

# SPANISH INFORMATION

## SERVICE *texts*

## and documents

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## Barcelona Bombed Through A Night And A Day By German And Italian 'Planes

## Hundreds Die In Terror-Raids

### *Victims Piled In The Streets*

This description of the most terrible air raid yet inflicted on civilians was written by Sefton Delmer as the bombs were falling.

It is given in Delmer's own words, the details uncensored, as he recorded them from hour to hour throughout the night and day.

Since 10.15 last night German and Italian bombers in the service of Franco have been raiding Barcelona in wave after wave, spreading mass death, mass mutilation, and mass destruction.

I do not hesitate to say this has been the worst ordeal of air bombing to which any capital city has yet been subjected.

My own eyes have seen scores of dead piled on lorries and raced off to the morgue, gangs of salvage men digging more dead from beneath the debris of fallen five and six storey buildings.

I have seen wounded carried to hospital by ambulances and private cars while ashen-faced, dusty steel-helmeted first-aid men, their stretchers dripping blood, go back for more.

The most conservative estimate must place the number dead so far at 400. It is well within the bounds of possibility that the total exceeds 1,000.

Where to accommodate the hundreds and hundreds of wounded is baffling the authorities.

The raids have one object only — terror intended to panic the population and force the Government to surrender.

Most of the bombs are concussion bombs. They are specially designed to spread when hitting the ground. They are not meant to destroy materials, but to kill men. They are the kind used at the front.

In four comprehensive tours of the city — two last night and two this morning—I found only one hit that could be considered on a military objective. All else was obviously directed against the civil population.

The last raid was at 10.25 a.m. I was out of my car instantly and into a nearby building.

#### WOMEN FIGHT GUARDS

I heard bombs whistle and crash, quaking the whole structure under me. From a balcony I saw a vast smoke cloud rising

where the nearest bombs had fallen as I raced from my car (which caught its first war scar from a falling shrapnel fragment last night).

When it happened I narrowly missed colliding with wildly driven lorries and ambulances racing from the same spot. I was almost crashed by a hurtling plumber's truck, from the end of which there peeped, in lieu of the usual load of pipes, seven heads — three men and four women.

They made no attempt to take cover. The driver was weeping and shouting.

I found a shallow but roft. wide black bomb crater in the middle of the busiest square in crowded Barcelona's amusement district.

Beside it was a motor-coach overturned and burning.

Three trams, their under-carriages blown away, were slewed across the square.

Women, frantic with terror were hysterically fighting and clawing at carbine-bearing assault guards for access to the square.

Two workmen carried on a bricklayer's basket the charred torso of a man. Plate-glass windows in the cafés were all blown in. In front of them the pavement was coated an inch deep in sticky blood in which lay caps and shawls of men and women smashed by a bomb. Red Cross men took the victims away. Others swept up human fragments.

Round the corner firemen with long ladders were hosing water into burning buildings.

Above the din and the shouting of ambulance men, the shrieking of women, sirens and the bells of the Red Cross cars, a cock was crowing from a housetop — for most Barcelonians keep chickens in their houses in these days.

#### TRAPPED IN SHELTER

One of the most pitiable features of the whole business is the large number of homeless peasant

#### From SEFTON DELMER

refugees, who, driven from their homes by the Franco offensive last night, entered Barcelona weary and hungry in high-wheeled peasant carts loaded with their simple household treasures.

They ran right into the war from which they were trying so desperately to escape.

Many took refuge in the underground Metro stations during the night, camping on the cold stones this morning.

Before eight o'clock they came up for air and to try to buy breakfast at the cafés.

Instead, there came the bombers, announced only by the whistle of bombs.

At one station entrance I found twenty-five dead—killed as they were trying to scramble back down to shelter.

House-dwellers around were, for the most part, wounded only by falling glass windows, concussion and tumbling furniture.

#### KILLED AT LUNCH

Many gazed down apathetically at the human wreckage in the streets below, while carefully sweeping the glass off their own balconies.

One hundred and fifty of Barcelona's foreigners — among them British newspapermen and merchants — had a narrow escape when a bomb in the same eight o'clock raid fell on the banquet hall of a luxury hotel, smashing it like matchwood.

As I am typing this bombs are whistling down, sirens are going, anti-aircraft guns are rattling.

They are falling close here. The whole place shakes as each bomb lands.

It is 1.45 p.m. by my watch, and this is the third raid today — the eleventh since the raids started at 10.15 last night.

Now the crashing goes further away. The noise dies down like

the diminuendo of a big drum.

Smoke is clouding the sky from a burning building. Men in the next room are telephoning to their wives to make sure that all is right.

Reports are coming in from places hit... «One fell near Main-square, plaster came down on me as I stood in the doorway.»... «Popular restaurant hit just as lunch was being served, all killed.»... «You all right, darling?» «What, Conchita out in the street! I am coming at once.»

