# SPANISH TESTAMENT

by

ARTHUR KOESTLER

With an Introduction by

THE DUCHESS OF ATHOLL

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TO

SIR PETER CHALMERS-MITCHELL


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# INTRODUCTION

THIS IS A BOOK which illustrates better than any that I know the difficulty of getting at the facts in days of dictatorships and of war. For propaganda and press censorships are inseparable from both, and the strictness of the censorship on the insurgent side in Spain was revealed a year ago when the correspondent of two well-known British Conservative newspapers telegraphed that he was leaving the insurgent headquarters on account of the intolerable limitations that were being imposed on his work. Other correspondents of the "Right" have since experienced similar difficulties.

Mr. Koestler in his opening chapter makes clear the dangers to which French correspondents who had reported the massacre at Badajoz had been exposed and the recantations which they had been driven to make. His own hands happily were more free. As representative of a well-known newspaper of the "Left"—only a fortunate chance had enabled him to enter General Franco's territory, for journalists of the "Right" alone were being admitted. An equally unfortunate chance led to an early encounter with a former German colleague of the Ullstein Press in which he had held important posts before the advent of the Nazi régime in Germany. The encounter could not be agreeable to the insurgent authorities, and Mr. Koestler was no doubt well advised to end his visit to Seville.

But though the visit was a brief one the author, on account of the political orientation of his newspaper, could write freely without fear of prejudicing its chances of further permits. This fact explains the frankness of

his opening chapter and his subsequent publication in a book, "L'Espagne Ensanglantée" (passages from which are incorporated in the present work) of statements regarding brutalities committed on the insurgent side. These will come as a shock to many who, through insistent propaganda, have been brought to believe that "atrocities have been limited to the Republican side and that the insurrection was due to General Franco's desire to save Spain from a Communist rising".

Mr. Koestler gives us a much more circumstantial review of the causes underlying the present troubles. His belief that agrarian conditions are the root of the evil is confirmed by Señor Salvador de Madariaga, who, as is well-known, has taken no side in the civil war. A year before the fall of the monarchy he wrote that there was little in the general situation of the Spanish countryside which was not already known and denounced more than a century ago. "We are here," he said, "touching one of the key facts of Spanish history."

Need there then be surprise that after the advent of the Republic had brought a measure of land settlement, limitation of terribly long hours of work and fixing of minimum wages for men whose earnings were often only a shilling a day, bitter feelings were aroused when, under a so-called "Radical Government", reinforced later by members of Señor Robles' pro-Fascist party, much of the protective legislation was repealed and wages sank to an even lower level than before?

Señor Fernando de los Rios, the well-known writer, and now Ambassador to the United States, described in a broadcast on December 30th, 1936, how terrible it had been when addressing meetings at Granada during the General Election of the previous February to be confronted by starving audiences crying out for "bread".

And still, Mr. Koestler tells us, "ten thousand Spanish peasant families continued to live in caves and sandpits.



Still the Statistical Year Book showed that out of every thousand deaths five hundred were those of children under the age of five. Still only forty-four out of every hundred adult Spaniards were able to read or write".

Yet even such conditions did not complete the tale of misery. The rising in the Asturias in 1934, due to the entry of the Fascists into the Government, had been suppressed with terrible cruelty by Moors and Foreign Legionaries. The testimony of five hundred and sixty-one eye-witnesses quoted in Chapter II seems conclusive on this point. It was this which led to the formation of the Popular Front. Is it surprising that, the victory won, there were pent-up feelings which outran the measures of a Government pledged to "moderation"? Starving peasants could not be restrained from seizing land and many such seizures had perforce to be legalized.

And as Mr. Koestler shows, much provocation came from the "Right". Fascist groups openly derided the election; their numbers increased; and there were powerful influences at work to encourage them in the violence described in Chapter III and to help to prepare for an armed rising. Nothing in connection with the so-called "civil war" seems to me of greater importance than the activities of the Nazi organization described in Chapter IV. In the light of the facts revealed by the documents seized, German aid to an insurrection of Spanish Fascists was a foregone conclusion.

Under all these circumstances there may well have been much unrest and violence between February and July, 1936. Unhappily much of it from the "Left" was directed against a church which had been mainly responsible for the backward state of education and which was closely connected with the Robles party. Undoubtedly, moreover, many terrible things happened on that side after news of the military rising came. But Englishmen in the best position to procure reliable information are clear that none were due

to official orders, but solely to the inability of the Government, faced with a revolt not only of the army but also of most of the police, to restrain men maddened by the knowledge of past suffering and by the news that Italian aeroplanes were bringing over Moors and Foreign Legionaries to help to conquer Spain for Fascism. But it is good to know that there were Republican political organizations in some centres which condemned murder daily on the wireless and by poster.

On the other hand, mass executions such as are vouched for in the statement of the governing body of the Madrid Faculty of Law as taking place on the insurgent side, portions of which are reproduced in Chapter IV, could only be the result of official policy. Those at Granada and Seville have been confirmed to me by an Englishman long resident in Southern Spain. Even the atrocities on a smaller scale recorded in this chapter could have been prevented by authorities who commanded disciplined troops. But indeed General Queipo de Llano in his daily wireless gave definite encouragement to brutality, and Mr. Koestler reproduces orders taken on July 28th, 1936, on a rebel officer, which definitely enjoin the instilling of a "certain salutary terror" in the civilian population by means both "spectacular and impressive", in order to weaken enemy morale. The orders further require the creation of panic among civilians behind enemy lines, with the same purpose. Hints are even given that firing on ambulances or wounded in transport are useful means to this end.

