined Franco to render him some service on earth.

Perhaps some obscure, rustic priest imparted the news to Señora Franco that the Lord had selected her husband to be His envoy on earth. She at once told Franco that he had been entrusted with this divine mission. The good news was occasionally printed in the papers in rebel territory, but in a timid way, lost in the middle of some profound

New Contingents of Italian Troops Landed in Ceuta

Dissatisfaction Amongst Phalangists in Morocco

Tanger.—A dispatch from Ceuta states that new contingents of Italian troops were landed in that port, and it has been learned from reliable sources that these troops were brought from Palma Majorca and form part of the Italian expeditionary forces destined for the occupation of Spanish Morocco.

This news confirms rumours which were circulated here a few days ago. The landing of the Italian troops in Ceuta is due, it is said, to the state of nervousness and the activity which has lately been noticed in the International zone, especially in the Franciscan convents. In this respect the activities in the convents which the Franciscans have in Tanger are highly significant. Very early in the morning last Sunday four trucks were parked in front of one of the convents; enormous boxes were being unloaded which, as one of the drivers confidentially stated, contained war material from Italy.

Phalangist circles in this city are highly dissatisfied with the activities of the Franciscan monks, as Phalangists here know well what Mussolini's plans are in regard to Spanish Morocco and Tanger. It is currently believed here that after leaving the League of Nations Italy has more liberty of action to carry out her plans.

editorial, by some ardent fan of his. It did not take deep roots until after Mola's death. It was thrown to the four winds then: Franco was entrusted with a divine mission, he was the Lord's envoy. Franco accepted this mission as he had accepted the others.

His admirers in the Canary Islands considered that nothing was too good for the «Generalissimo». They decided to erect a monument to him on the Teide — the high peak of the Canaries — and they lost no time in starting the collection to pay

for it. —They were clever at making collections—. Franco was consulted, and he telegraphed back that the idea greatly pleased him.

«Yes, go ahead, build a monument, a statue of myself. But it must be large, very large, so that it may be seen from a great distance. It must shed its light on future generations, so that it may be a guide to Culture and Civilization.»

(1) The author of this article, who is forced to hide his identity under a pen name for fear of reprisals against his relatives, lived for 15 months in rebel territory and has only recently escaped over to the loyalist side.)

They are Spaniards!

When the first Republican soldiers entered Teruel, some of the inhabitants whom the fascists had not allowed to escape during the truce granted by the Government forces, ventured to go out into the street.

As soon as they caught sight of the advancing Republican soldiers, they cried out in astonishment: «But they are not Russians. They are Spaniards!»

Don Julio Just, who is a member of the Cortes and former minister, and who had followed the first Republican troops into the city, conversed with the stupefied people of Teruel.

«But», they explained, «the rebels have been telling us ever since last summer that the Republican army is entirely composed of foreigners, the majority of whom are Russians. And here we see nothing but Spanish soldiers and officers. It is hard for us to understand.»

This fact is symptomatic and shows to what extremes the rebels have gone in their campaign of lies, calculated to deceive the people. By maintaining a rigorous censorship of all letters and by broadcasting news entirely lacking in truth, the insurgents manage to keep the people living in the territory under their sway in complete ignorance of the truth.

When, therefore, in the coming year the Republican Army begins its triumphal advance and liberates the cities and villages of Andalusia, Castille, Extremadura and all the rest of Spanish territory which still lies under the yoke of the insurgents, a thick veil will be torn from before the eyes of millions of people. For then they will understand the meaning of the true Republican Spain and the Spanish People's Army.

For our Army is Spanish, genuinely and authentically Spanish. Apart from the heroic International Brigade, who are not mercenaries, but men of ideals, there are no foreign units whatsoever. Where are the Moors, the riff-raff legionaries, the Italians, the Germans, the Lybians and the Abyssinians in the ranks of the Republican forces? Who has seen them? Nobody.

It was the Spaniards who captured Teruel, and it was only right that Spaniards should free a Spanish city. The same will occur in all the cities and villages of rebel Spain as soon as the hour of their liberation is sounded.

(«El Diluvio». Barcelona, 24 December 1937.)

The people support Franco with great enthusiasm

The newspaper «Lucha» (Fight) of Teruel 26-11-37 complains of the poor response of villages in that province to the appeal for Social Aid for soldiers at the front. The village of Fuentes Claras gave the sum of four pesetas and that of Baguena two pesetas. «This is the limit», says the newspaper. «These villages are not worthy of four pesetas».