#### STREETS FULL OF CRATERS

The last was a man who had just heard that his little daughter was struck.

White faced, he has dashed out, heedless of danger to himself to find his little one.

It is 3.30. I have just got back from the streets. And what streets!

This morning on my way to the office they were still smiling, elegant boulevards. They and the Plaza de Cataluña — pride of Barcelona and the whole of Spain — are strewn with overturned, burned-out trams and cars and buses.

Rocks of masonry and shattered plate-glass litter the once-smooth pavements — full of craters as the moon.

That restaurant I mentioned was not hit by a bomb. It was blown in by the explosion from one which fell 100 yards lower down.

That bomb made a crater ten yards wide, twenty feet deep. Water from the broken mains was gushing through it.

Although the boulevard is thirty yards across, two solidly built, sevenstorey apartment houses on either side were blown away, as though they were made of straw.

Only jagged fragments of their back walls, with clothes still hanging from pegs, remain.

Before this bombing the hospitals stated that in their morgues alone 280 bodies lie stored. Many more bodies are now stored beneath the debris of these big buildings and the others which have caved in.

That's what five airplanes can do to a modern city. Three hundred yards down the boulevard on either side of it in both

It is therefore British and French, no less than Spanish democracy, that is in peril at this moment. It is liberty in Britain and France, no less than in Spain, that the German artillery is seeking to pound to pieces at this moment.

directions houses are stove in by the explosions.

A ghastly smell of burning bodies fills the air. Acrid smoke hangs everywhere.

My wife was lunching in a restaurant 500 yards down the boulevard. When I met her she said: «The window behind me was the only one not blown in. I never realised how elastic glass can be. It caved in like a sail before the wind.

«We were all terribly frightened. Some of the people had nasty wounds. Even the cat jumped.»

At the hotel I found the porter comparatively unmoved by the bombing. He was studying an official document. «See this», he said, «I shall have to present myself for the army. I'm of the navy class, 1929.»

The streets are now crowded with whole families on their way to the refuges, carrying bundles of bedding and provisions with them ready for a lengthy sojourn.

But there are also the usual strollers about, enjoying the sunshine in apparent unconcern.

While I was on my way back to the office I met the Air France bus coming in with a load of passengers from France—and peace.

They shook their heads and gesticulated with upturned palms in horror as the bus carefully detoured round a bomb crater and a heap of debris blocking the main street.

(From the «Daily Express».)

Whenever one of these brutal air-raids takes place the leaders of civilized nations are shocked, the corresponding protests ensue, and the governments of France and Great Britain are prompted to take steps to prevent this mass slaughter of civilians.

If France and Great Britain really want to put an end to these gruesome, foul murders, there is a very simple formula by which they can be stopped:

By restoring to the Spanish Government their legal international rights, the right to acquire abroad the means necessary to protect civilian life behind the lines.

If war planes are sold to the Spanish Government, these ghastly murders will be stopped, and it can then be said that Great Britain and France did really and sincerely want to put an end to them.



# The Spanish People Are Being Murdered

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF CIVILIZED COUNTRIES

On the 8th February, 1937 motorized Italian troops, the Foreign Legion and Moroccans advanced along the Alle Theodor von Feiding, which had been softened by rain. They also came to Spain to save this town from the 'revolutionary system of extermination', the system of godlessness and anarchy. For this patriotic purpose fifteen thousand Spaniards had to be exterminated during the days of the occupation. And, just as the time when the victor of Bailen made his entry, the representatives of the ruling caste and those of the Church presented addresses to the saviours who had come in the name of the Fatherland and of Christianity.

True, ever since the beginning of the revolt, German and Italian aeroplanes had bombarded the open towns of Spain, and German and Italian tanks and guns, torpedoes and war specialists had assisted in the battles round Irun and San Sebastián, Toledo and Madrid. In Badajoz they were joined by mercenaries and arms from Portugal.

Malaga, however, was stormed by troops of the Italian regular army. They were the reply of the Fascist ruling powers to the cry for help from the Generals, who had got into difficulties.

The Generals' dreams of victory had originally borne a different aspect. In a proclamation made by General Mola on the 25th July, a week after the rising broke out, the following was to be read: «More than eight-tenths of Spain are already in our hands. In a few days we shall be in Madrid and Spain will once more be reckoned among the civilized nations».

The process of 'civilization' was spun out beyond all expectations. At the beginning of November, 1936, the Generals' assault on Madrid was broken by the defenders of the Republic. It transpired that the most modern weapons of war which their Fascist helpers could supply them were not sufficient. Even the specialists who tended the highly intricate machinery of war were not sufficient. The ranks of the rebels began to thin and the great reservoir of the people was only used sparingly to supplement them; there was fear of arming the people. The Spanish Generals, having begun the war with Foreign Legionaries and Kabyles, now required yet another trifle if the campaign was to succeed: they required a trained Fascist army.