The machine-gunning of fugitive non-combatants from Malaga and Guernica which has been described to me by fugitives from these places and the frequent attacks on their ambulances experienced both by the Spanish Medical Aid Committee and the Scottish Ambulance Unit conform so closely to the second and third injunctions in these orders as to justify belief in their authenticity. This is confirmed by the fact, that as they appeared in "L'Espagne Ensanglantée"



last January, there has been ample time to expose them if not genuine.

Finally, the brutalities which Mr. Koestler himself both saw and heard when taken prisoner fully confirm the terrible statements he prints. His own graphic and moving account of the midnight hours in the prison of Seville bring more vividly before us than anything else I have read the horrors Spain is enduring. His account of the nightly executions is confirmed by Mr. Rupert Bellville, who, having joined the Spanish Fascists, has stated publicly that he was for ten days a member, though an unwilling one, of a firing squad.

Finally, Mr. Koestler shows how unreliable are the official insurgent statements in regard to the proposed Communist rising, which has been generally given as the justification for General Franco's insurrection. I am equally unimpressed by the only other pieces of documentary evidence I know of for the existence of this plot. One appeared in the "Echo de Paris" of January 14th, 1937. It purported to be instructions for a rising sent to Spanish Communists early in 1936 by "technical experts" of the French Communist Party, collaborating with the Comintern and its delegates in France. Extracts from it were published by the "Patriot" in a leaflet in March last. The full text contains references to "chiefs and officers" of the army who were to lead the supposed rising. But where, one may ask, were the Communist chiefs and officers in the Army?

Evidently doubts of their existence have been felt elsewhere, for now reliance appears to be placed on another document, also purporting to come from French Communists, but giving an entirely different set of instructions, and speaking of the Spanish Communists as possessing a force of 150,000 front line militia, and 100,000 of a second line! If this were so, why, after the army had risen, were the Government obliged to give out rifles to any untrained men they believed to be loyal and to enrol not only men but

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## PART I



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# PART I

## CHAPTER I

# JOURNEY TO REBEL HEADQUARTERS

ON JULY 18TH, 1936, when the Franco revolt broke out, I was staying at a little seaside resort on the Belgian coast, engaged in writing a pacifist novel.

It looked at first as though the revolt had proved abortive and that the Government was master of the situation throughout Spain. Then the news grew more and more alarming. By the end of a week it was clear that there was to be a civil war of long duration, with possible European complications. We greedily devoured a preposterous number of newspapers; the pacifist novel came to a standstill and found its way into a drawer, there to moulder away forgotten. *Requiescat in pace.*

The part played by the Press in the Spanish affair was from the outset a most peculiar one. The rebels refused to allow a single correspondent of any Left-wing or even liberal newspaper into their territory, while correspondents of newspapers with pronouncedly Right-wing views were equally unwelcome on the Government side. Thus a state of affairs was rapidly created whereby, roughly speaking, the Right-wing newspapers had correspondents only on the Franco side, and the Liberal and Left Press only on the Government side. The communiqués from the respective headquarters were grossly contradictory, and almost as great were the discrepancies between the telegrams sent by the correspondents on both sides, for whom a drastic censorship, furthermore, made it impossible to send out unbiased messages.

The Spanish Civil War had, as it were, infected the Press of Europe.

In these circumstances, as a journalist of liberal convictions and author of fragments of pacifist novels—the first was brought to an untimely end by the outbreak of the Abyssinian War, and the third I shall never dare to embark upon—I was bound to be tempted by the idea of getting into rebel territory. I arranged with the "News Chronicle" to try my luck at getting into Seville. I fancied I stood a better chance of success than many of my colleagues, since as occasional theatre and film critic of the official organ of a Central European Government I was able to exploit certain connections.

At this time, the first month of the Civil War, Seville was still the headquarters of the rebels and likewise the central clearing station for the men and arms despatched from Germany and Italy. I felt some uneasiness; but I calculated that the worst that could happen to me was that I should be expelled. Man proposes. . . .

On August 20th I went to Cook's and bought a ticket to Lisbon; two days later I embarked at Southampton.

From the moment of leaving Cherbourg an oppressive atmosphere hung over the ship. The steamer was called the "Almanzora"; it had left Southampton on August 22nd and was due to arrive at Lisbon on the 25th. It was full of Spaniards travelling to rebel territory; that is to say, they were either adherents of the rebel side or were behaving as though they were, since they had no desire to be arrested and denounced immediately on their arrival. Everyone was mistrustful of everyone else; we all sat in silence reading the wireless news from the war zone posted up on the notice board, scrutinised our fellow passengers, and gave them a wide berth.

The general tension was noticeable even in the first class saloon, penetrating even that armour plate of icy boredom in which the Englishman on a sea voyage is so



supremely able to encase himself. The Englishmen in the first class were almost all in sympathy with the rebels; having read their "Daily Mail" thoroughly, they were firmly convinced that the rebellion was a crusade to save civilization; they took Queipo de Llano to be a kind of Richard Cœur de Lion at the microphone, Azaña an Anarchist. Any attempt to disabuse their minds of at least this last misconception only invited mistrust. A knowledge of the facts was in itself sufficient to bring one under suspicion of being a "red".

In the third class opinions were divided. There was a sixteen-year-old Spanish boy who played around with a little Portuguese girl of about fifteen, sang charmingly to the guitar and was given to making cheeky remarks. Five days later I saw him in Seville being taken out of a van with a number of other prisoners and escorted through a line of gaping spectators into the headquarters of the *Falange Española*. His face was bruised black and blue, and tears were running down his grimy cheeks. He did not recognize me, and I avoided making myself known to him; the next day he was shot in accordance with the usual custom.