(«La Unión». Seville, 3-12-37.)

No one shall be a little «The Leader»

Anyone who tries to limit the powers of our leader (Franco) is a bad Spaniard. Those who suggest such limitations are collaborators of the reds and enemies of the fatherland.

(«La Unión». Seville, 3-12-37.)

LIAN JOURNEY TO REBEL HEADQUARTERS

QUEIPO SMERDY- AKOFF

Our journey as far as Ayamonte, the Spanish frontier station, was made by the regular train service. The frontier is formed by a river, the Guadiana; we were taken across by ferry, for there is no bridge at this spot. It was here that three days before fugitives from rebel territory had thrown themselves in the river in order to swim to the frontier of a country which they took to be neutral. Phalangists had fired at them with their rifles; and Portuguese on the opposite bank, finding this entertaining sport, had done the same. Not one of the fugitives had reached the bank alive. Even had they done so they would have been sent back again.

From Ayamonte to Seville there is a bus service. The road runs through Huelva and La Palma del Condado, that is to say, through a district that has been more or less from the outset in rebel hands; nevertheless, the villages on the route gave an impression of disorder. At every little stopping-place a group of men who had up till then been sitting chatting outside the Town Hall, threw away their cigarettes and, seizing their rifles, surrounded the bus. Their appearance was hardly such as to arouse confidence; had one not known them to be the guardians of law and order, one would have taken them for bandits.

Spain, arise — everybody get out!

There followed a strict examination of passports and luggage, effectively backed up by the muzzles of the loaded rifles. We were mostly well-dressed people in the bus. The only suspect was a young man in a blue fitter's overall; and he was the only one to be subjected to a personal search. As we were about to leave Huelva, and he had been searched for the sixth or seventh time, he let fall a protest, which was met by a blow in the face; he turned pale and lapsed into silence. The official behaved as though nothing had happened. We drove on.

Round about one o'clock we arrived in Seville.

The first native of Seville that I spoke to after my arrival was the porter of the Hotel Madrid who carried my suitcase from the bus stop to the hotel. He spoke a little French and was pleased at an opportunity of showing off his knowledge. 'You'll be all right at our hotel. You needn't be afraid there', he informed me confidentially. 'We've only had two arrests in the last few days. One was a French journalist; the Seguridad fetched him from the hotel at three o'clock this morning to examine his passport; probably they'll let him go again quite soon. The other was an Englishman from Gibraltar, who registered at the hotel as "General Belton". He came the day before yesterday and was arrested straight away. For two days we sent food in to him in prison, but yesterday it was sent back. Either they shot him or let him go; either he is a spy or it was a mistake. With us, as I said, you'll be all right; if you'd gone to the Hotel Cristina you wouldn't be so well off, for the Cristina is full of German officers, and they take everyone for

a spy, especially anyone who speaks French...'

There were no other English correspondents in Seville besides myself, and I was lucky; just before I was to be arrested I escaped to Gibraltar and was not arrested until five months later.

I imagine that foreign correspondents in Spain will have a lot of tales to tell when the war is over and there is no more need for caution.

My first step was to go straight to Bolin. He was very pleasant and told me that the rebels hoped soon to win the war. It was impossible to get anything out of him.

Then I went on foot to Queipo de Llano's headquarters to present my letters of introduction and to secure an interview with the General himself.

