

# SPANISH INFORMATION

## SERVICE texts

## and documents

A WEEKLY RÉSUMÉ OF OUR DAILY "SERVICIO ESPAÑOL DE INFORMACION"

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"The High Command announces its satisfaction with the irreproachable behaviour of the Spanish People's Army, which has had sufficient self-control in the heat and passion of war to treat not only the civilian population which was evacuated during the battle, but also the soldiers who were made prisoners or who surrendered, with the respect which is due them both as defeated opponents and as Spanish citizens."

## The Evacuation and Surrender of Teruel

On the morning of January 9th, a messenger from the rebels bearing a communication written in pencil on rough paper, presented himself to one of the guards within the city of Teruel. The message read as follows:

"Spanish Red Cross.—Teruel. — The signer of this note, the delegated president of this local Committee of the Spanish Red Cross, expects of your gentleness, that you will receive the bearer of the enclosed message and that you will guarantee his entrance and exit."

"Teruel, Jan. 7th, 1938. With deepest respects. — Signed the delegated President: Jesús Vinyas. — To the Chief of the forces of the 84th Mixed Brigade of the Government of the Republic."

The following is the message of which mention was made in the preceding note:

"Spanish Red Cross.—Teruel. — The authorities of the International Red Cross, in compliance with a duty, make the following proposals to the Major of the 84th Mixed Brigade:

"First. — That the wounded quartered in the Hospital de la Asunción be evacuated, if they so wish it. The Republican Government authorities shall promise that they shall receive the humanitarian treatment which international law demands."

"Second. — That the women, children, and old men, who so wish be likewise evacuated. The authorities of the forces of the Government shall promise that they shall be allowed to go to their homes or be given passports to go abroad if they so desire."

"The aim of both measures is to remove the non-combatant population from the hardships of the fight and to see to it that our wounded get proper care."

"Hoping that this petition will be heeded, I thank you."

"Teruel, January 7th, 1938."

"The delegated president, Jesús Vinyas."

"To the Major of the 84th Mixed Brigade. Teruel."

After a consultation over the telegraph with the Minister of National Defence, the message was replied to as follows:

"It is agreed to comply with the wishes expressed by the delegate of the International Red Cross, concerning the evacuation of wounded, sick, women, children, and old men and the follow-

ing is communicated to the chief of the rebel forces:

"First. — That the evacuation shall be carried out exclusively by way of the exit of the building leading onto the Plaza del Hospital and in consecutive groups composed of not more than six persons."

"Second. — That during the evacuation hostilities shall cease only in the sector through which the refugees must circulate, and that there shall therefore be no general truce."

"Third. — That the evacuation shall be carried out in a space of time not exceeding two hours beginning at 2 P.M. today."

"Fourth. — That the itinerary to be followed by the refugees shall be fixed by the chief of the forces loyal to the Government of the Republic."

"Fifth. — That any aggression on the part of the rebels in that sector shall be energetically repelled to."

"Sixth. — That the part of the proposal concerning the granting

of passports to go abroad is rejected."

"Our conduct with the civilian population and the prisoners who have been evacuated up to the present; the cares which our social welfare and medical services have bestowed on all those who were wounded, sick, or weak, guarantee that those who are now to evacuate the fortress will receive similar treatment."

"Facts demonstrate the betrayal of which you are victims and we hope that the noble comportment and the valour shown by the Spanish People's Army, will make you realise the uselessness of your absurd resistance."

The proposal for the evacuation of non-combatants was made to you long before you had begun to suffer the hardships of the siege. If you had accepted it, you would have avoided the sacrifice of many innocent victims."

"Although the laws of war relieve us from listening to your proposal, our humanitarian sen-

timents, impose upon us the duty of not disregarding it."

At 2:30 P.M., in view of the fact that the proposal had been accepted on the above-mentioned conditions, the evacuation commenced. In the first moments more than five hundred people came out. Some of the refugees fainted as a result of weakness, and all of them asked for water to quench their terrible thirst. The state of all of them was most lamentable."

In the opinion of the Minister of National Defence it was not possible to accept the condition that the refugees who wished to do so should be allowed to leave Government Spain, as in this way to this many of the persons responsible for the rebellion would be able to escape."

At 10:30 P.M.

During the entire afternoon, in view of the fact that the period of two hours fixed for the evacuation of women, children, and old men, had been extended, people,

including some soldiers, continued to leave Teruel."

At 9 P.M. Lieutenant-Colonel Rey d'Harcourt, the head of the garrison, surrendered with 1,500 people, most of whom were combatants, who were with him in the Hospital."

Some rebel groups, whose surrender is expected soon, are still holding out in certain buildings of the city."

At 11:30 P.M.

More details of the surrender of various groups that took place in Teruel today are given in this communiqué."

Fighting within the city ceased only in the sector fixed for the evacuation. The evacuation continued during the entire afternoon, as the two hours granted for this purpose had been extended indefinitely. General Rojo, who went to Teruel in order to solve the difficulties that arose as a result of the concentration of so many people, summarised his impressions for the Minister of National Defence in the following words:

"The evacuation which I have witnessed is an immense tragedy. The people are completely exhausted. It can be said that all the refugees are ill. Our troops receive the refugees with kindness and affection. Lieutenant-Colonel Ibarrola permitted one of the military doctors, who had come out with a group of wounded, to return to the rebel stronghold from where he had come, to inform those remaining there of the noble conduct of the Republican Army. At 6 P.M. the number of refugees was over two thousand."

A few minutes before 9 P.M., Lieutenant-Colonel Rey d'Harcourt, who was in command of the rebels in the city, asked to speak over the telephone to General Hernández Saravia, the commander-in-chief of the Army of the East, he offered to surrender together with the troops under him. Since the republican general and the rebel officer did not understand each other clearly over the telephone, Hernández Saravia authorised Rey d'Harcourt to go to the General Headquarters of the XXII Army Corps, in order to be able to communicate more easily by means of a field telegraph. Meanwhile, General Rojo reported the news to the Minister of National Defence by telephone, and asked

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## Final Defeat of the Rebels Near Teruel

The surrender on January 7th and 8th of the rebel garrison inside Teruel, totalling some 2,500 men, signified the failure of the insurgent counter-offensive which began on December 29th and aimed at the recapture of that city. A week earlier the rebels at the height of their advance arrived within a few hundred yards of the town. Following the capture of the Tooth of Teruel on December 31st, they succeeded in reaching the River Turia, which skirts the city on the west. But here they met their match, for their path was not only barred by the People's Army but also by the lay of the land."

In order to enter Teruel from the west it is necessary first to cross the river and secondly to climb a steep slope into the town. Moreover, the western face of the city is composed of a long row of extremely solid monastic buildings which form a natural fortification. For two days the rebels repeatedly attacked Teruel itself but each time they were driven back with heavy losses. That was on December 31st and January 1st. On January 2nd, they relaxed their pressure in that sector and evidently decided that the only possible way of taking Teruel was by advancing along the plain from Concud."

On January 1st, after a tremendous battle, the rebels succeeded in taking Concud, but the Republicans maintained their positions on the heights overlooking it. Since that time the rebels have made daily attempts to advance on Teruel from the direction of Concud, but each time they have been repulsed with very heavy losses."

Inside Teruel several of the insurgent strongholds were captured during the course of the week, but no attempt was made to take the re-

ligious hospital for fear of harming the 700 patients and thousand odd civilians who had sought refuge there. In other words a passive battle between the Republicans and rebels was taking place inside the city the outcome of which depended on the result of the active battle which was taking place outside the town. At one time it looked as though the rebel forces might after all enter the town, but the tremendous defensive power of the Republican Army prevented them from doing so."