On August 24th we touched at the rebel port of Corunna. A Portuguese destroyer and a French cruiser, "Le Triomphant", lay ill at ease in the utterly silent harbour. A motor sloop flying the flag of the Spanish Monarchy, a yellow stripe on a red ground, surmounted by the Bourbon Crown, brought on board the port officials: a commissioner of police and a representative of the Phalanx. The Phalangist, who was obviously acting as an auxiliary policeman, a fat bespectacled youth of the type who has failed in his University examinations, planted himself down in the middle of the promenade deck so that he could be admired, raised his arm frequently in the Fascist salute, announced that Madrid had fallen the day before, that all Freemasons, Jews and Communists were going to be exterminated, that then, and then only, would life in the true sense begin,

and politely accepted the foreign cigarettes that were offered him.

Vigo, the second rebel port that we touched at, presented a similar picture. Side by side with an English destroyer lay two Portuguese torpedo boats, and a little distance away a German Dornier-Wal flying-boat rocked peacefully back and forth in the water. Otherwise the harbour was utterly lifeless and glowed a sullen red under the grilling rays of the sun, as though under a silent, evil spell. And in peace-time Vigo is the largest sea-port for transatlantic shipping in the whole of Spain. To-day the town, situated as it is only twenty miles from the Portuguese frontier, is the centre of operations for the smuggling of German and Italian arms to the rebels. In Vigo itself there was nothing to betray this fact; the harbour was cordoned off by a double row of sentries, who looked as though they would not hesitate to shoot at sight.

Strolling through the town is for the foreigner for all the world like running the gauntlet. Every hundred paces or so he is stopped by a patrol and made to hold up his hands, turn out his pockets, and protest his complete innocence and his profound sympathy with the rebel cause, whereupon he is given a friendly pat on the shoulder and, with an "*Arriba España*", allowed to go on his way, only to run into the arms of the next patrol, when the whole business begins all over again. He notes, during his hour's walk through the town, that it is chock-full of troops —Legionaries, Carlists, Phalangists, but no Moors; that all taxis and private cars are labelled "Requisitioned"; that all the young people wear a yellow armlet with the letter "M"—*mobilisado*; that the civilians slink timidly along by the walls, and that scarcely a single woman is to be seen out in the streets. He sees two suspects, one with a bleeding nose, being escorted into the Palace of Justice, and notices that the passers-by anxiously look the other way, to avoid hearing or seeing anything. He reads the



notices posted up in the cafés: "You are requested not to talk politics," and hears people talking in hushed whispers—for there are spies everywhere; he sees them tremble at the approach of every Phalangist—for one never knows what is going to happen; he sees them buy newspapers announcing the fall of Madrid, the destruction of Government cruisers and the burning of Barcelona, and throw them aside unread—for they know that it is all lies. He even sees a funeral procession; the black motor hearse too bears the label "Requisitioned" and, below this, the words "*Viva España*"—the labels are stuck on securely and cannot be scratched off; behind the hearse walk dignified gentlemen carrying top-hats and wearing above the black mourning flower in their buttonholes the brightly-coloured Royalist cockade. He sees the gaily beflagged houses, and behind the decorations the windows with closed shutters; and all the time he is unable to shake off a dream-like feeling that he has had this nightmare before, a feeling that the psychologists term *déja vu*. He knows all this only too well, this picture of a provincial town under a dictatorship: the trembling townsfolk, the military let loose, the fear of spies, the whispered rumours, the constriction in the throat that affects a whole town, a whole population, like an epidemic, and when, an hour later, he is back on board the steamer and is questioned by the Englishmen in the first class as to his impressions, he replies, in the words used by certain friends of Lord Lothian's to convey their enthusiastic impressions of Berlin:

> "The city is quiet, the trams are running, and there are no corpses lying about on the pavements."

The Englishmen in the first class nod contentedly; they had known it all along, of course: where Franco rules, order and security prevail.

## The Conspiracy in Lisbon

No sixth sense was needed to discover what game was being played in Portugal. It was played with the cards on the table. The facts that the diplomatic chancelleries of Europe obstinately and successfully refused to admit were to be seen in the streets of Lisbon in broad daylight; one's nose was positively rubbed into them.

It all began while we were still on the steamer, during the passport examination before we disembarked. As a journalist I was put through a special cross-examination, during which I noticed that one of the three Portuguese police officials present was not speaking Portuguese, but Spanish. I did not attach much importance to this circumstance at the time, and only discovered its significance the next morning in Lisbon, when I learned that the man in the uniform of the Portuguese political police—the "International Police" it is called—was in fact a Spaniard, a representative of the Burgos Junta. It was in his power to decide who should land in Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, and who should not. A few days before my arrival, Albea, the ex-President of the Argentine Republic and leader of the Argentinian moderate Radical Party, had arrived in Lisbon. "We shall first have to ask the representative of the Burgos Government whether you may land," the police officials on the steamer had said to him. I was later informed that the Burgos Junta's liaison officer in Lisbon, Señor Gil, was one of the heads of the Portuguese "International Police."

I had anticipated having some difficulty in getting into rebel territory, and I therefore applied to a Central European Consul in Lisbon whom I knew for advice.

"You will, of course, have to get a visa," said the Consul.

"A visa? From whom?"



"Why," said the Consul. "From Señor Gil Robles, of course."

"Where am I to find Gil Robles?"

"Why, at the Embassy."