At Rebel Headquarters

The headquarters of the Second Division of the rebel army, under the command of General Queipo de Llano, is in the Calle de las Palmas in the heart of Seville. It is a typical Spanish building with doors and windows opening on sunny, cloistered courtyards. Day and night these courtyards are filled with a motley and confused throng of men in the most varied uniforms: Foreign Legionaries of the *Tercio*, adventurous figures straight from the films; elegant Carlists with red Basque berets; young merchants' sons in the uniform of the *Falange Española*; airmen in white uniforms who, curiously enough, speak broken Spanish and while away the time of waiting in reading the *«Völkischer Beobachter»*. All these people jostle and elbow each other languidly in the courtyards, roll cigarettes, and wait. For what? The sergeant-major next to me has been waiting thirty-six hours to be received by Colonel Questa, Queipo de Llano's chief of staff. He has spent the night in the courtyard, has had his food brought to him from the canteen and takes it all as a matter of course. The airmen are waiting for orders; the non-commissioned officers are waiting for mess vouchers; the quartermaster sergeants are waiting for the pay for their troops. No one is in a hurry, everything proceeds at a leisurely pace. In amongst this crowd come and go priests and chaplains, important-looking gentlemen in civilian clothes, couriers whom I saw in Lisboa, women in black veils inquiring after the whereabouts of their husbands, newsboys, shoe-blacks, ice-vendors, all in the courtyard of the General Staff, in the Holy of Holies of the Civil War, only a few steps from General Queipo de Llano's sanctum. This room too opens directly on to the court, and the door, hidden only by a screen, is left open because of the heat; if you stand on tip-toe you can see the gaunt figure of the General within, bending over a flag-bedecked map with Colonel Questa and a German airman. It is difficult to believe that in this nonchalant, languid, leisured atmosphere decisions are being taken as to the plan of campaign for the following day, decisions affecting the life and death of people and cities. And yet the whole scene is in perfect keeping with the general picture presented by the first few weeks of the war, about which, for all the ferocity and dogged resolution dis-

played by both sides, there is a curious note of improvisation, of unorganized hectic activity.

I waited four hours for my promised interview with Queipo de Llano, but when the Council of War was over, the General had to repair to the studio to give famous daily talk over the wireless. The studio was just across the courtyard, opposite his room. Its furniture, likewise improvised, consisted of a microphone, a desk and a recess, where a radio engineer with earphones clamped over his head was testing the acoustics.

The General's talk lasts an hour, during which time the door of the studio is left open. By evening the crowd in the courtyard has thinned out somewhat; officers and soldiers sit down informally on the paving-stones of the courtyard and listen to the General, cigarettes in their mouths. The General stands at the microphone, his notes in his hand; he gesticulates violently as he talks, but keeps an eye the whole time on the engineer, who, like the conductor of an orchestra, gives him a silent signal whenever his diction is either too loud or too soft. After about an hour he concludes, somewhat abruptly, with his usual *«buenas noches»*; the whole courtyard grins and applauds, and the General acknowledges their approval with a courteous little bow, just as though he were on the stage. A very odd glimpse, this, of the General Staff of an army; but the observer has long since ceased to be astonished. Did he not know the bestial reality behind all this, he would imagine that he was either dreaming or was present at an opera.

Portrait of a Rebel General

At this time General Queipo de Llano was one of the most famous broadcasters in the world; every evening millions of adherents and opponents listened in to his talk from Seville, with mixed feelings, but with rapt attention. Never, probably, in the whole history of wars and civil wars has a general made speeches to the world — and such picturesque speeches too; and even if his accounts of the strategic situation are frequently contradicted by the facts on the very next day, they have never been lacking a certain artistic charm. Here are some samples, taken at random:

July 23rd, 1936. 'Our brave Legionaries and *Regulares* have shown the red cowards what it means to be a man. And incidentally the wives of the reds too. These Communist and Anarchist women, after all, have made themselves fair game by their doctrine of free love. And now they have at least made the acquaintance of real men, and not milksops of militiamen. Kicking their legs about and struggling won't save them.'

August 12th. 'The Marxists are ravaging beasts, but we are gentlemen. Señor Companys deserves to be stuck like a pig.'

August 18th. 'I have to inform you that I have in my power as hostages a large number of the relatives of the Madrid criminals, who are answerable with their lives for our friends in the capital. I likewise repeat what I have already said, namely, that we have a number of the

miners from the Río Tinto mines in our prisons... I don't know why we are called rebels; after all, we have nine-tenths of Spain behind us. And since we have nine-tenths of Spain behind us, I fancy that those on the other side are rebels and that we should be treated as legal government by the rest of the world.'

August 19th. 'Eighty per cent of the families of Andalusia are already in mourning. And we shall not hesitate, either, to adopt even more rigorous measures to assure our ultimate victory. We shall go on to the bitter end and continue our good work until not a single Marxist is left in Spain.'

September 3rd. 'If the bombardment of La Línea or one of the other coastal towns is repeated, we shall have three members of the families of each of the red sailors executed. We don't like doing this, but war is war.'

September 8th. 'I have given orders for three members of the families of each of the sailors of the loyalist cruiser that bombarded La Línea to be shot... To conclude my talk I should like to tell my daughter in Paris that we are all in excellent health and that we should like to hear from her.'