The decision of Lieutenant Colonel Rey d'Harcourt, the commander-in-chief, to surrender with the entire insurgent garrison, was the definite sign that the insurgent counter-attack had failed, the principal aim of which had been to recapture Teruel and relieve the rebel forces besieged there. The rebels seem to have realised this and their counter-offensive has practically ceased."

The double victory of the Republican Army in the offensive and counter-offensive at Teruel is not only a tremendous moral triumph, but may also be the turning point of the entire war. The rebels have been forced to break up their concentration in Guadalajara, which they had prepared for the purpose of attacking Madrid. All their shock forces, consisting of Navarrese, Moors, Legionaries and Italians, totalling some 150,000 men, were thrown into the fight at Teruel. And even then they have failed in their attempt to recapture the city. Their crack Spanish troops, the Carlists, have become so demoralised that on January 7th two companies of the First Navarrese Brigade, totalling 240 men, deserted to the Government in the neighborhood of the Tooth of Teruel."



for orders concerning the conditions under which the surrender was to be carried out. When the Minister had begun to give them, General Rojo reported the following: «While we were speaking, Hernández Saravia was speaking with Rey d'Harcourt, who, of course, has surrendered with all his forces, which amount to 1,500 men, counting both combatants and civilians. These men were those who were in the Hospital. The rebel stronghold of Santa Clara still remains. Over this d'Harcourt considers he has no jurisdiction, because since December 23rd, the two groups have been isolated and he does not know whether the officers of the other group will obey his orders.»

Then General Saravia communicated the following to the Minister:

«All the men who were in the Hospital under Lieutenant-Colonel Rey d'Harcourt have surrendered trusting my word that the Republican Army respects prisoners, takes care of the ill and wounded, brings aid to the civilian population and guarantees the lives of all within the laws of the Republic.»

The Minister of National Defence answered General Hernández Saravia in the following words:

«Although the conditions verbally laid down by you are slightly in contradiction to those which I was going to formulate, I accept them fully as if they were mine. Now, the Chief of the Army of the East has given his word of honor and it is necessary for everyone to carry out the agreement arrived at. It must be seen to it that the prisoners are not subjected to any violence and that the necessary measures are taken for the strict fulfilment of the promise.»

The Prime Minister, who had been present during the last part of the telegraphic conference, transmitted the following message:

«My congratulations to Generals Rojo and Hernández Saravia and to the Army of Levante. I agree with what was said by the Minister of Defence and I hope that measures will be taken to insure that the prisoners are treated with consideration and adequate care be provided for the sick and the wounded.»

In fulfilment of an order of the Ministry of National Defence, Doctor Bejarano, the General Inspector of the Sanitary Services of the Land Forces, and several other doctors left for Teruel at midnight in order to organize the care and the housing of the wounded and the sick.

The Minister of the Interior ordered three companies of Assault Guards, free from the passions of the struggle, to leave for Teruel in order to take charge of the prisoners.

The Minister of National Defence telegraphed the Military Commander of Valencia, ordering him to immediately prepare temporary hospital buildings.

At 12.30 A.M.

According to the news received at midnight the exit of the people, who were in the Hospital stronghold, was taking place in an entirely orderly fashion. This operation was carried out under the supervision of the Assault forces.

The total number of people in the stronghold, including combatants and non-combatants, is

between two thousand and two thousand two hundred.

Thirty soldiers, including those on guard, escaped from the rebel stronghold of the Convent of Santa Clara.

The attitude of our troops towards the prisoners is one of respect and pity.

At 3.30 P.M. (Jan. 8th)

When the evacuation of the forces who had resisted in the Hospital had been completed last night, Lieutenant-Colonel Rey d'Harcourt, their commander, offered to parley with the forces in the Convent of Santa Clara. When the Minister of National Defence was consulted concerning this proposal, he replied in the negative. The rebels still resisting might kill this officer and then, in their systematic campaign of lies, blame the crime on the republican troops, saying that we had broken our promise to respect the lives of the prisoners.

It was proved this morning that this would have occurred. The men sent to parley with the rebels were fired at from the convent. At eleven o'clock General Rojo said that he expected that the sick and wounded in the Convent of Santa Clara would be evacuated today, and the Minister accordingly issued the following instructions:

«Even though we may afterwards evacuate the sick and wounded from the Seminary and the Convent of Santa Clara, we must give the rebels holding out there to understand that we shall only accede to total surrender, because if they have the intention of holding out still further, it will mean that by evacuating the sick and wounded first we are rendering the rebels the medical relief they require, thus relieving them of the difficulties which this service represents, and they would have more freedom of action to resist.»

The Chief of the general staff replied: «As regards total surrender, the rebel leader Colonel Barba replied that he would consult his superiors. This is an innocent trick, for it is easy to surmise what the reply will be; but anyway, as the process would be similar to that followed yesterday in the surrender of the Hospital—where total surrender was due to an internal revolt which occurred when they saw that some were leaving while others were staying behind—I hope that the same will be the case today, although we propose to proceed more radically and briefly.»

«In regard to what happened yesterday at the hospital—the Minister replied—, my opinion is the same as yours. As a matter of fact, that is why I consider my suggestion more appropriate. Accordingly orders should be given to those of our men who are in contact with the rebels to give them to understand that the evacuation, to which we have acceded, must be carried out in a limited space of time, and that when the time is up, whatever may happen, we shall make no further concessions, for otherwise their resistance would be an open door resistance, too comfortable, enabling them to surrender whenever they deem it convenient. This can be inferred from Colonel Barba's reply, which you have quoted, which has absolutely the appearance of a trick.»

At two o'clock in the afternoon General Rojo issued the following communication:

«This morning one hundred and forty soldiers escaped from the Convent of Santa Clara and came over to our lines.»

«I have just received a communication from General Hernández Saravia stating that the whole matter can be considered liquidated, for the last of the rebels still in Santa Clara have surrendered in the same manner as did those at the Hospital yesterday. All rebel resistance in Teruel is now wiped out. The city is entirely ours. The Bishop of Teruel, who was with the rebels, has also surrendered.»

«At the last minute Colonel Barba endeavored to impose some conditions, but it was already too late. As regards prisoners and refugees, the same precautions as yesterday will be taken.»

## Over One Hundred Officers and 2.500 Troops Have Surrendered in Teruel

### The President of the Republic, Sr. Azaña, Congratulates the Minister of National Defence

Sr. Manuel Azaña, President of the Republic, sent the following telegram to the Minister of National Defence after the surrender at Teruel of the rebel garrison and its officers:

«To the Minister of National Defence: Kindly accept and extend to all the forces under your authority which have taken part in the operations my warmest congratulations and the profound admiration and gratitude which all Spaniards who defend the independence and freedom of their country feel towards the Republican Army for the complete occupation of Teruel. We all know that with this brilliant victory our troops and their able commanders begin to gather the fruits of courage and ability, and that this victory is also a reward of your Excellency's tremendous efforts as head of the Ministry. Please accept my kindest greetings. — Manuel Azaña.»

Sr. Prieto's reply: «I appreciate most deeply your kind telegram on the occasion of the complete occupation of Teruel by our troops, and through their commanders I have extended to them the stimulating message of appreciation which the Head of the Spanish State has sent them.»

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ARMY

On January 8 the following message was sent to the Army engaged in operations in Teruel:

«The last of the rebel forces still holding out in some buildings in Teruel surrendered yesterday afternoon and this morning, together with their leaders and the rebel authorities.»