It transpired that there were two Spanish Embassies in Lisbon.

In the one was the legal representative of the Madrid Government, Sánchez Alvornoz, a sick man, entirely isolated, deserted by his staff, spied upon by the Civil Police; to all intents and purposes a prisoner of the Portuguese Government.

The other, the Black Embassy, calling itself the "Agency of the Burgos Junta", had its offices at that time in the Hotel Aviz, and was run by two people who detested each other. One was Gil Robles; the other, who went under the alias of Hernández D'Avila, was Nicolás Franco, General Franco's youngest brother.

The Central European Consul of whom I have already spoken took me on the evening of my arrival to Esturil, the "Le Touquet" of Portugal, an hour's journey out of Lisbon. The Consul was a very nice fellow, married to a Portuguese aristocrat and therefore on friendly terms with the rebel leaders. At the Estoril Casino we came across a great number of them, some sitting at the bar, some playing bac, others trente-et-quarante. It was altogether a curious company that was gathered here in this Casino behind the front lines of the Little Iberian World War: the Ambassador of a Balkan State (Heaven knows why this state maintains an embassy in Portugal) was reeling about, obviously the worse for drink, among the dancing couples on the terrace; a Japanese and a Hungarian attaché were whispering at the bar, evidently thinking themselves terribly important; while ladies of the Portuguese aristocracy, my friend's wife among them, went to and fro among the company with collecting sheets, "for Franco's hospitals", as they said with a flutter of their eyelids. The atmosphere was just such as one might find in Shanghai or Harbin. Most of the

ladies and gentlemen were slightly tipsy and all were filled with a great sense of their own importance. It obviously gave them great satisfaction to be able to point out to a foreign journalist that so-and-so was a spy or an arms smuggler or a foreign agent. If one had taken them seriously, one might have imagined that half Esturil consisted of super-spies, all playing the part of "The Man who was Thursday".

This visit to the Casino as an introduction to the Civil War was to prove useful, after all. For I got to know one or two leading figures of the rebel aristocracy socially, as it were, and I even gained permission to put up at the Hotel Aviz. There I made the acquaintance of some more leading officials at the Lisbon rebel headquarters, amongst them Franco's brother, Gil Robles, the Marqués de Quintanar and the Marqués de la Vega de Anzo, both of the *Falange Española*, and Señor Mariano de Amadeo y Galarmendi, who posed as "Spanish Ambassador".

The atmosphere at rebel headquarters was completely unlike that at the Casino.

In the Hotel Aviz there prevailed a bizarre mixture of conspiratorial secrecy and court ceremonial: one had a feeling that all these black-coated gentlemen, as they discussed, in hushed whispers and in tones of exquisite courtesy, gun-running, plans for the offensive, exchange transactions, and, last but not least, the commission accruing therefrom, imagined their necks to be still encased in the starched ruffles of the Court of Philip the Second. The only exception was Gil Robles. When the Marqués de la Vega de Anzo presented me to him as an English newspaper correspondent, he flatly and abruptly turned his back on us, to the silent consternation of his assembled staff. This was a piece of luck for me, for the Marqués, his former secretary, proceeded to reproach him at such length for his undiplomatic handling of the Press that he finally gave me, in addition to my rebel passport, a letter of recommendation in his own handwriting to General



Queipo de Llano in Seville (which in its turn produced the unexpected result that the latter, who was on terms of open hostility with Gil Robles, kept me waiting for four hours for an interview).

During my stay in the Hotel Aviz I had ample opportunity of collecting evidence with regard to the activities of the Portuguese rebel headquarters. Later on I had occasion to give evidence in London with regard to these activities before the Committee of Enquiry into breaches of International Law relating to Intervention in Spain.

Since that time the fact that the Portuguese Government is virtually in a state of war with Madrid has gradually become common knowledge in Europe, so that there is no longer any point in recapitulating these things.

I stayed in Lisbon only thirty-six hours; on the night of August 26th, armed with my *Salvo Conducto* from Gil Robles and Franco's brother, I left for Seville.

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

From Ayamonte to Seville there is a bus service. The road runs through Huelva and La Palma del Condado, that is to say, through a district that has been more or less from the outset in rebel hands; nevertheless, the villages

on the route gave an impression of disorder. At every little stopping-place a group of men who had up till then been sitting chatting outside the Town Hall, threw away their cigarettes and, seizing their rifles, surrounded the bus. Their appearance was hardly such as to arouse confidence; had one not known them to be the guardians of law and order, one would have taken them for bandits.

"Spain, arise—everybody get out!"

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

Round about one o'clock we arrived in Seville.

We drew up in a large square where workmen were engaged in changing the street name-plate on a corner house. They took down the old plate on which was written "Square of the Republic", and nailed up a new one which read: "Primo de Rivera I Square." The rusty "Republic" plate they packed away carefully in brown paper. I wonder if they will ever unpack it again. . . .

The first native of Seville that I spoke to after my arrival was the porter of the Hotel Madrid who carried my suitcase from the bus stop to the hotel. He spoke a little French and was pleased at an opportunity of showing off his knowledge. "You'll be all right at our hotel. You needn't be afraid there," he informed me confidentially. "We've only had two arrests in the last few days. One was a French journalist; the *Seguridad* fetched him from the hotel at three o'clock this morning to examine his passport; probably they'll let him go again quite soon. The other was an



Englishman from Gibraltar, who registered at the hotel as 'General Belton'. He came the day before yesterday and was arrested straight away. For two days we sent food in to him in prison, but yesterday it was sent back. Either they shot him or let him go; either he is a spy or it was a mistake. With us, as I said, you'll be all right; if you'd gone to the Hotel Cristina you wouldn't be so well off, for the Cristina is full of German officers, and they take everyone for a spy, especially anyone who speaks French. . . ."