I had heard a few of these gems before my departure from Paris, and had pictured the speaker as a kind of Spanish Falstaff or Gargantua — coarse, jovial, red-nosed, fat and apoplectic. And now he was actually standing five paces away from me, in front of the microphone; on a lanky, gaunt, almost ascetic frame was poised a head with expressionless, sullen features; a thin-lipped mouth, covered by a short, scanty moustache, and grey cold eyes in which a smile was seldom, a peculiar and disconcerting flicker frequently, visible. The contrast between the extremely grave and restrained, if crabbed personality of the General and his spicy, burlesque way of expressing himself at the microphone was not merely staggering, it was positively uncanny.

His talk had now come to an end; while it was being translated into Portuguese, the General led me across the courtyard to his room. His first question was whether reception of Seville was good in Paris and London, and whether his talks came over well.

On my answering in the affirmative he continued ruminatively:

'I am told that I can scarcely be heard in Central Europe. Atmospherics are supposed to be responsible. But I am rather inclined to think there is deliberate interference from other stations.'

A somewhat painful pause ensued. Then, before I had time to put my first question, Queipo de Llano asked me rather brusquely:

'How is it that you've come to Seville?'

I reminded the General that I had received a *«Salvo Conducto»* signed by Gil Robles in Lisbon.

'Don't talk to me about Gil Robles', interrupted His Excellency illhumouredly. 'When we are victorious, Spain will be governed by a military cabinet; we shall sweep away all the parties and their representatives. None of these gentlemen will be members of the Government.'

'Not even Señor Gil Robles?'

'I can assure you that Señor Gil Robles will not be a member

of the new Government.'

I turned the conversation round to foreign affairs. What would happen in the event of a victory of the military party? The answer was short and succinct:

'Spain will maintain the closest friendly relations with Germany, Italy and Portugal, all of which states support us in our struggle and whose corporate constitutions we intend to imitate.'

To my next question, what would be the relations of the new Spain to those countries which adhered strictly to the Non-Intervention agreement. His Excellency's answer was no less precise. It consisted of two words:

'Less friendly.'

Finally I questioned him as to the origin of the German and Italian planes, 'the activities of which on the Nationalist side had aroused such lively comments abroad.'

'We bought those machines in Tetuan', replied Queipo de Llano with a smile. 'It's nobody's business.'

'Whom did you buy them from in Tetuan?'

'From a private trader, who buys and sells aeroplanes off his own bat.'

I failed to discover from His Excellency the name of this curious private individual in Tetuan who apparently was in a position to deal in dozens of the most up-to-date foreign war-planes. I also failed to get in any further questions, for the General broke off abruptly and proceeded immediately to a description of the atrocities committed by the Government troops.

For some ten minutes he described in a steady flood of words, which now and then became extremely racy, how the Marxists slit open the stomachs of pregnant women and speared the foetuses; how they had tied two eight-year old girls on to their father's knees, violated them, poured petrol on them and set them on fire. This went on and on, unceasingly, one story following another a perfect clinical demonstration in sexual psychopathology.

Spittle oozed from the corners of the General's mouth, and there was the same flickering glow in his eyes which I had remarked in them during some passages of his broadcast. I interrupted again and again to ask him where these things had happened, and was given the names of two places: 'Puente Genil' and 'Lora del Río'. When I asked whether His Excellency had in his possession documentary evidence with regard to these excesses, he replied in the negative; he had special couriers, he said, who brought him verbal information with regard to incidents of this kind from all sectors of the front.

Unexpectedly the flood ceased, and I was given my *congé*.

Some days later the Spanish Consul in Gibraltar told me that on the occasion of an officers' banquet in Tetuan in the year 1926 he had seen Queipo de Llano in an epileptic fit.

Taken from a book entitled *«Spanish Testament»* by Arthur Koestler, foreign correspondent of the London newspaper *«News Chronicle»*, who was taken prisoner by the insurgents at Málaga. The book is published by Gollancz and contains an introduction by the Duchess of Atholl.

Social Cleaning Goes on Behind the Rebel Lines

by Antonio Ruiz Vilaplana

After a restless night—a night peculiar to Burgos at that time, dark, full of hymns sung by strident voices and of the raucous sounds of automobile horns—a peace officer came to wake me nervously banging at my door.

—Come, don Antonio... Get up. We have seven more corpses.