«The whole of Teruel is today under control of the Republic. The Republican Army which terminated its successful offensive on December 22nd, and since the 29th of the same month has successfully thrown back the furious attacks of the rebel counter-offensive, may consider that they have fully realised today the plans drawn up by the High Command, and may look forward, confident of their strength and discipline, to obtaining a

Finally the chief of staff sent the following telegram to the Minister:

«General Hernández Saravia and myself wish most heartily to congratulate you and the Government, and only wish to be able to continue under your authority and leadership until we attain final victory.»

The Minister replied:

«On accepting in the name of the Government yours and General Hernández Saravia's congratulations, we also wish to congratulate you on today's victory, and we wish to extend our congratulations to all the leaders, officers and the troops who have taken an active part in the operations under the able leadership of you both, and you can be sure that your names shall not be forgotten by our Republic and that our people shall always be grateful to you.»

final victory in the struggles to follow.

«You have reason to feel satisfied with your splendid discipline and, above all, with your humane behavior towards the conquered enemy.»

«The High Command announces its satisfaction with the irreproachable behavior of the Spanish People's Army, which has had sufficient self-control in the heat and passion of war to treat not only the civilian population which was evacuated during the battle but also the soldiers who were made prisoners or who surrendered with the respect which is due them both as defeated opponents and as Spanish citizens.»

«The members of the Government of the Republic request me to offer to all the leaders, officers, units, commissaries and troops of the Mobile Army, the Air

Force and of the D. E. C. A. (Defence Against Air Craft) which have taken part in the operations, their warmest congratulations and their confidence in the destiny of Spain and in the final victory of Spanish Democracy, in which I join them.»

«Headquarters of the Command, January 8, 1938.»

«By order of the Minister of National Defence.»

«General Vicente Rojo, Chief of Staff.»

### THOUSANDS EVACUATED DOCUMENT SIGNED BY THE BISHOP OF TERUEL

The official figures for civilians and soldiers evacuated from the hospital are as follows: 40 officers, 400 soldiers, and 1,000 civilians.

Early this afternoon approximately 2,000 more combatants and 2,000 civilians who were sheltered under the ruins of the Seminary and Santa Clara Convent surrendered.

Among those who surrendered today are Colonels Rey d'Harcourt, Barba and Gasca; eight other high officers, fifty officers and also a son of the rebel admiral Magaz.

Don Anselmo Polanco y Foces, Bishop of Teruel, who also surrendered, delivered to the Command the following note: «I take great pleasure in certifying that from the moment of my evacuation from the Seminary of Teruel until my arrival at the Rebuelos de Mora station, I have been shown the highest consideration by every one, and I am grateful for this.»

The Health Service of the Army has notified the Ministry of National Defence that they have removed 84 wounded republican soldiers and 161 wounded soldiers to the hospital. The latter were properly deloused, washed and given clean clothing, they were in a wretched condition. They had not been given medical assistance for several days. They were placed at the base hospital, separated from the rest of the patients, and guarded by soldiers of the Health Brigade.

### From a Letter Signed by Mr. George Seldes American writer, published in the New York Times, replying to the pastoral letter issued by the Spanish Rebel Hierarchy for propaganda purposes

... Is it fact, propaganda or falsehood when, for instance, it is charged that the art collection of the Prado has been «basely despoiled»? Every American in Madrid knows that the government has saved the works of the Prado and that Franco, the new defender of the faith, sent his German and Italian bombers who first dropped lights, then inflammatory bombs, carefully setting the Prado on fire.

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The pastoral letter claims «the revolution was barbarous, inasmuch as it destroyed the civilized work of centuries. It destroyed also thousands of works of art». The British art mission denies the latter statement, confirming the Valencia and Barcelona Government's official report that more than 90 per cent of the church art has been preserved... Many churches which are monuments of art are protected by the Government. It could not prevent church destruction by mobs in July, 1936, especially where certain persons used churches for munition depots and when certain persons used church steeples for firing on the working people. The Germans shelled Rheims because it had a lookout. The American army shelled and destroyed French churches because there were Germans in them. We also destroyed churches just because they were tall. The pastoral letter denies churches were fortresses, but churchmen with equal probability confirm it.»



# FROM SPANISH TRENCHES

There is an unpretentious section in the abundant heritage of the world's history which, although it frequently yields testimonies richer in human values than other documents which are considered more important, is nearly always relegated to a secondary plane by serious and wise historians. Of course, I refer not to the letters written by personalities in high posts, for these are invariably "State Papers" encased in their political and diplomatic reserve, but to the almost anonymous letters hurriedly scribbled by simple folk on simple sheets, folk who are unpretentiously making history without having their roles recorded; letters addressed to loved ones expressing spontaneous feelings of the moment, devoid of that polished style peculiar to professional historians.

These letters represent marginal notes on history and, as is usually the case with more important texts, these marginal notes may perhaps be considered by careful students the most interesting part of history.

Unfortunately Spanish History is very poor in marginal notes of this nature. Very few letters saved from the waste basket, or from the fire where Spaniards prompted by modesty and shyness usually bury the sentimental expostulations of relatives. Perhaps it may be said that as we Spaniards are so given to verbal gossip we feel a natural aversion for written gossip. But to this I offer an objection. Not everything contained in a letter is gossip. Fresh impressions as jotted down on the prompting of the moment may unconsciously be a more vivid piece of history than the polished texts carefully recorded from time to time by professional historians.

"From the Spanish Trenches" is a book of vivid letters written by combatants of the International Brigades and by members of the various medical units which the American Committees to aid Spanish Democracy have sent to our fronts since the beginning of the war.

These letters have been translated and compiled by Marcel Acier, a young American writer who was born in France, and who is now giving all his time to organize medical help for our soldiers.

In this book just published in New York there are letters written by authors like Ilya Ehrenburg and Jef Last who are masters of their craft, by foreign correspondents, Irish Republicans, communists, Catholics, American women who are serving as nurses, and young people who with a strong desire to live and be free, are defending our cause which is also theirs and that of all free people in the world.

Some one may say that these testimonies are too recent; perhaps they may lack the exact vision and cool judgement peculiar to works composed when events are far distant and the mind has recovered the serenity and perspective which time and distance afford. But on the other hand, they portray so vivid an impression of current events in Spain, such vital force, they are so full of real human feelings, that the letters reflect better than any polished volume the Spanish tragedy as it is lived in Spain and felt by the peoples of the world.

These letters describe scenes of bloody slaughter and tender sentimental scenes. We should like to reproduce them all, preserving their characteristic style, intimate details, even with their grammatical errors and faulty spelling.

Ilya Ehrenburg in his bitter-sweet prose describes the parade of a battalion leaving Barcelona for the front:

"... The children thought that the shining caps of their fathers were splendid. Women held their men in a tight embrace. Every now and then a moment of quiet would steal into the festive mood. Eyes sparkled. A young girl repeated over and over: '... You will write to me, won't you...' A skinny young fellow clasped his gun tightly and talked, nobody knew to whom: 'A gun, but that

has to be cleaned, doesn't it?... I heard a little old woman whisper to her son: 'Shall I go all the way to the station with you? Can I?' That wasn't a scene from a movie, that was real.

"The Germans marched in front. They carried the portrait of Thaelmann. Blond, blue eyed, bigger than the others; they knew how to march too. They looked like masters of the military art. They had known much sorrow: the downfall, jail, solitude, the tortures of their exile. Among these happy, fiery and brave men, in the company of their bravery and childlike good humor they had regained their hope. They went to the bastions of Saragossa to save the sons of Pomerania and Baden. They smiled happily at the noisy Barceloneros who greeted the departing column from their balconies.