The masters of Rome and Berlin needed raw materials and naval bases. They had invested money and blood. They could not abandon either their capital or their dreams of dominion in the Mediterranean and colonial expansion in Africa. Apart from all other considerations, the war in Spain offered suitable terrain for manoeuvres in which was weapons and the latest strategy could be tried out. Years before, Giulio Douhet, the Italian Air-Marshal, had developed the theory of absolute air warfare in his book 'Il Dominio dell'Aria'. The formation flights of Marshal Italo Balbo to South and North America were studies in this school of thought. Now the black Caproni squadrons were to test the truth of the formula: «There are no longer any fronts,

there is no longer a hinterland. Totalitarian air warfare transforms the whole country into a battlefield». The bombing squadrons are testing the reliability of their sighting devices, and the anti-aircraft artillery their degree of precision in blocking the heavens.

German generals have declared that the penetrative power of armoured, motorized troops will be the deciding factor in any new conflicts. Their experience in Spain as an area of manoeuvres not only serves the ends of the coming Imperialist war, but at the same time provides a test for their tactics in battle against an improvised people's militia in their own country. To whom would experience in the assault tactics of tanks and motorized troops, operating against concrete barricades and against streets infested with machineguns, be of greater importance than to those states where the guilty conscience of Fascist dictatorship prevails, the nightmare of a Caesar before the hour of reckoning?

Many weapons of the most diverse types have been placed at the disposal of Franco's army. They constitute the most modern machinery of death, constructed for the coming trial of strength in the Great World War and hitherto untried. Their sojourn in Spain is only for the purpose of a guest-performance. After a few weeks they go back to their country of origin with their range-charts verified in practice and with fresh experience regarding advantages and weaknesses.

From Berlin and Rome come death-machines, instructors and soldiers to do battle against the Spanish people. From Berlin, Rome, Paris, London, Belgrade, Prague, Vilna, and New York come volunteers to risk their lives in defence of the Spanish people. They come against the wishes of their governments, they cross frontiers illegally, buy tickets as far as the Spanish frontier with the last of their savings, come from distant lands on foot and travel as stowaways, but they get there. Thousands find their way there, march to the front if they are soldiers, or, if the handling of a rifle is strange to them, learn the most important exercises and then hurry to the points of greatest danger. In this way a pilgrimage in the name of freedom has come into being on the strategic map. A new power has appeared, the Solidarity Brigade.

It has happened at all times that the bravest and most sincere representatives of progress have offered testimony of their principles by deeds, over and above their platonic confession of faith. Were not the American wars of freedom the magnet which attracted the forces of liberation to that country? Was not Byron praised because he espoused the cause of Greek national emancipation in battle against the foreign domination of the Turks? Did not the conscience of Europe stand by the Polish fighters for freedom when, in 1863, they revolted against Czarist oppression?

Gottfried Keller, the Swiss writer, said of this struggle that it was waged not only for the inalienable right of Poland to national freedom, but also for the

freedom of the world, for the highest good of all the people: «Furthermore, by joining in the protest against the unpunished use of force, Switzerland defends her own freedom and independence. If the public conscience did not rise against this infamous injustice, against these crimes of other nations, there would be no guarantee of existence for any people, other than brute force. The genius of nations would become subjugated to guns, and, with the nineteenth century in full course, culture would again become retrograde.»

The voice of Europe seemed paralysed, and its conscience was anxiously censored. Just as the Oblomovs in the glass palace of the League of Nations deliberated for months at a stretch during the war of plunder in Abyssinia in order to establish who was the aggressor, so, now, they piled the documents dealing with Non-Intervention higher and higher. In the name of Non-Intervention the legitimate Government was blockaded by paragraphs and force. Meanwhile, the Fascists went on merrily intervening and despatching their conscripted volunteers and mountains of war material to Spain.

Thereupon lovers of freedom of all nations corrected the cowardice of the diplomats by opposing the powers of capital in their countries with the power of their convictions and their lives. They sent out the solidarity battalions from their midst to aid the threatened Republic.

In his historical consideration of the Revolt of the Netherlands, Schiller paints a picture of the force composed of the thousands who had been exiled by moral duress and repression and who now hastened to the aid of the Netherlands Provinces in their fight against the barbaric foreign dominion of Spain. These fighters also came from all countries, were also a kind of international brigade. «Their recruiting ground was the whole Christian world... Everybody who had been won over to the new doctrine, who had suffered under the despotism or had reason to fear it in future, made the fate of this new republic his own. Every affront experienced at the hands of a tyrant brought another civic right in Holland. Men rushed to enter a country where freedom was raising her gladdening standard... The republican army was complete without

## The Great Artist Pablo Casals Has Returned to Spain

The great 'cellist Pablo Casals, has returned to Spain after an extended tour of Europe and America. He makes this artistic tour every year, and contracts which he had previously signed compelled him to leave Spain for a few months. This year, however, he excluded from his artistic itinerary those countries hostile to the Spanish Republic. In those countries where he played, Pablo Casals repeated his triumphs and increased his fame as a great artist. The foreign press brought news to Spain of his resonant triumphs, whenever he played before large audiences.