I got up still half asleep, and replied automatically:

—You go to the judge's and wait for me. I shall be there presently.

I could still hear the steps of the peace officer going away from my door when I started to dress nervously.

Seven more corpses! These brutal words were still ringing in my ears. It had been the same for twenty, forty... I had already forgotten how many days. I had lost all notion of time during that period of nightmares.

That constant spectacle of ruthless brutality, so highly emotional, strongly aroused my sensitiveness. That terrible wave of murders, which we registered on the official records as «committed by unknown persons» greatly troubled my conscience, as if I myself had been an accomplice to those crimes.

I started on my way to the judge's. It was still dark and very cold, as the mornings in Burgos at this time of the year usually are. I felt cold, sad and dejected.

I had to pass by a huge building belonging to the Jesuits, now converted into a barracks, and it recalled to my mind the famous suit in which this very building was involved a few months before my arrival in Burgos. The Republican State, in accordance with a Law voted by Parliament, tried to expropriate this building, but the foxy Jesuits simulated a previous sale and the Republican Government was prevented from expropriating the building. And the State, republican, popular, secular,—caught in the network of reactionary Justice—had to swallow this coarse stratagem...

How easily—I thought—had the Jesuit padres, after the military uprising, jumped over legal obstacles in order to place the beautiful building at the disposal of the Army. And they had said that it did not belong to them any longer; indeed, what did it matter, for the sake of the patriotic and religious rebellion it was permissible to disregard such little things as title deeds. Those were left for that naive republican State bitten by the bug of legality...

The officer in command of the forces quartered in the building, grateful for the Jesuits' obliging act, had granted them the *exclusive rights* to console the «criminals» who were sentenced to death. The holy Company organized under the command of the brave father Leturio a *team of confessors* who took turns in that ghastly mission.

On going across Puente Viejo (the Old Bridge) something vulgar in itself, but highly significative, happened to me: two ragged, dirty young fellows, wearing soldiers caps and belts, literally jumped on me. Naturally I was scared.

—Hands up!, said one of the ragged boys thrusting his rifle against my chest.

—Ruffian! I said pushing the rifle away. If that thing is loaded it may go off and kill me.

He did not move, and stared at me brutally, without answering.

—I am an authority, I said in view of the fact that he did not desist from his attitude.

—Oh! Excuse me then, he said, making the soldier's salute. He stepped aside to stop another person who was coming that way.

—Hands up!, he growled.

I did not wish to lose any more time on that affair and went on my way.

At the judge's a peace officer and two other persons were waiting for me with the official car. One of the men waiting for me was an officer of the civil guard who was in command of the detachment in a nearby town, and was famous throughout the whole province for being «tactful and intelligent in the performance of his duties».

As soon as I saw him I understood that there had been «operations» during the night, and he had come to guide us on the expedition. This officer, with whom I had hardly exchanged half a dozen words, for some reason or other felt a strong aversion for me. For this reason I did not ask any questions about our expedition.

The other man waiting for me was an interesting and peculiar human specimen. He took advantage of his slight acquaintance with the judge to accompany him, although the judge disliked it, whenever corpses were found and on other similar official business. He was a lanky, dry, melancholy old man, always wearing a mourning suit, which was in perfect harmony with the ghastly scenes at which he was always present.

In spite of the fact that every one present knew them no one ventured to identify the dead bodies, and we had to register in the official records, that hideous hackneyed phrase: «Seven unidentified corpses found in a field near kilometer 102 of the Valladolid highway»

The man greeted me with a great display of affection. He explained to me that he got up as usual to go to church, but that he had seen the official car, and, as he still had a little time, he would go with us if we did not mind.

He commented with great joy that it seemed that «they were big fish today». It certainly was necessary «to get some of those who wear collars and ties, and not only poor devils». With a sadistic light shining in his eyes he asked whether any «of the dead» was General Batet, who had been sentenced to death and whose execution he was expecting any minute; for he did not want to miss it. He felt disappointed when the officer told him that was not among them and General Batet would be «shot in accordance with the Law, with military honors and everything». But this little disappointment did not stop him from coming with us.

Finally we started on our errand. It was outside of the town. We went along a path to a little hill. We were met by a few civil guards and some laborers from the morgue.

The officer, who seemed to be well acquainted with the place, led us to a ditch recently dug in the middle of a small cultivated plot, and ordered the laborers to go on digging.