"The little grandmother marched at the side of her son. The column dissolved into the crowd; a woman marched at the side of every man. It is the warmth of a full life, which makes death easy. Only the Germans marched alone, their manly gait was a soldier's gait. They were foreigners in this country. When the column crossed the Rambla, I saw two factory girls. They went toward the Germans hesitantly and without saying a word; just smiling a bit, they marched at their side..."

The Captain of the Irish Battalion, a practising Catholic, writes to his family from the hospital in Elda:

"... And, the pity is that the vast majority of those whom he enticed into Franco's camp are just fools who think they are 'Fighting for the Faith'. I've seen how Franco and his German and Italian masters 'Fight for the Faith'. The bodies of babies cluttered in a schoolyard after an air-raid, breadlines of women blown to bits, workingclass houses razed. And you heard of the Bull-Rings of Badajoz and other towns which the fascists took? And the women who are turned over-one to every twenty Moors? That's the kind of Faith they fight for, it... well—to hell with it!

"... I'm sorry to be leaving Spain. And I want you and everyone else to understand that if it had so happened that my corpse was now rotting with those others whose stench nearly drove me insane in University City—my life would not have been wasted. Every life given in Spain is another reason why fascism must not pass. If I must take the responsibility for Irish casualties there—my conscience is clear, even though parents will not understand it, and even though they will blame me. Our lads who died out there, have not died in vain. They will be an inspiration to us in Ireland when (for I'm afraid there is no 'if') our turn comes, and fascism has to be defeated there..."

Letters like this are the best denial offered to those who blindly maintain that all true Catholics should be on Franco's side. The Irish people are devout practicing Catholics. No one can deny that. There are many Irishmen fighting at our side, and many have fallen on our soil like real heroes.

Alongside the letters written by cultured men who are in the habit of writing, there are other simple letters written in the labored style of men who are not used to writing; but for all that they are no less interesting or less vivid. The same spirit animates all of these people: "They Shall not Pass", the rallying cry which the militiamen of the early days transmitted as a legacy to all the anti-fascists of the world.

A Dutch peddler, Catholic and anti-fascist, writes to his friends from the Spanish front. These letters are perhaps his first literary attempt.

"Friends, I am for about a month in Spain now and we are still doing splendidly. I am here with a Flemish group, and we are doing splendidly. The fascists went on a great offensive on our front last week, but the result has been that they have been beaten back a few

## And you heard of the Bull-Rings of Badajoz and other towns which the fascists took? And the women who are turned over—one to every twenty Moors? That's the kind of Faith they fight for...

kilometers along the whole line, and that they have lost hundreds of dead; it has been a veritable butchery, behind every tree lay a corpse. Every day Spaniards come over to our side who have been forced to fight for Franco. We shall not rest until we have chased that fascist scum into the Mediterranean up to the last man..."

"... But the finest success we booked on the Guadalajara front, it is on the big highway Madrid-Saragossa, there he made his last big attempt. Here it was Mussolini's servants, his blackshirts and his best troops from Abyssinia, 40,000 in number had been collected here equipped with the most modern Italian weapons and tanks, but we, well supported by our brave Spanish comrades, were at our posts. Five long days the fight was heavy and bloody but on the sixth day came the reward, ours made a furious attack and we succeeded to break through their lines, then it was finished with them, it was not a retreat anymore but it became a wild fight; twenty kilometers they were beaten back in two days, leaving behind sixteen cannons, sixty trucks, hundreds of machine guns, six wagon-loads of ammunition blankets, tons of gasoline, shoes their field-kitchens were strewn all over. They had taken off their shoes to be able to run faster and still we made six hundred prisoners and the dead couldn't be counted. According to estimate they have lost material worth 16,000,000 pesetas in one day. So you see things go well here just now..."

"... Here we have the most beautiful example of solidarity, here they fight shoulder to shoulder, Hollanders, Belgians, French, Germans, English, anyhow all the nations of the world all together with one purpose, to beat fascism..."

"... Those poor fascists all run around with a beard a yard long and more they have sworn not to get shaved except in Madrid, and now they cannot fight anymore because they are tripping all the time over their beards..."

The well known Dutch writer Jef Last has taken an active part in the battles around Madrid, and the letters which he has written to his wife, whom he left in Amsterdam with their three small children, give a vivid account of the battles in which he has taken part around Madrid:

"... I repeat what I have already written: our militiamen are the finest and bravest human material you can imagine.

"... The days of Getafe and Villaverde are also the days in which boys like Col captured enemy tank after enemy tank, with nothing but a few hand grenades. That Saturday Franco announced over the radio that he would drink his coffee in Madrid. Radio-Lisbon described how he had triumphantly entered the city on a white horse... Foreign correspondents were forbidden to follow the army. Franco wanted to be alone when he reckoned with the inhabitants of Madrid. Mola counted on a repetition of Badajoz and announced the penalty of death for anyone who might be found with weapons... That was four weeks ago. In the meantime Franco's coffee has become cold; All of them miscalculated because they did not understand the proletariat and because they did not know that even though this proletariat may make mistakes, it learns from those mistakes; that you can beat it down, but that it will get up again every time, that it can fall back for a moment, but only to resume the battle

with so much more courage and conviction. In their haste they bumped their heads into a bloody mess, against the renewed heroism of the people of Madrid..."

"... The enemy lies in a trench at about eight hundred yards from us. This trench runs from the military hospital to the Extremadura highway. Opposite us they occupy a little village and we can very clearly see the holes in the houses, where they have mounted their machine guns. The artillery base, which puts us under fire for several hours every afternoon, must be just beyond that. They shoot badly and most of their projectiles explode one hundred yards behind our line in the cemetery, where they seem to begrudge the dead their rest. Or is it possible that the fascist motto 'Spain, arise!' is meant for them too?..."

"... For twelve days we haven't been out of our clothes, three times we have thrown the enemy back after a night attack, every day we stand at our posts for eight hours, and at no time during these two weeks have we had a hot meal, since the field kitchen can't get through..."

"... Yet during all these weeks I have not heard a single complaint. At night, when we sit around the fire with tears streaming down our faces, the comrades tell stories! There is a lot of singing, too. Nobody doubts our victory... 'Often they ask me: 'Tell us again, teniente, why did you really come here!...' I get my map and point out how France is surrounded on all sides by the fascists if they should come to win in Spain. With Spain to bolster it, Germany can shut off England from its colonies. That will be the moment when a new world war will have to break out, under the most favorable circumstances for fascism. For that reason we are not only defending Spain, but Democracy..."

"... They look at me with shining eyes and say: 'Qué lucha! (Boy, what a battle!)'."

Women have also come to help in Spain with unfailing enthusiasm.

Nurses and young women from different American universities work day and night in the hospitals close to the front. Their letters are the testimony of their enthusiasm and tireless activity. We should like to reproduce them all; but unfortunately there is not enough space. We shall merely quote a paragraph from one of these letters just to show the spirit which is moving our defenders:

"I... judge the spirit by the soldiers. An ambulance came in with thirty wounded. We started to take care of their wounds and bandage them before we put them into bed. A young Spaniard (he must have been sixteen years old at the most) became impatient. He took out his penknife, cut open the palm of his hand removed the superficial inflicted bullet (all this without our knowledge). Then he held up his wounded hand in a salute, and holding the penknife in the other with the bloody bullet, shouted: 'Comrade médico, salud.' And holding his head high he continued and shouted, 'No pasarán!'. In Spanish 'No pasarán' means that Franco shall not pass. The bullet, you see, did not pass through the palm of his hand. It was in but not deeply imbedded. How's that for spirit!"