## Ministry of Finance Tax Receipts During February, 1938

During the month of February there was a marked and sustained increase in tax revenue, especially in taxes and duties which may with reason be considered an index and a reflection of improved economic conditions in the country and of normalisation of administrative agencies. As compared with the same month last year, there was a total increase of 75,501,767 pesetas in tax revenue. This figure does not include payments of arrears, which do not constitute present income, but are the result of transactions in the previous fiscal year. If these are included, the increase in revenue amounts to 181,435,300 pesetas.

This increase in taxes has been general and is distributed throughout the provinces as follows:

Albacete . . . . .	827,193 pesetas
Alicante . . . . .	815,806 »
Almería . . . . .	243,229 »
Barcelona . . . . .	15,129,305 »
Castellón . . . . .	477,048 »
Ciudad Real . . . . .	1,746,267 »
Cuenca . . . . .	1,287,876 »
Gerona . . . . .	1,905,824 »
Jaén . . . . .	681,760 »
Lérida . . . . .	315,845 »
Madrid . . . . .	4,396,828 »
Murcia . . . . .	398,367 »
Cartagena . . . . .	1,605,300 »
Tarragona . . . . .	101,376 »
Valencia . . . . .	1,213,392 »
Caspe . . . . .	93,604 »

Only the province of Guadalajara showed a decrease of 165,000 pesetas in revenue.

There was also a considerable increase (23,706,900 pesetas) in duties on tobacco and 20,720,850 on wood.

An interesting and significant index of the persistent trend towards normality in administration and in economic affairs is to be found in the noteworthy increase in territorial and industrial taxes and taxes on utilities: inheritance, income, and transport taxes, automobile license taxes on light, payments, beer, sugar, duties and excise on stamps and tobacco. Alone the enumeration of these various taxes indicates that one may adopt an optimistic attitude as far as taxes are concerned, not only because the collection of taxes is bearing economic results but also because it reveals and promises an increase in production and improvement in social and economic conditions in the territory under the legitimate Government of the Republic.

needing to rob the ploughs.»

So it was then and so it has happened again. But the fame of the battalions of freedom may only be sung when generations have passed into oblivion. To write of the past is laborious and praiseworthy. To write of the present is simple, but unwelcome. To stand to arms in the present in the cause of freedom is even more undesirable still.

(From the book «Spain Between Death and Birth» by Peter Merin, published by John Lane, The Bodley Head, London, Chapter «Small world war-gand dress rehearsals».)

under different circumstances I am unable to say what my feelings would have been in this respect. But the years do not pass in vain. In any case, I can never forget my first aspirations. The idea that we are all bound by duty to help improve the lot of the people with material and spiritual contribution has always been present in my mind.

In his recent tour Pablo Casals did something more than his artistic work: he has been an ardent propagandist of our cause and by his prestige as an artist he has destroyed many fabrications by our enemies. Every opportunity Casals proclaimed the justice of the Spanish people in their fight against the traitor generals and the fascist powers which are invading Spain, and has declared himself proud of being a citizen of the Spanish Republic. Before the end of his tour, he returned to Spain to share with his own people the burdens of this war is imposing on them. He has returned to his post of honor, to his work and struggle with magnificent simplicity, with the simplicity of a man who knows his duty.

All articles and items in this week may be reprinted



## BARCELONA

## Night and Day Air Raids

Nine Attacks

## WHOLE STREETS WRECKED

Barcelona, March 17. — Barcelona was savagely bombed today. Amid its ruins to-night it is mourning at least 500 dead, and trying without enough medical supplies or doctors to care for at least 100 wounded and dying. Among the wreckage of many buildings crowds of rescuers are feverishly searching for other victims, buried or dead. Occasional cries heard out of the ruins tell of living persons still clinging to hope.

There were eight raids within 15 hours ending at 2 o'clock this afternoon. Those which created the greatest havoc were not aimed at military objects. They were aimed at a section of the Old City where the poor live huddled together like rabbits in their warrens. They were aimed also at the wide boulevards and plazas, where at the hour of 2 p.m. throngs are taking the sun or otherwise enjoying the Spanish noonday hour.

There are some who fear that the dead will prove to be as many as 700, and no doubt this number will be still further increased by another raid which is going on as I telephone this message to London.

## NIGHT AND DAY

The first of the series of raids began at 10.10 last night. The "all clear" signal was given at 12.08, there having been three separate raids during this period. Less than two minutes after the "all clear" another alarm was sounded, and at 2 o'clock this morning there was still another. One heard the crackling of anti-aircraft guns, the reverberating explosions of bombs. Where they fell great clouds of smoke ascended into the white moonlight night. So bright was the night under a moon straight overhead that scores of searchlight rays seemed weak against its background, making it difficult to locate the raiding aeroplanes. Flames lit the sky in several places.