We could see at a distance the silhouette of the prison clearly standing out on the horizon. Amidst the solemn stillness, for none of us made the slightest sound, the spades made a ghastly noise when they came against stones.

One after the other the corpses were extracted from the ditch. They were horribly disfigured by wounds and also by the fact that some were hit with the spades. There were seven corpses, and they were placed in a row on the ground. It was a hideous sight. All of them were immediately identified: Colonel Mena, Commander-in-Chief of the civil guard; Rubio Saracibar, lieutenant-colonel of a cavalry regiment, «El Riojano» and Abad, two manufacturers from Burgos, captain Marín of the civil guard, and two employees of the Madrid-Burgos Railroad.

From the explanations given we inferred that the Colonel was executed because he had obeyed orders issued by the Madrid Government and had arrested a few men, amongst them General González Lara. When we saw the corpses of Captain Marín and that of the lieutenant-colonel, we were deeply affected, because we knew them well. They were shot because they took General González Lara and the other men arrested to the prison. The two manufacturers were shot because «they belonged to the International Red Fund» from which they received 5,000 pesetas a month, and the workers... because they were not «trigo limpio» (clean wheat). I could not attach any meaning to this term, but it must have had some signification because our friend in mourning nodded assent when the explanation was given.

The seven unfortunate men, whose corpses we had before us, had been taken from the prison the night before on the pretence that they were being transferred to another prison. They were taken to that place and were told that instead of being transferred, they were to be shot then and there.

The men faced their tragic end bravely, except one of the manufacturers who cried and implored that he was innocent, that he had committed no crime.

—That was natural. What would the scoundrel say! commented our friend in mourning.

Colonel Mena was a republican. Before he died he gave one of his executioners a ring with the request that it be given to his daughter. The poor girl did not know anything about her father's fate.

—As we lost too much time with this and other «soft scenes», someone commented, we had to hurry up the affair, since it was already daylight, and they were badly buried.

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—Things done in a hurry are never well done, said another. That's why they were not buried deep enough, and it seems that some dog started to dig there, and the hand of one of them was seen by shepherd who notified the civil guard and the court.

—This will never do, he went on. Things must be properly done, because these gentlemen (the court officials, he meant) are being caused a great deal of trouble needlessly.

In spite of the fact that every one present knew them, no one ventured to identify the corpses, and we had to register in the official records, that hideous hackneyed phrase: «Seven unidentified corpses found in a field near kilometer 102 of the Valladolid highway»

Once our duty (!) had been performed, we returned to the city, and one of the group turned round and said:

—Your Honor, we have not finished yet. We still have another «catch», which was found on the river bank this morning near the Frandosvinez bridge.

He laughed out aloud at his own witticism.

We went to the place, as it was also in our district. There, on the left bank of the river, almost under the bridge, we found the soaked «catch». It was the corpse of a well dressed young man. He was wearing a brown suit.

The peace officer turned the corpse face-up. Its face was covered with blood and mud. The eyes had been taken out, and the socket of one eye was hanging out. It was a horrid sight.

The unfortunate fellow had his hands tightly roped together, and his anguish and agony must have been such and the exertion to untie his hands so great, that the rope cut deeply into the wrists.

We searched the corpse and in the pockets found a spoon and fork, which was the usual sign that he had been taken out of prison, some printed pieces of paper and a letter containing a photograph.

The photograph, which was stained with blood and mud, was that of a young woman holding in her arms a thin baby girl with sad eyes.

We looked at the letter and it was signed «Goyita». The poor woman consoled him and conveyed to him the hope that he would soon be released, «because you have committed no crime».

Something which I saw at the foot of the letter finally shot my nerves to pieces. Right below the signature the hand of a child had scribbled:

«Daddy, many kisses and caresses from your «Nita» (little baby).»

Nothing has been done to identify the victims of these gruesome murders. Such a task is made difficult by the fact that all documents and means of identification were usually removed before we arrived; but in this case, the letter and the photograph have been attached to the official records in court, and some day the unfortunate woman and a child will cry over the remains of their dear one who was mutilated and murdered in cold blood under the bridge of Frandosvinez, the man before whom, at the very moment of his death, cruelty and hate were not restrained, and whose tragic fate one day was destined to provoke the wicked witticism, heard by myself:

«A catch has been found on the river bank.»

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.