E. de CH.

(Written for "Servicio Español de Información".)



# Mola's Death and the Monte de la Brujula

by Antonio Ruiz Vilaplana

I had known Mola since 1935. I met him a few days after taking my oath in the Burgos court.

Mola had recently been appointed military commander of Navarre, and he visited Burgos frequently. He always stayed at the same hotel where I was staying, and there he had his interviews with General González Lara. González Lara was Captain General of Burgos, and he went frequently to Navarre to visit Mola.

The Government should have been concerned with the intrigues of these two generals who were known to be open enemies of the Republic; but they were concerned only to a certain extent, as they limited their precautions to appointing a police escort for Mola, and at that it was done more as a measure to protect him than to gather information about his activities.

Generals Mola and González Lara, and also other officers who were not known to me, periodically dined together at the hotel where I was staying.

Although I knew the royalist ideas of these generals, I was not surprised at these periodic reunions. Around that time I had made a trip to Barcelona on the same train as General Goded. I was acquainted with his son who was a practising lawyer in Madrid, and in his conversation General Goded expressed himself in terms openly hostile to the People's Front and to the Generalitat of Catalonia.

General Goded was going to the Balearic Isles not as a tourist or to seek solitary confinement, as his words would lead one to believe, but to assume supreme command of the military zone which is so important from an international point of view.

Goded predicted for us young people his son and myself unpleasant and tragic events for having permitted the development of liberal ideas in Spain.

"Franco and myself," he said to us, "went in time to warn those who should be warned, and we said to them: 'here we are and with us is the whole Army to save Spain; within the Republic we want to save the country'. And do you know what the answer was? They sent Franco to the Canary Islands and me to Palma to play bridge with the English tourists."

Goded believed that the Government was wrong in sending him there, and I myself was and am still today of the same opinion.

General Goded was making a direct trip to Palma, without stopping at Barcelona, so as not to be present at the ceremonies to proclaim Companys President of Catalonia; but he was to be in command of armed forces, and to be shortly after one of the leaders of the military rebellion right in Barcelona.

But going back to Mola's meeting with the royalist military leaders in Burgos, I believe I am not wrong in affirming that in these meetings the military rebellion, which has today taken another course, was prepared, or at least that the initial plans were made there.

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"When are we going to take Bilbao?"

During the month of May this question passed from mouth to mouth all over the "nationalist zone."

Mola who was "The Chief" in the North was conducting the operations, and in those spring days he was closing his circle around the resistance of the Basques.

For the tenth time he had sent his ultimatum to Bilbao, but his threats contained a more serious summons.

"If you do not surrender" the sheets dropped by his air force stated, "I have sufficient means and elements to destroy and wipe out your whole country."

He was not bluffing: Durango, Guernica and other towns destroyed by fire and shrapnel bear witness to this.

The fall of Bilbao was impending. I heard about the resistance put up by the "gudaris", of the steel ring around the city; but I had the feeling that all that was useless. I saw material and regular Italian forces with strong motorized detachments arriving in Burgos every day; German bombers and pursuit planes arrived every day at the Gamonal and Vitoria airfields, and there awaited orders to attack. In view of the tremendous amount of war elements accumulated in Spain by the glaring intervention of Germany and Italy it was easy to surmise that the brave but isolated defense of the Basques would sooner or later break down.

The German aviators were solemn and reserved and never gave out any news about the operations; but the few Spanish aviators, who every once in a while intervened in the war, were more outspoken and frequently spoke to us in an admiring manner.

"Believe me, it is great," they said to us. "What splendid material! And how great these guys are! In a period of two hours they start out all together, they drop the pills wherever it is convenient and then return without breaking their formation. They never lose a plane."

"It is only natural!" said a friend. "They have no air force! And you can hardly expect them to bring a plane down with a rock or a stick..."

"Tomorrow," said an Andalusian aviator "something big is going to happen. Those fellows were very much excited today over at the Gamonal airfield. If something on a great scale is going to take place, I am going to try and get them to let me go up with one of them."

"Oh! If something big is going to happen" said another Spanish aviator, "I am sure to go. The German commander of the Gamonal airfield is staying at the same hotel as I am and he will surely let me go. The other day at Durango it was very serious. We had to reach an elevation of three thousand meters, for we could not breathe due to the smoke and the heat."

In view of this, we all expected the fall of Bilbao from one moment to another by that system of "roasting from the air."

They were already talking about a government headed by Mola. This was to be constituted immediately after the fall of the city, and was to be formed by "orderly people" and right wing politicians, and was intended as a guarantee and a check to the fascist elements.

All of a sudden the news about the death of Mola. He died in an airplane accident, when he was flying from Vitoria to Burgos. The plane crashed on Monte de la Brujula and the general, his staff and the pilot died instantly.

Half an hour after the news reached me, a military ambulance followed by some official automobiles sped by towards the military hospital. The ambulance was carrying Mola's remains.

His dead body was torn to pieces, and the doctors took enormous pains to put the pieces together again.

As one of them explained to me later, the dead body was so disfigured and torn that it could not be seen by anyone. It was just a formless mass of flesh, a bloody mess of flesh...

At midnight I saw the hearse going over the deserted Arco bridge, carrying the corpse to the Army headquarters to await its removal to Pamplona.

The following day the whole population of Burgos filed through the Army Headquarters where a tightly closed casket, guarded by Navarrese forces, was exhibited to the public.

A requiem Mass was said in the same room at noon, and immediately afterwards the corpse was taken by road to Pamplona.

In the very same room where a few months back the Burgos authorities had humbly submitted to Mola, the same authorities were now reunited to render him their last homage.

I stood close to the casket, and my mind was far away from the scene. An obsession tortured me, something was hammering in my ears:

"He was dead. He died in the Monte de la Brujula. In the Monte de la Brujula!"

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When the repression being carried out by the rebels was at its highest point and the families of the working and middle classes spent night after night in anguish and uncertainty; when the fields all over the territory controlled by the rebels were every morning strewn with dead bodies, some one in a high office issued an order:

"Enough of these ghastly spectacles! Let Justice follow its course; but let it be handled cleverly and without marring the 'Glorious national movement', with these hideous exhibitions."

The tragic dawn and the hideous discoveries were put an end to. The roads and the fields recovered their normal appearance, and the discoveries of unidentified corpses no longer filled up the official records.

But the terror continued invading the homes. Every night many victims fell under the white terror. Every night brought death and sorrow to many homes.

No more dead bodies were seen on the roads, in the fields or in the rivers, but in every city, in every town and village, there was a distant secluded place which received the hideous legacy.

And thus in the small villages and wherever there was a cluster of wretched little houses, large ditches were opened like the Hondón in Rodillo, and in every town a lot like the Llano in Estépar, and in every city a vast and distant field like the Monte de la Brujula in Burgos...

The Monte de la Brujula! The highest point along the Vitoria highway, an insignificant hill which, amidst the surrounding bare prairies, assumes the pretentious appearance of a mountain, received every night in its entrails the tragic loads which bigotry and hatred took as a toll from the peaceful, defenseless population.

On passing by this pretentious little hill I have many times instinctively closed my eyes in repugnance. I thought that the many hundreds of corpses buried there would rise up to complain... I would anxiously open my eyes to peer at something unknown lying on top of the freshly removed earth, on top of the imperceptible ditches...