All this was hardly calculated to cheer me up.

In the vestibule of the Hotel Madrid I found several French journalists sitting drinking aperitifs. They too did not appear to be exactly cheerful. Grand of the Havas Agency was there, René Brue, the "Pathé Gazette" man and one or two others. Antoine of "l'Intransigeant" was not amongst them. It was he whom the police had fetched out of bed at three o'clock that morning.

I should have liked to join them at the table, but they gave me no invitation to do so. They were a dejected, timid little company, and most of them sat about in the hotel vestibule more or less all day long, without putting their noses outside. On the day of my departure I learned that the Frenchmen were under a sort of collective house arrest, as it were. The rebel Press chief, Captain Bolín—we shall come across his name frequently in the course of this book—was in a towering rage with them because news had trickled through into the French Press of the horrible massacre at Badajoz. He had declared on the morning of my arrival and after Antoine's arrest that they might not visit the front in future except in organized parties under military supervision. The next expedition was not to take place for some days. Until then he "privately advised them if possible not to leave their hotel".

And so there sat the Frenchmen sipping their aperitifs as though at a funeral feast. They were worried to death about Antoine.

He was released that evening, and was in such a hurry to leave that he scuttled off by taxi to Gibraltar at five o'clock in the morning. In his paper, however, he said no word of this. Newspapers do not publish accounts of such adventures; they are afraid that if they do so the rebels will refuse to allow any more of their correspondents into rebel territory.

Three days later Brue was arrested.

He was kept in prison for three weeks; Bolín personally threatened to shoot him, because he had filmed the blood-bath of Badajoz.

Jean d'Esmé too was arrested. I do not know for how long he was kept in prison.

The story appeared in the French Press. Brue and d'Esmé were forced to deny it for the sake of their colleagues, who were still in Bolín's hands—the delicate hands of a rebel propaganda chief.

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

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

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

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

### At Rebel Headquarters

The headquarters of the Second Division of the rebel army, under the command of General Queipo de Llano, is



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

cities. And yet the whole scene is in perfect keeping with the general picture presented by the first few weeks of the war, about which, for all the ferocity and dogged resolution displayed by both sides, there is a curious note of improvisation, of unorganized hectic activity.

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

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

### Portrait of a Rebel General

At this time General Queipo de Llano was one of the most famous broadcasters in the world; every evening millions of adherents and opponents listened in to his talk



from Seville, with mixed feelings, but with rapt attention. Never, probably, in the whole history of wars and civil wars has a general made speeches to the world—and such picturesque speeches too; and even if his accounts of the strategic situation are frequently contradicted by the facts on the very next day, they have never been lacking in a certain artistic charm. Here are some samples, taken at random:

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

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

August 18th. "I have to inform you that I have in my power as hostages a large number of the relatives of the Madrid criminals, who are answerable with their lives for our friends in the capital. I likewise repeat what I have already said, namely, that we have a number of the miners from the Rio Tinto mines in our prisons. . . . I don't know why we are called rebels; after all, we have nine-tenths of Spain behind us. And since we have nine-tenths of Spain behind us, I fancy that those on the other side are rebels and that we should be treated as the legal government by the rest of the world."

August 19th. "Eighty per cent of the families of Andalusia are already in mourning. And we shall not hesitate, either, to adopt even more rigorous measures to assure our ultimate victory. We shall go on to the bitter end

and continue our good work until not a single Marxist is left in Spain."

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

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

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

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

On my answering in the affirmative he continued ruminatively:

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



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

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

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

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

"Not even Señor Gil Robles?"

"I can assure you that Señor Gil Robles will not be a member of the new Government."

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

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

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

"Less friendly."

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

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

"Whom did you buy them from in Tetuan?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

Although Seville swarms with soldiers, it is not the army that chiefly impresses its character on the town. The dominant element is the Phalanx.



The headquarters of the Phalanx in Seville is in the Calle Trajano; on the afternoon of August 28th I myself saw a lorryload of prisoners from the Río Tinto mines being taken there. The scene was terrible; about half the prisoners were wearing bandages soaked through with fresh blood; and they were bundled out of the lorry like sacks. The street was cordoned off by a double file of Civil Guards; behind them the crowd stood looking on in silence. Speechless, grim, it lingered outside the building for another half hour, staring at the walls and the pale sentries; then it dispersed. It had been waiting for the sound of shots from within. But it had waited in vain; executions are carried out at night.

In the cafés in Seville two notices hang side by side; the first forbids anyone to talk politics, the other makes an appeal for volunteers for the National Militia, the pay offered being three pesetas a day. (In Portugal volunteers for Spain are promised twelve to fifteen pesetas.) I had an opportunity of watching a recruiting commission at work for about an hour. About thirty candidates had queued up, no more. The first question that was put to each of them was whether he could read and write. The illiterates, of whom there were about ten, were lined up in a special file, and about half of them were accepted. (They were nearly all labourers and agricultural workers.) Of the literates only one, a peasant lad, was accepted, all the rest being rejected. The recruiting commission had orders to turn down any suspicious character; by "suspicious characters" are understood industrial workers, unemployed, anyone wearing spectacles, and agricultural labourers with that indefinable something in their appearance that betrays contact with revolutionary ideas. The recruiting officers, and still more so the sergeant-majors, knew how to detect "this something". I saw how this procedure worked out in practice during the hour I spent there; out of what was in itself, for a whole morning, a ridiculously small number of thirty candidates, only five were accepted. Andalusia

is a poverty-stricken province with social contrasts of medieval intensity, and every second person has that "something" in his gaze. And here we touch upon the chief problem of the rebels: their chronic lack of man power.