Then at 7.40 this morning the city was aroused by bombing which struck the central part and killed many workers who were coming into town in the early trains. At 10.20 bombs ripped open the crowded part of the city, dropping their deadly load before the sirens could announce their presence. And at 12.55 they came again, this time principally hitting the boulevards.

I watched all these raids from my balcony. In one case I saw there raiding aeroplanes flying high and heading towards the sea. Great clouds of smoke rolled up into the clear sky, and in a few minutes most of the city was obscured by a heavy pall. Smoke spread through the streets.

## PITIFUL TALE

This afternoon I walked through the crowded working quarter, which is very extensive. There was scarcely one of its narrow streets which did not speak of its own pitiful tale of tragedy and sorrow. I walked also through the wide boulevards and saw how scarcely one escaped. Here was a church whose

tall Romanesque tower I had often admired. It was a temple of the aristocrats and the rich. The tower now had a great gaping bomb-hole near its lower part. There, across the street, firemen were rescuing persons from the top floors of a smashed building. A great firemen's ladder rose to the top, and a wounded woman was being lowered to the street on a belt.

At one of the Red Cross hospitals wounded and dead lay on the floor, occupying every available space. Ambulances awaited their turns outside. The dead were placed in lorries, and when the lorries were full they hurried away.

On one wide boulevard there were great piles of mortar, stone, and timbers of what once had been buildings. A huge theatre was smashed up. Lines of rescue squads were passing baskets of debris from hand to hand, hoping to get at the dead and wounded still buried there. Two burned tramcars stood on the track.

In the old quarter I walked through streets familiar to me—streets which I love for their picturesqueness, for their varied and teeming life. Living beings were now fleeing from them in streams—women with bundles and babies

and household possessions, fleeing they knew not whither.

## MUTE STOICISM

There can be no doubt that the object of these bombings was to spread horror and panic among the people. Yesterday and the day before news inspired by insurgent forces told that there were disorder and panic in Barcelona because of the eastern offensive. It was not true then, but it would seem decreed that it should be made true by today's raids. Still it is not true. There is neither disorder nor panic. There is that same mute stoicism and patience, that same deep sense of suffering—and, one might truthfully say, of heroism—that was the marvel of those who witnessed a similar thing in Madrid.

One could multiply graphic and tragic incidents of this visitation. In one place a bomb dropped between a motor-omnibus and a tramcar, killing most of the tram passengers and burning the omnibus. A witness tells of how a dying man on a stretcher raised his fist in the anti-Fascist salute. Another bomb fell in a queue of men and women waiting to buy food.

(From «The Times».)

## Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

More ought to be said of the work of the General Administration of Evacuation. Provision for refugees is, perhaps, the most urgent problem in the rear. The Government has spared no effort to alleviate the suffering of the refugees, but it has also tried to incorporate them into the life of the nation so that they may keep their self-respect under these difficult circumstances. The General Administration of Evacuation was organised by the Ministry of Labour, and is under the capable direction of Señora Eladia Puigdollers.

Over a million and a half refugees. Approximately three and a half million persons have been obliged to abandon their homes. Of these 1,753,000 are without means of support and dependent on the help of the Government. The General Administration of Evacuation has offices in Madrid, Valencia, Pons, Albacete, Alcazar, Alicante, Almeria, Castellon, Castuera, Fabara, Huelves, Jaen, and Murcia. The duty of this organisation is to arrange for the evacuation of citizens from war areas when their lives are in danger and to arrange for their reception (housing, feeding, and other needs), in towns where they can be provided for.

But the General Administration of Evacuation does not merely provide necessities. Men and women who wish to continue their work or to learn a trade are assisted in finding a post suited to their capacity. The children go to school, and the older ones, who had been apprenticed to a trade, are sent to cities where they may continue their apprenticeship in a workshop.

Particular care is given to refugee children, many of whom are now living under better conditions than before the war. This applies particularly to those who come from regions such as Andalusia where, under the oppression of the landlords, the children of the illiterate peasants were condemned to toil from earliest childhood. These children are well cared for physically, and are receiving an excellent education.

How refugees are cared for in Valencia. The Hospital for Refugees in Valencia treats four thousand patients a month. There is also the Giner de los Rios Hospital, a home for old people, and a shelter for transient refugees on their way to other towns. The refugees are not treated like beggars, or encouraged to be idle, but they receive maintenance and medical attention in sickness or old age.

Model Refuges in Alicante and Almeria. The refuge in Almeria is very large, comfortable and well-ventilated. It contains a soap factory where the women work, and for which materials are supplied by the General Administration of Evacuation. A beautiful home for old people is being built in Alicante, where there are also isolation and convalescent homes and a hospital for delicate children.