Monte de la Brujula! On its borders, in its vicinity-populated by bloody visions, replete with the sorrow of human beings brutally sacrificed-a German 'plane similar to so many other German planes which from the skies drop death and destruction on defenseless Spanish cities, crashed. In it the Commander-in-Chief of the forces of the North, the first 'chief' of the rebellion, one of those principal by responsible for bringing about the tragedy which is taking as a toll the lives of hundreds of thousands of Spain's men, women and children, met his death. Mola met his death in one of the foreign planes which he ordered to fly over Spanish cities and drop murderous shrapnel on the defenseless Spanish people which he and the other rebel generals and their allies claimed to be saving.

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.

## OPEN LETTER, to the Editor

Daily Telegraph and Morning Post  
LONDON

Dear Sir:

In the January 8th issue of your paper you publish a despatch from your special correspondent with the Government forces at Teruel giving an accurate account of the brilliant Republican victory at Teruel. He points out that,

"It is interesting to note that the taking of Teruel and its defence against two tremendous

counter-attacks has been achieved entirely by Spanish troops without the intervention of the International Brigade."

Your correspondent, who was actually in Teruel during the operations, undoubtedly saw that only Spanish troops participated; and since he is your correspondent and you publish his material, it is to be assumed that he is trustworthy.

In your January 10th edition, however, you print a despatch on Teruel from your special correspondent with the rebel forces, who is in San Sebastian, to the effect that

"A Nationalist commentator remarks that the enemy forces at Teruel are composed as to 40 per cent of Jews, Negroes, North Americans and Czechs; 40 per cent of trade unionists and 20 per cent of Communists and Socialists."

Was this later statement of your special correspondent in "San Sebastian", who merely transmits statements made by a rebel com-

mentator, published in order to discredit the statement of your correspondent with the Government forces?

You have, probably, since read Ernest Hemingway's statement to a reporter of "Ce Soir" to the effect that only Spanish troops took part in the Teruel operations. Ernest Hemingway has, of course, from the beginning been a friend of the Spanish Government and of the Spanish people as have all straight-thinking, decent men and women the world over. But it is known that a man of his integrity would not issue such a statement abroad unless it were absolutely true. It is not possible that a news-

paper which enjoys such prestige as yours could be consciously made an instrument of rebel propaganda. I consider that it is only through an error that your paper has fallen a victim to the propaganda which the Spanish rebels "so cleverly" distribute for foreign consumption.

BILL GILPIN

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



# THE CHURCH MILITANT

## THE INSURGENTS AND THE CHURCH

«When the troops of the Moorish Foreign Legion entered Pamplona, their black faces still blacker from the dust and heat of the battle of Badajoz, they were enthusiastically acclaimed. «This is no civil war, sir», a woman exclaimed to me, «it is a Crusade!»»

This excerpt from a message which appeared at the end of August in a Right-wing French newspaper, is significant as illustrating to what heights of insanity people are still able to attain in the twentieth century. For the lady in Pamplona who greeted the Foreign Legionaries and Moors as crusaders is by no means an exception. The rebel propagandists set themselves from the beginning to create in Spain, as also abroad, an atmosphere reminiscent of the Crusades. They relied on the assumption that all faithful Catholics in Spain were in their camp. This assumption has proved to be erroneous.

On October 4th, 1936, six weeks after the outbreak of the insurrection, Don José Aguirre, the leader of the Basque Catholic Nationalist Party, made the following declaration before the assembled Cortes:

«I regard it as of particular importance at this moment to state emphatically that we of the Basque country are all with you against Fascism, and that we are quite especially so because of our undeviating Christian and Catholic principles. You can count on our being and remaining wholeheartedly and loyally on your side. Christ chose neither bayonet nor gun to win the world. A Christian movement such as ours vindicates social progress. For what other reason did Christ come into the world? We come from the people, we are the descendants of the people, just as Christ came from the people, we are with Him and with the people in this fight. Our Church is the Church of the poor and humble.»

Behind the man who made this profession of faith was ranged the majority of the Basque Catholics. With those of the Catalan Catholics who are loyal to the Government they amount about one third of all the Catholics of Spain. The Basque country is, moreover, the one province of Spain which has adhered most strictly to the fundamental principles of the Christian faith. It is likewise the only province of Spain in which a Christian Social movement with its roots in the people can be compared for strength with the Socialist Workers' movement. The Basques of Bilbao were, even after a year of civil war, still more Catholic than «red».

But they would have no truck with Crusader Franco. In Irun, San Sebastián, Durango, Guernica, Bilbao the self-styled Defender of the Faith has had to subdue the Catholic provinces step by step after a hard struggle, and with the help of Mohammedan troops.

What is the deduction to be drawn from this? That «true» Catholics are against Franco and that only the bishops and the

hypocritical land-owners are with him? Not at all. Such an assumption would be as erroneous as the assumption that all Catholics were on his side. In the Spanish question one must be on one's guard against broad generalizations. The truth of the matter is that the rift runs right through the Catholic Church. The great majority of the Catholics of Navarra have been without doubt behind Franco from the beginning; the great majority of the Basque Catholics have from the beginning been behind the Government.

The whole question hinges not on religious, but on political, doctrines. The contrast in the behaviour of the Basque and the Navarran Catholics is inexplicable as a theological problem, but perfectly explicable as a political problem.

The Basques have striven for centuries to attain linguistic, cultural and economic autonomy. History has taught them that the liberal democratic movement in Spain favours the cause of racial minorities and that movements aiming at absolute monarchy and dictatorship, on the other hand, are bitterly opposed to all demands for autonomy. The Catholics of the Basque country had everything to hope for from the Republic and nothing from the Generals. Franco's first act after taking Bilbao was to abolish Basque fiscal autonomy.

In Navarra the position was exactly the reverse. The Pyrenean valleys of Navarra had remained a stronghold of medieval tradition; it was Spain's Vendée and the birth-place of the Carlist movement. In Navarra Catholicism was synonymous with the political programme of absolute monarchy, with the retention of patriarchal, feudal conditions in agriculture.

The Catholicism of the Basque country, a predominantly industrial province, professed the faith of the «Church of the poor and humble», the Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount, of the «camel and the needle's eye».

The Catholicism of Navarra professed the faith of the Church of Torquemada, of the quarrelsome and worldly Popes of the Middle Ages, of the Church Militant.

It is one of the fundamental untruths of the rebel propaganda to designate this war a religious war. One need not be an orthodox Christian to consider it blasphemy for ambitious Generals to use God as an excuse for their insurrection. The struggle between feudalism and democracy in Spain has as little to do with religion as had those picture postcards in 1914 which portrayed God blessing a French mine-layer or a German submarine, as the case might be.

The crusading spirit of the rebel Generals only persists so long as believers and priests identify themselves with the purely political aims of the insurrection. The moment that priests, and even bishops, cease to see eye to eye with these political aims they are treated as enemies, and either imprisoned or shot. A well-known case in point is that of the Bishop of Vitoria

and Canon Don Lucius, who, at the beginning of the struggle in the Basque country, were arrested by Carlists together with thirteen pupils of the Priests' Seminary and shot.

The number of Catholic priests executed by the rebels has been computed at over 150.

The Protestants in rebel territory were given a particularly bad time.

The Protestants form a small, but socially far from unimportant, minority in Spain, since their adherents are drawn for the most part from the educated middle classes. The liberal and strongly social character of the Protestant Minority Church in Spain made it inevitable that members of the Evangelical community should be regarded from the first as suspect and as enemies of the Burgos regime.

Here is an extract from a document in my possession which is based on an investigation conducted by the Protestant community in Madrid:

«The members of the Protestant faith in Madrid, who are connected with any political party, deem it their duty to make known to the public the following facts with regard to the persecution and murder of dignitaries and members of the Lutheran Church by Spanish Fascists.