Franco and his generals were unable to introduce conscription on any considerable scale. They knew that they had the masses against them; they knew that every bayonet that they forced into the hands of the peasants of Andalusia and Estremadura might be turned against them at a suitable moment. The Spanish Army never has been a people's army; as we shall see in a later chapter there has always been a disproportionately large number of officers in it, a characteristic which has been still further intensified during the course of the Civil War. At the end of a year's fighting the Moors (estimated at about eighty thousand), the Italians (estimated at about a hundred thousand) and the picked troops of the Foreign Legion constitute the backbone of the infantry in Franco's army. Then come, in the order of their numerical strength, the political formations: the *Falange Española* and the *Requetes*. The actual Spanish regular infantry counts last in Franco's army.

This chronic lack of man power has been more than compensated for from a strategic point of view by supplies of the most up-to-date war material from abroad. On July 15th, 1937, almost exactly a year after the outbreak of the Civil War, the "Daily Telegraph" wrote:

> "General Franco continues to rely principally on relatively small forces supported by very heavy armaments. In some quarters it has been estimated that there was one machine-gun to every four men. This is probably an exaggeration. Nevertheless, the Insurgents used very large numbers of machine-guns in proportion to their effectives."

The situation on the Government side was exactly the opposite. Madrid had at its command an infinite supply of men and for a time was numerically twice to



three times as strong as the rebels. But these forces were without training, without discipline, without officers and without arms.

On the rebel side there were companies with one machine-gun to every four men. On the Republican side there were companies where four men shared a single rifle.

My stay in Seville was very instructive and very brief.

My private hobby was tracking down the German airmen; that is to say, the secret imports of 'planes and pilots, which at that time was in full swing, but was not so generally known as it is to-day. It was the time when European diplomacy was just celebrating its honeymoon with the Non-Intervention Pact. Hitler was denying having despatched aircraft to Spain, and Franco was denying having received them, while there before my very eyes fat, blond German pilots, living proof to the contrary, were consuming vast quantities of Spanish fish, and, monocles clamped into their eyes, reading the "Völkischer Beobachter".

There were four of these gentlemen in the Hotel Cristina in Seville at about lunch time on August 28th, 1936. The Cristina is the hotel of which the porter had told me that it was full of German officers and that it was not advisable to go there, because every foreigner was liable to be taken for a spy.

I went there, nevertheless. It was, as I have said, about two o'clock in the afternoon. As I entered the lounge, the four pilots were sitting at a table, drinking sherry. The fish came later.

Their uniforms consisted of the white overall worn by Spanish airmen; on their breasts were two embroidered wings with a small swastika in a circle (a swastika in a circle with wings is the so-called "Emblem of Distinction" of the German National-Socialist Party).

In addition to the four men in uniform one other

gentleman was sitting at the table. He was sitting with his back to me; I could not see his face.

I took my place some tables further on. A new face in the lounge of a hotel occupied by officers always creates a stir in times of civil war. I could tell that the five men were discussing me. After some time the fifth man, the one with his back to me, got up and strolled past my table with an air of affected indifference. He had obviously been sent out to reconnoitre.

As he passed my table, I looked up quickly from my paper and hid my face even more quickly behind it again. But it was of no use; the man had recognized me, just as I had recognized him. It was Herr Strindberg, the undistinguished son of the great August Strindberg; he was a Nazi journalist, and war correspondent in Spain for the Ullstein group.

This was the most disagreeable surprise imaginable. I had known the man years previously in Germany at a time when Hitler had been still knocking at the door, and he himself had been a passionate democrat. At that time I had been on the editorial staff of the Ullstein group, and his room had been only three doors from mine. Then Hitler came to power and Strindberg became a Nazi.

We had no further truck with one another but he was perfectly aware of my views and political convictions. He knew me to be an incorrigible Left-wing liberal, and this was quite enough to incriminate me. My appearance in this haunt of Nazi airmen must have appeared all the more suspect inasmuch as he could not have known that I was in Seville for an English newspaper.

He behaved as though he had not recognized me, and I did the same. He returned to his table.

He began to report to his friends in an excited whisper. The five gentlemen put their heads together.

Then followed a strategic manœuvre: two of the airmen strolled towards the door—obviously to cut off my retreat;



the third went to the porter's lodge and telephoned—obviously to the police; the fourth pilot and Strindberg paced up and down the room.

I felt more and more uncomfortable and every moment expected the *Guardia Civil* to turn up and arrest me. I thought the most sensible thing would be to put an innocent face on the whole thing, and getting up, I shouted across the two intervening tables with (badly) simulated astonishment:

"Hallo, aren't you Strindberg?"

He turned pale and became very embarrassed, for he had not expected such a piece of impudence.

"I beg your pardon, I am talking to this gentleman," he said.

Had I still had any doubts, this behaviour on his part would in itself have made it patent to me that the fellow had denounced me. Well, I thought, the only thing that's going to get me out of this is a little more impudence. I asked him in a very loud voice, and as arrogantly as possible, what reason he had for not shaking hands with me.

He was completely bowled over at this, and literally gasped. At this point his friend, airman number four, joined in the fray. With a stiff little bow he told me his name, von Bernhardt, and demanded to see my papers.

The little scene was carried on entirely in German.

I asked by what right Herr von Bernhardt, as a foreigner, demanded to see my papers.