Refugee children abroad. The Administration also maintains a branch office in Paris whose work it is to assist the numerous refugees in foreign countries. Older children are sent to countries where they can study modern methods in the factory and workshop.

## SAVE SPAIN—SAVE BRITAIN

«Why not make a stand now, while there is still a good company of united, very powerful countries that share our dangers and aspirations? Why should we delay until we are confronted with a general landslide of those small countries passing over, because they have no other chance, to the Nazi regime?»

Those words of Churchill, uttered in the House of Commons on Monday, acquire actuality from the present critical state of the struggle in Spain.

There is a growing feeling in this country that we must say to Hitler and Mussolini, «Thus far and no further»; that Britain should declare that it will stand by France in resisting a German attack on Czechoslovakia.

But France will be in a poor position to resist a German attack on Czechoslovakia if there is a Fascist Spain in its rear. So Hitler and Mussolini are moving through Spain at the moment to realise their aim of a Fascist Europe.

While the British Government was talking about «non-intervention» they were moving their new planes and heavy artillery into Spain in preparation for the great offensive.

They believe that if they can seize Spain they will have democratic Europe at their mercy. Not only will France be paralysed, but a Fascist Spain on Britain's lines of communications in the Mediterranean will, it is believed, paralyse Britain also.

It is therefore British and French, no less than Spanish democracy, that is in peril at this moment. It is liberty in Britain and France, no less than in Spain, that the German artillery is seeking to pound to pieces at this moment.

We have either to make an ignominious and cowardly surrender to Fascism, or we have got to check Hitler and Mussolini in Spain.

## Open the Frontiers

The way to do so is known to everyone. It is to abandon the treacherous policy of the British pro-Fascists and send airplanes and guns to Spain.

It is to open the frontiers and permit those Britons and Frenchmen who want to participate in the defence of European democracy to do so.

Those who hang on to this criminal policy of non-intervention are enemies of the British people who desire to see the downfall of British democracy.

They desire to see Britain dominated by a Fascist Europe so that their own reactionary class victory over the liberties of the British people can be assured.

They are prepared in pursuit of their criminal policy to let Fascism attain a position when it will be able to impede British overseas communications, rendering it more difficult to defend the self-governing dominions, New Zealand and Australia, from an attack by Japan.

## Arms and Planes for Spain

The claim that these people made twenty months ago that non-intervention would help to maintain peace can now be seen to be a cynical and reactionary lie. Non-intervention is another name for the treacherous surrender of key positions to the Fascists.

It is another name for giving the Fascists a jumping-off ground for a swift and overwhelming swoop on the last strongholds of democracy, on the last strongholds of a free working-class movement in Europe.

The British people will be called upon to pay for this policy with millions of lives of their bravest and best, unless it can secure its instant reversal.

Now is the time for the whole of the democratic people of Britain to act.

Organise in your own defence by fighting for arms and planes for Spain.

Organise mighty demonstrations in every town and village in the country.

Organise meetings in every possible factory and workshop. Force the local Trades Council and the local Labour Parties to act.

THE FASCIST WAR IS HERE.  
BRITISH DEMOCRACY IS IN DANGER.  
HALT THE FASCIST ADVANCE IN EUROPE.  
SAVE BRITAIN BY SAVING SPANISH DEMOCRACY.  
PLANES, ARMS AND AID FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE.

(«From «The Daily Worker».)

«It is high time for the world to know that the Spanish campaign is an extension of the Abyssinian campaign. It is necessary for us to impose our influence on Spain, for otherwise we shall not be able to make the Mediterranean an Italian Lake as the Duce desires it. That is why we are helping Franco.»

This cynical statement was made by General Ambrosio Valatti, who took part in the war in Abyssinia, and who has been in command of Italian troops in Spain, in the Magazine «Il Mediterraneo» which is published in Rome.



# The Government of the Republic and the Catholic Church

Following is an extract from statements made to the press by Manuel Irujo, former Minister of Justice, today Minister without portfolio, concerning the attitude of the Republican Government toward the Catholic Church in Spain:

Among other things, the military insurrection brought about the downfall of the agencies of control at the service of the Republic: the Army, the Police, the Bar, the diplomatic corps, the departments which regulated work, social legislation, and finance, went over to the rebels almost en masse. The high clergy also participated with the insurgents in the military rebellion. The collective letter in which the high clergy on the fascist side condemned the Republicans is sufficient and irrefutable proof of this. And this is only one of the things which proves their participation in the rebellion.

The people in arms justly considered the royalist centres and the Catholic churches their enemies. In their anger the people placed the churches, the religious organisations and their representatives on the same plane as the enemies of the Republic. And indeed, the Church authorities took an active part in the struggle.

As soon as the Government of the Republic had the situation well in hand, it set about to reorganise religious life.