«In Granada the Protestant pastors José García Fernández and Salvador Iñiguez, together with the wife or the former, were shot. Another dignitary of the Lutheran Church, Samuel Palonque, is, if he is yet alive, in prison.

«In Córdoba Pastor Antonio García was expelled; before he had time to leave the town all his furniture was removed by Carlists, who threatened to kill him. Antonio García and his wife fled that same night to Gibraltar without any luggage and completely without resources.

«In San Fernando Pastor Miguel Blanco was shot under martial law in the presence of his mother and a number of members of the Protestant Church «to serve as an example to heretics», it was stated in the official report. It is feared that his fellow Pastor Francisco López de Puerto Real has met with a like fate.

«Since the beginning of August Carlos Linean, of the village of Miada near Badajoz, and Luis Cabrera, the Protestant teacher of the neighbouring village of Santa Amalia, have disappeared and nothing further has been heard of them.

«In Ibañero, in the Province of Cáceres, a number of Protestants were shot, among them the well-known notable Francisco Tirado.

«In Santa Amalia the wife of a Protestant agricultural labourer was saturated in petrol and set alight, and then, after being terribly burned, she was beheaded with an axe.»

I received a typed copy of this document at the beginning of November, 1936, in Madrid. The copy bore neither signature nor date and the incidents related seemed to me so crude that at first I doubted the authenticity

of the document. I made enquiries and gained possession of papers which confirm the allegations in the report, among them a letter written by Pastor Elías Araujo of the Protestant Mission in Madrid to Professor F. J. Paul of Belfast. The letter contains the text of the first report from Antonio García, the Pastor mentioned in paragraph three of the above document. He confirms among other things the shooting of Pastor Miguel Blanco in San Fernando, as well as that of Pastor Iñiguez of Granada and of his predecessor García Fernández (see paragraph two of the document). Only Samuel Palonque, thanks to the adroit intervention of his wife, escaped abroad after five days of imprisonment.

Further material regarding the persecution of Protestants in rebel territory was published by Dr. Inge at the end of November in the «Spectator» and the «Church of England Newspaper». Dr. Inge related, among other things, that the Protestant Pastor of Salamanca, his wife and two children were executed as «heretics» by the rebels and that the Protestant Pastor of Valladolid was burned alive in gaol. The French Protestant newspaper, «Evangile et Liberté», writing of this ghastly revelation, expressed the fear that:

«... the overthrow of the constitutionally elected Republican Government would also mean the downfall of Spanish Protestantism, as the result of a fresh wave of persecution of Protestants and the re-introduction of *autos de fe*, with the difference that instead of the formal ceremonial of the stake and the death-mask of former times the far more drastic and summary firing squads and the executioner's axe would be brought into play...»

So much for the treatment of Protestants by the rebels. That their treatment of the Jews is even worse goes without saying. The rebel Press is particularly fond of referring in catch-words, strictly after the German pattern, to «Jews, Freemasons and Marxists», who must be extirpated for the good of Spain. In Spanish Morocco, at the beginning of the insurrection, the Jewish communities were forced to contribute to Franco's war chest, and prominent Jewish citizens were arrested and shot. In Tangier Phalangists posted up anti-Semitic notices in which the Mohammedans were adjured «to

declare war against Jews and Communists». Finally, in Tetuan, in the months of July and August, 1936, regular programs were carried out in the Jewish districts, the organized origin of which was untraceable. Similarly popular editions of the «Elders of Zion» and translations of German anti-Semitic literature were widely disseminated.

Thus the problem of Franco's position with regard to religion may be summed up as follows:

Franco does not represent the interests of believers as against the forces that threaten religion. He represents the interests of that section of the Catholic population which is Catholic and reactionary. Catholics with Republican sympathies are persecuted by him with the same ruthlessness as are Republicans who profess no religion. The Protestants who, owing to their social status, are almost entirely Republican, are treated as out-and-out enemies, as are the Jews.

The analogy with the attitude of the State to the Church under other dictatorships is unmistakable. In Germany, too, the National-Socialists, before seizing power, maintained that they were the defenders of the Faith and of culture against the godless Weimar Republic; scarcely had they attained power than they began to persecute that section of the Catholic and Protestant Church which did not submit to the dictates of worldly tyrants and refused to identify themselves with their methods and political aims. In Germany, too, disagreements and splits occurred within the Protestant and Catholic Churches for purely worldly, political reasons; and there were also dignitaries of the Church who became the willing tools of that same tyranny. It would appear that wherever modern dictatorships of the Fascist type come to power, the Church has to undergo a historical trial similar to that which it underwent in the early Middle Ages when the power of the absolute monarchies was being consolidated, a trial leading to the same internal divisions and dissensions.

*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.*

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

### Workers' Institutes in Alcoy

#### The Republic Creates New Schools

On the petition of the Textile Workers' Trade Union at Alcoy, the Government have ordered the establishment of a Workers' Secondary Institute, for workers and sons of workers in Alcoy and its neighborhood; a Polytechnic School for Workers, in which special attention will be paid to the textile industries; and a Centre for Industrial Experiments for the carrying out of scientific experiments concerning these industries. All of these educational institutions will be located in Alcoy. The burden of supporting them will be divided between the Government and the Textile Industry Trade Unions of Alcoy.



# The Military Situation

## The Battle of Teruel

At the time of writing these comments, the rebel counter-offensive in Teruel has reached its climax. The rebels have reacted late but vigorously to the blow struck by our speedy offensive. From the second day of our offensive in lower Aragon it was obvious that it had caught them unawares and baffled them. The defense put up by their troops was disorderly and careless; and the great confusion of their movements proved that they were not subjected to a plan, but to the tactical and strategical promptings of the moment. While in our camp the military mechanism functioned with exact regularity and in perfect order, in Teruel proper and in the neighboring bases like Sigüenza, Calamocha, Albarra-cin, Calatayud and Saragossa, manoeuvres were continually undertaken and then immediately cancelled and abandoned. Aranda tried desperately but in vain to gather sufficient forces together to remedy the harm done. Pressed hard by the urgency of the moments, spurred on by the frantic S O S sent from Teruel, he drove on his columns one after the other, and when he saw them broken up, half destroyed by our accurate fire, he re-enforced them and drove them on to still more deadly attacks. Finally, concentrations carefully prepared for other enterprises were taken from their bases and pitted against our fronts in lower Aragon. We are fighting and resisting heroically. Great masses of aeroplanes and artillery of the Fascist International are pitted against our recently occupied lines. Franco's plans have been broken up. His troops are fighting today where we want them to fight.

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On this occasion the rebels were victims of an excess of confidence. They did not want to understand that their victories in the North were essentially due to their great superiority in material and to the geographical factor. Let us suppose that Vizcaya, Santander and the Asturias had been connected through the Rioja with the Republican front in Aragon. From a moral and military point of view it is questionable whether the success of Franco and his foreign masters would have been possible. Certainly not. Against the Italo-German air force we would have matched our own air force which, although inferior in numbers, is rendered far superior by the bravery and fearlessness of our pilots and the quality of our material. To their masses of artillery and squadrons of armored cars and to their great quantities of portable automatic weapons, we would have opposed similar war material, to their shock troops, our mobile divisions.

When we raised the question of geographical fatalities and the injustice of one sided Non Intervention, and claimed that the struggle on the fronts in the East, Teruel, Center and South would be quite different, the rebel press at Valladolid, Burgos, Salamanca and Seville and their branches abroad, affirmed that we were resorting to ridiculous excuses, but that in reality we were hopelessly beaten.