Herr von Bernhardt said that as an officer in the Spanish Army he had a right to ask "every suspicious character" for his papers.

Had I not been so agitated, I should have pounced upon this statement as a toothsome morsel. That a man with a swastika on his breast should acknowledge himself in German to be an officer in Franco's army, would have been a positive tit-bit for the Non-Intervention Committee.

I merely said, however, that I was not a "suspicious character", but an accredited correspondent of the London

"News Chronicle", that Captain Bolín would confirm this, and that I refused to show my papers.

When Strindberg heard me mention the "News Chronicle" he did something that was quite out of place: he began to scratch his head. Herr von Bernhardt too grew uncomfortable at the turn of events and sounded a retreat. We went on arguing for a while, until Captain Bolín entered the hotel. I hastened up to him and demanded that the others should apologize to me, thinking to myself that attack was the best defence and that I must manage at all costs to prevent Strindberg from having his say. Bolín was astonished at the scene and indignantly declared that he refused to have anything to do with the whole stupid business, and that in time of civil war he didn't give a damn whether two people shook hands or not.

In the meantime the Civil Guards had actually arrived on the scene, with fixed bayonets and pugnacious expressions, to arrest the "suspicious character". Bolín angrily told them to go to the devil. And to the devil they went.

I decamped there and then from the confounded Cristina. Arrived at my hotel, I began hurriedly to pack. I had hardly finished when a French colleague of mine came up to my room and privately advised me to leave for Gibraltar as quickly as possible. He was obviously acting as the mouthpiece of some higher authority; but he refused to say whom. He merely said that he had heard of the shindy and that the whole affair might turn out very seriously for me.

Eight hours later I was in Gibraltar.

Twenty-four hours later I learned from private sources that a warrant for my arrest had been issued in Seville.

So Strindberg junior had had his say after all.

I don't care two hoots, I thought. Seville has seen the last of me.

There I was wrong.

## CHAPTER II

# HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

IN HIS RECENTLY published book on Australia Egon Erwin Kisch relates the following amusing anecdote.

Sydney was celebrating Anniversary Day. Kisch took part in the jubilations, the processions and so forth, and thought it all marvellous until suddenly it occurred to him that he did not know in the least what was being celebrated. He looked through the papers, and found page-long and flowery accounts of the programme of festivities, but not a word as to what it was that was actually being celebrated. He made enquiries of ten of his Australian friends, and received ten different answers. Finally, in desperation, he consulted the "Encyclopædia Britannica", and there at last found the answer to the riddle. The Australians actually commemorate the arrival of the first convict ship, but they have long since forgotten or have tried to forget the historical event to which Anniversary Day owes its existence.

I must leave to my friend Kisch the responsibility for the accuracy of his anecdote. But even if a pure invention it is a good story, and might very aptly be applied to Spain. Ask ten different people what were the origins and causes of the Spanish Civil War—and you will be given ten different answers.

If you continue to play this little game long enough, you will find that the view on which there is most unanimity is the one that maintains that Spain is the battle-ground of a struggle between "reds and whites", between Communism and Fascism. This is an entirely erroneous view.

During the twelve months of the Civil War the clamour of demagogues and the mutterings of the ignorant have so

obscured and distorted the real facts of the situation that it is now scarcely possible for the onlooker to make head or tail of them. All that he can see are bloody arabesques traced on the façade of an historical process without being able to penetrate to its structural foundations.

The roots of the Spanish question lie in the agrarian problem.

In any discussion of the events now being played out in Spain, it is imperative to bear in mind the fact that it has remained to this day a country with a semi-feudal structure.

The distribution of land in 1933 was as follows:

| *Category* | *No.* | *Percentage* | *Land owned* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *in hectares* | *percentage of total* |
| Large landowners | 50,000 | 1 | 23,200,000 | 51·5 |
| Peasants owning large farms | 700,000 | | 15,800,000 | 35·2 |
| Peasants owning small farms | 1,000,000 | | 5,000,000 | 11·1 |
| Poor peasants | 1,250,000 | 99 | 1,000,000 | 2·2 |
| Agricultural labourers | 2,000,000 | | | 0 |
| | | | | 48·5 |
| TOTAL: | 5,000,000 | 100 | 45,000,000 | 100 |

These figures serve as a kind of compass by which to find one's bearings in the Spanish chaos. They show that the landed aristocracy, which constitutes barely one per cent of the total rural population, controls more than half the total area of cultivable land. That is to say, fifty thousand feudal magnates own more land than the remaining ninety-nine per cent of the population put together.

The millions of small peasants and agricultural workers live in abject poverty and misery. About three million out



of a total rural population of five million possessed in 1933 so little or such poor land that their standard of life scarcely differed from that of the agricultural labourers owning no land at all.

The houses in the villages in the interior of Spain often consist of a single room. Anyone looking in at the door can see the whole household: an iron bedstead facing the door, two or three chairs and a bench, a few primitive cooking utensils hanging on the walls, and invariably a swarm of children and dogs, to say nothing of flies. The floor is often of dried clay. Many of these houses are completely devoid of the luxury of windows, a round hole in the wall taking their place. The single door serves to light the room, to provide entry and exit for men and beasts, and to carry away the smoke.

In 1932 there were still rural areas in Andalusia, and for that matter at the very gates of Madrid, where large numbers of agricultural labourers and their families lived like troglodytes in caves and pits dug out of the hillside.