Priests are not persecuted. They have official permission to carry out their work, to fulfill their religious duties everywhere, even within prisons. When a priest or monk is drafted for the army, he need not take up arms. He may be assigned social welfare work which is more in keeping with his profession.

When the Government of the Republic issued an order for the collection of precious metals, it excluded sacred vases and other articles of worship. Citizens have received special permission to open chapels to fulfill their religious obligations. Very soon these chapels, which are functioning in a semi-public manner but sometimes accommodate as many as 700 people, will be opened to the public. The need for this is becoming greater each day; and at the same time, life is becoming more and more normal. Elementary precaution has made necessary this prudence in dealing with the religious question.

This movement for tolerance exists throughout the whole of territory loyal to the Republic, but the Basque nation offers a magnificent example of the liberty given ecclesiastical institutions to continue their activities. Under Euzkadi's autonomous Government religious life was not in the least disturbed. The priests were not compelled to go against their beliefs by taking up arms, but they helped the people in other ways. Many of them died at the front while fulfilling their religious duties.

The Basque clergy was Christian and Catholic and it respected and gave its support to the Basque people. For this reason forty priests were executed and several hundred others imprisoned or banished after the fall of the Basque country. Among those who were banished was the Bishop of Vitoria.

More than 200,000 Basques emigrated from the Basque country. One hundred thousand of these are in Catalonia, and it has therefore been necessary to open a number of chapels. More chapels are being opened, and it is expected that there will soon be a place of worship for all Basque Catholics who have sought refuge in Catalonia, as well as for other religious Catholics. In doing this the Government of the Republic has merely complied strictly with a fundamental duty to respect the religious conscience of citizens. It is expected that religious life will become perfectly normal throughout all of loyal Spain.

The Government exerted its authority to prevent violent action from being taken against religious centres and against priests and monks, and it was strictly obeyed. The Government itself will not undertake to reestablish religious worship, as this is the duty of the religious organisations. The Government will endeavour, within the limits of existing laws, to give heed to the desires of citizens relative to their religion.

There are no anti-religious prejudices, no religious opposition. The Government wishes to reestablish normal religious conditions, just as it wishes to establish normal social and political conditions and to bring the rebels before the law.

It should be pointed out, too, that the great monuments, the cathedrals, the works of art, and the immense majority of churches are still standing. Many of them are being used temporarily as hospitals, bomb-proof shelters, and store-houses. Various orders published in the Gazette provide severe punishment for those who damage any part of the artistic treasures formerly belonging to the Church. Just as much as it is interested in guaranteeing the continuation of the spiritual, economic, and social traditions of the country, so the Government is also interested in preserving these objects.

Indicative of the treatment members of religious orders receive from the Government of the Republic is the fact that there are places in some provinces where the women who were in convents before the outbreak of the rebellion are now making clothing for the Army.

In Valencia, in the old Asylum of Santa Monica, there were about 200 nuns. They were formerly under the General Administration of Prisons and subsidised by the Administration of Social Welfare. Since it was necessary to organise workshops for the manufacture of clothing for the prisoners, the General Administration of Prisons obtained permission from the Administration of Social Welfare to have the nuns depend exclusively on these workshops, and undertook to support them. Work was begun with 40 sewing machines. The plan has been completely successful. The nuns produce as much as the same number of ordinary workers would. They earn enough to support themselves and the older nuns who are too weak to work. This spirit of helping the Republic has spread to many other religious communities throughout loyalist Spain. Many nuns, monks, and

priests have already offered their services to the Republic.

The rebel press and radio have often falsely reported the persecution of nuns in Republican Spain. This has been categorically denied by two outstanding foreign journalists: Richard S. Mowrer of the "Chicago Daily News", and Henry W. Buckley of "The Daily Telegraph and

Morning Post", who have personally interviewed many nuns and have observed the care and respect with which they are treated by the Republican authorities and people. Perhaps it was because of the sympathetic attitude of these women that rebel aeroplanes bombed the Asylum of Pablo Iglesias in Valencia twice during the month of February, causing four casualties among these nuns.

These workshops for nuns, of which there are several in loyal Spain, are progressing quite well.

One workshop, for example, produces 500 sets of underclothes and 100 overcoats daily for the Army. Another group produces over 100 uniforms every day.

There are some priests in Albaterra prison camp. But they are not compelled to do physical labour. Their work is mostly clerical. Those who prefer penury, mechanics, and similar forms of work are permitted to pursue these occupations.

(*Servicio Español de Información*. Barcelona, Mar. 1938.)

## THE PEASANTS, THE CHURCH AND THE WAR

### The Struggle in Defence of Spanish Soil in Order that the Land May be Cultivated by Free Men and not By Foreign Invaders

The Spanish people have never enjoyed abundance, writes the Norwegian newspaper "Arbeiderbladet". The houses constructed ten years ago are built in much the same manner as those of the XVI century. The Spanish country towns lack the cheerfulness which is peculiar to those in North Europe.