It was clear, of course, that our successes at Brunete and Belchite confirmed our assertion. Franco himself issued a communiqué whereby he acknowledged the fact that we had an Army. But the rebel generals and the foreign technicians who are advising and directing them always believed that we would limit ourselves to wait for their offensives in silence and resignation, and that we would not attempt to take the initiative.

If after the campaign in the North was over the rebels had immediately transferred their remaining forces and material to Castille and Aragon and had rapidly launched an offensive on a great scale, then perhaps we would have been forced to limit ourselves to a flexible defensive on a deep line, followed by a counterattack the same as in Brihuega, or to a tenacious resistance on a limited line the same as in Arganda. But in the North the rebels lost enormous amounts of war material and many thousands of men. They were engaged for eight months in hard and tenacious struggles, and during that time they were incapable of starting even a minor offensive from the Pyrenees to Castel de Ferro. As the military critic of «La Dépêche» de Toulouse quite often stated, the rebels did not have the means to carry out two offensives simultaneously, notwithstanding the fact that they were continually receiving men and material from Italy and Germany.

And in the belief that they were insured against transcendental surprises, they set themselves

## Franco's plans have been broken up. His troops are fighting today where we want them to fight.

peacefully to re-group their fighting units and to renew their commands, and this task had not been finished by December 15.

They were still engaged in this task when we made our rapid attack on Teruel. They did not expect it and were unable to realize its intensity for 48 hours. Perhaps they considered it a feint on our part to mislead them, or that we were scouting in great scale. The insults which Queipo de Llano broadcast from Seville, calling the Republican Army «a body of gangsters» and the greatest «pack of murderers which the world has ever known», and his grotesque insults against General Saravia, were clear signs of the surprise which our attack produced.

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Notwithstanding the fact that the Republican Army was still in its adolescence and notwithstanding the haste and urgency with which it was created, our High Command believed that it had already reached a stage in which it was capable of striking heavy blows and of manoeuvring ably even under adverse circumstances. And the High Command did not consider it wise to wait to fight under conditions chosen by the rebels. On the contrary, they decided to compel the insurgents to fight under conditions chosen by our leaders, to take the lead away from them, to frustrate their strategic plans. As to the manner in which this was attained, the best proof is obtained by examining what is happening today on our fronts. Whatever may happen in the future, the fact remains that the initiative has changed sides, that the national and foreign enemies no longer strike where they wish and when they wish, that we are outmanoeuvring them and that their vast projects for invasion and strategic conquest have faded into nothing, and that beyond our frontiers and our territorial waters people are beginning to believe that we are going to win the war.

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A dispatch from Rome states that Mussolini has received a long memorandum from the Commander-in-Chief of the Italian Expeditionary forces in Spain, informing him that Franco cannot win the war if he is not supplied with one hundred thousand more men and the necessary material.

But will Mussolini, and is he able to, make this new enormous sacrifice? In order to try to convince him, Franco has sent Mussolini an indecorous, tearful entreating telegram replete with flattery. The Italian press published this shameful telegram in full.

However, it will not be by humiliating acts of this nature that Franco will convince Mussolini to give him further assistance. Mussolini will consider the problem on purely essential terms, with pragmatic realism, and will act according to circumstances; but present circumstances are not favorable for increasing Italian intervention in Spain. The French left-wing press has been publishing detailed information regarding the internal situation in Italy. Concern over the Spanish adventure is continually growing. The middle class is completely bankrupt and the workers have descended to a miserable standard of living. Illegal publications are ceaselessly increasing. In a word: the Fascist political and social structure is beginning to crack.

Under such circumstances, will Mussolini venture to send Franco the extra one hundred thousand men he has asked for, especially in view of the fact that he has still to face Abyssinian resistance and political fluctuations in Central Europe? It would hardly seem so.

And if he does not send Franco these extra men, it is hard to conceive how the Spanish rebel chief is going to make good his promises to Rome and Berlin...

And if he does send them, we are still at a loss as to how the rebel general is going to keep his promise...

(From the Decennial Information Bulletin issued by the General Staff of the Army. Dec. 31, 1937.)

Ayuntamiento de Madrid

# THE BEGINNING OF THE END

News which reaches us every day from the rebel side confirms the belief current here and abroad that the edifice built up by the Spanish reactionary forces with the help of the Fascist International is decomposing as rapidly as it was erected.

At Teruel two Navarrese companies-Franco's most trusted troops have deserted to the Loyalist side. At Huesca recently two hundred soldiers were shot because they were implicated in a plot to desert to the side of Government. And in the same manner deserters are continually streaming over to the Republican lines. They all say that many thousands would do the same if they had the chance.

A recent despatch from Gibraltar states that a Colonel who occupied a high post in rebel territory deserted and immediately went to the Spanish consul to offer his services to the Republic.

Reports from Paris state that Spanish fascists are continually pouring into France, seemingly already weary of fascism. They say that the fascist heaven is not as heavenly as it was pictured to be.

Although there are so many men at the fronts, the number unemployed increases every day. The very few who are at work receive such low wages that with the natural increase in prices due to the scarcity of prime necessities they can hardly afford to purchase food.

The depression all over rebel territory is terrific, and the brilliant Republican victory at Teruel, which the rebels have tried so hard to conceal, has caused real panic among the dominating classes. The general belief is that it is only a matter of time before they collapse completely.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## Mr. Shinwell in Madrid

Mr. E. Shinwell, who was formerly Minister for Mines in the British Government and who is now on a visit to Republican Spain with a party of eight other Labour M. P's., made the following statement to a reporter during his visit to Madrid:

«Our visit to Madrid has made an excellent impression on us. We have been astounded at the courage and enthusiasm of the people of Madrid, who carry on their normal life in spite of the bombardments. The entire people seem optimistic. We have also been able to appreciate the efficiency of the forces composing the Republican People's Army and our impression could not be better. We have visited the trenches and have talked to officers and soldiers, in all of whom we have noted a magnificent fighting spirit.

«We are longing for our return to England so that we can set forth our impressions and increase the aid for the Spanish Government, especially in those foodstuffs of which there is a shortage. We shall also bring pressure to bear on the Government so as to try and make it intensify its aid.

«When we return to England we shall also say that judging by what we have seen at the fronts and behind the lines we are convinced that the Spanish Republic will be triumphant.

«Since the beginning of the war the English working class has been on the side of the Spanish Republic. They have published articles and held meetings in its favour.

«The work that we propose to carry out when we return to our country is to influence the Government to put an end to the farce of Non-Intervention and to afford the Spanish Government

means for carrying on the war which it has a perfect right.

«Finally we must express our gratitude for the friendliness with which we have been treated in Spain. We have heard of Spanish hospitality, but little did we realise how hospitable the Spanish people really are.

«At the same time we have been able to appreciate the unity which exists among the Spanish working class, unity which is lending every aid to the Spanish Republic and which is benefiting and doing a great service to the English working class.»

## The Rebel Authorities Take Reprisals Against the Author of «Doy Fe» («I Certify...»)

The rebel authorities have officially discharged Antonio Ruiz Vilaplana, formerly secretary of a law court in Burgos, from the post. This step was taken in accordance with the decree of 3 December 1936. His discharge made retroactive and dates from 12th July last. Ruiz Vilaplana is accused of going over to the red zone.

(«Diario de Burgos», December 20, 1937.)

N. B. — It will be recalled that Ruiz Vilaplana passed from rebel territory into France, where he spent some time during which he wrote his book «Doy Fe» («I Certify...») describing his experiences in rebel Spain. It only came to loyalist territory in December, 1937. We are present publishing chapters from his famous book.