#### OPTIMISM AND BRAVERY OF THE PEASANTS

The Swedish Deputy Ovanmyra, who is a peasant himself, from Dalarna, was very much interested in the russet color of the earth in Spain. The same was the case with all the Scandinavians who have recently visited Spain.

"It was", declared M. Ovanmyra, "at once evident that in Republican Spain the land was in a good state of preservation. The vine plantations were well cultivated, and the orange groves in the Levante region were bearing fruit. And when coming to a small town at nightfall we would see large caravans of peasants returning from their work in the fields."

"The Spanish peasants are great optimists. They start for the fields in the morning, never knowing whether or not on their return they will find their houses in ruins and their children alive. All the towns in Loyalist Spain have been bombed by foreign war planes at the service of Franco. They all bear the mark of bomb explosions."

"At any hour of the day the towns may be bombed again. Julius Deutsch has recently provided carefully collected statistics that the rebels prefer holidays to carry out air-raids. On holidays the peasants remain in the towns, near their homes. In the cities the main thoroughfares are more crowded, and there are more probabilities of scoring hits. In the Basque Country the foreign air force at the service of Franco bombed the Churches on Sundays when they were crowded with people of all ages."

"And the rebels themselves claim that they are fighting for Christianity and for the Church. The reactionary bourgeoisie of all countries apparently believe that this is the true Christianity."

"In spite of everything the Spanish peasants are cultivating their land and carefully attending to all the crops. And they continue working because they believe in a better future. They work stoically, hopefully, even though they are frequently machinegunned by the Italian and the German aviators, while they are at their work."

#### THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM

"The Agrarian problem in Spain has caused great political quarrels. 57 per cent of the Spanish people derive their living from the land, and they have worked this land under such miserable conditions that it is a miracle they have been able to resist for so long. For the good of the people and society a change had become necessary. When the Monarchy fell in 1931, a Law was passed calling for the expropriation of large estates in return for a sum corresponding to the taxes being paid on them. The land became the property of the State, which could rent it to the peasants. The parties of the Right did everything in their power to impede this law from being enforced. In 1933 the reactionaries won the elections, and the Law of Agrarian Reform was completely distorted. Land expropriation was to be carried out in such a mild form that the landlords virtually queued up to have their estates expropriated."

Only now, during the war, has it been possible to carry out proper distribution of the land. We endeavored to get information direct from the peasants in the towns where we stopped. Investigation showed that a different situation existed in each province, and that the distribution of land had not been carried out completely all over loyalist territory. The large landholders had not all been treated in the same manner. Those who were implicated in the military rebellion had their land expropriated and distributed among the peasants. But there are still large estates remaining in the hands of their former proprietors. Many estates are being cultivated collectively by former laborers, but our impression is that the tendency is towards parcellation of the land among small holders."

"A great change has taken place in Spain. The influence of the church and the landlords has been broken. The people feel their freedom, and one at once notices that they are no longer oppressed. In many towns new buildings can be seen. They are new school buildings. During the first year of the war, the Government created 7,578 new schools. Everybody, young and old, seemed to have been seized by the same craving: to learn to read and write. Everybody is reading books. One gets the impression that this is a strange war: the rifle is very important, but great importance is also attached to the book. Perhaps from a military point of view,

it is a weakness that all the attention is not given to the rifle, but, if so, it is a noble weakness. The Spanish people possess excessive vitality. A proof of this is that Spain was once one of the most important countries of Europe, and one has the impression that they possess the qualities necessary to build up a great era for themselves."

"Those against whom the Spanish people are fighting, reactionaries, ruled Spain many centuries, and they were unable to do anything except keep the nation in a very backward state of ruin, ignorance and misery. They have now grown still lower. They have betrayed their country by throwing it open to foreign invasion."

"On our return from Madrid we stopped at Tarancon, a town situated in the middle of the plains of Castile. It had been bombed several times by rebel air force. Few houses still standing. There was an American Hospital in this town and it was blown to bits by German planes, along with patient nurses, and doctors. But the people did not want to leave town."

"We arrived at Tarancon on Sunday afternoon, and the people were calmly promenading along the highway in their Sunday best, while many fathers gathered to talk surrounded by a swarm of their children. It was a human beehive harried by modern vandals. The town had been seriously damaged, but morale was not broken. They preserved their cheerfulness and the desire to work among ruins."

"The russet colored plains dulled far, far out of sight. Amidst the noises of the town one could hear the distant boom of the guns. There was fighting going on not far from there. The struggle for the Spanish soil determine whether it will ultimately be conquered by foreign invaders or whether it will belong to a race of free men."

"If war planes are sent to the Spanish Government, these ghastly murders will be stopped, and it can then be said that Great Britain and France did really and sincerely want to put an end to them."