In 1929 the average daily wage of an agricultural labourer was three pesetas (worth at that time a shilling); women's wages were half this amount (that is, sixpence); and the working day lasted from sunrise to sunset. Agricultural labourers possessed neither rights nor means of protecting their interests. In the villages the only law, the only authority, was the despotic rule of the *cacique*, the local boss, backed up by the rifles of the Civil Guard. Moreover, work was available only on a hundred to two hundred days in the year. Spanish agricultural labourers have always lived under the threat of starvation. For centuries their unspeakably wretched condition has been the most urgent social problem of the Iberian Peninsula.

This is the first fundamental fact that must be constantly borne in mind. The second concerns the position of the Church.

The Catholic Church is the largest landowner in Spain. This explains why the Spanish peasants' struggle for existence was bound at the same time to be a struggle against the secular power of the Church. The anti-clerical character of all Spanish mass movements since the seventeenth century is a direct and inevitable consequence of the temporal power exercised by the Spanish clergy ever since the expulsion of the Moors.

With the dawn of the industrial era the Spanish Church assumed as dominating a position in the commercial world as it had hitherto done in agriculture. It controlled banks and industrial concerns, owned urban house property, and had adopted the most up-to-date business methods of modern capitalism.

Until 1936 the tramway system in Madrid belonged to the Church. A number of typical Spanish cabarets, with their, to English ideas, very *risqué* programmes, were controlled by holding companies with clerical capital. Among the "big five" banks of the Iberian Peninsula was the *Banco Espíritu Santo*, the "Bank of the Holy Ghost", which largely helped to finance Franco's insurrection.

It is essential to appreciate the peculiar position of the Spanish Church in order to realize that the struggle of Spanish democracy against the clergy is not an anti-religious struggle, but a purely secular, political struggle waged against an extremely secular, extremely political opponent —a struggle which all the Western democracies waged successfully centuries ago when they set to work to lay the foundations of a liberal era. It is the struggle of Henry VIII against Rome, the struggle of France in the eighteenth century for the Rights of Man.

The Spanish clergy, in whose traditions the stake and the torture chamber of the Inquisition live on unforgotten, still possessed to all intents and purposes until February, 1936, that power and that mentality against which Rabelais, Voltaire, the Encyclopædists, Tom Paine and Godwin all inveighed.



The anti-clerical demands of the Spanish Popular Front in the year 1936 were not a whit more radical or "red" than those of the writers of the age of enlightenment: separation of Church and State, distribution of Church lands amongst the landless peasants, secular education, freedom of religious worship, freedom of speech and freedom of the pen. If this is anarchism, then John Stuart Mill was an anarchist; if it needed the inspiration of Moscow to raise these demands, then Cromwell was a hireling of Stalin. The truth is that the Spanish Popular Front was not striving towards a Soviet State or a Bakunian Utopia, but towards one goal alone: the raising of the Spanish State, which had never yet succeeded in emerging from the clerical, feudal stage, to the constitutional, material and spiritual level of the great European democracies.

This is, moreover, not the first attempt of the kind to be made in Spain; for two hundred years the ruling caste of Spain, the grandees and the clergy, have successfully resisted all such attempts. No country experienced as many revolts, changes of government and revolutions in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as did Spain.

Again and again the property of the Church was confiscated and the Jesuits were expelled, for example, in the years 1767, 1808, 1838 and 1852. But within a few years the forces of reaction once more gained the upper hand and the *status quo* was restored. Feudal proprietors of vast latifundia, a tenacious Church, a corrupt Court, and parasitic military cliques once more ruled over the land. Again and again a progressive middle-class allowed its adversaries to wrest from it what it had gained in the course of bitter struggles. It almost looks as though the Left in Spain has always suffered from a deep-seated, age-long inferiority complex. If ever it has come to power, it has

apparently been to its own surprise, and it has never really known what to do with its power. The politicians of the Left have always been, to use an expression of Upton Sinclair's, "idealists and amateurs". This is a disease of all young democracies. And the more soberly the progressives have acted, the more brutal and bloody has been the reaction to follow.

In some respects the Carlist wars of the nineteenth century were a prelude, providing many analogies, to the Civil War of 1936. On the one side one finds the Liberal Government of Madrid, a Government all too receptive to illusions; on the other the coldly calculating feudal forces of reaction, in league with the Church and the Army, whose watchwords are "inviolability of the clergy" and "absolute monarchy without parliamentary control". These high-sounding phrases merely serve as a screen to conceal the interest of the reaction in the maintenance of the *status quo* on the land. In both of the Carlist wars the Spanish feudal caste enjoyed the active support of the reactionary European powers, particularly that of Prussia, while the English and French democracies confined themselves largely to platonic expressions of sympathy with the other side. And always with the same melancholy result: democracy bleeds to death, the Middle Ages triumph, and passive observers beyond the Pyrenees raise their hands in pious horror and protest against the atrocities.

The triumph of barbarism bears fruit; Spain at the beginning of the nineteenth century loses its colonies and becomes the poorest nation in Western Europe, a sort of dim Tsarist State in the Mediterranean; the "Iberian outsider". There is a proverb that says: "Africa begins at the Pyrenees."



At the beginning of the twentieth century Spain gradually awoke from its charmed slumber. Catalonia, Asturias, the Basque country, were rapidly being industrialized; the Liberal middle classes, which were too timid and too weak of themselves to wage a successful struggle for political emancipation, were joined by an ally, the workers' movement.

In 1930 the number of miners, industrial workers, railway workers, dock workers and subordinate employees was about two million; in addition there were about 300,000 domestic servants. The urban workers' wages and conditions were not unlike those prevailing on the land, and were so low as to be comparable only with those obtaining in Tsarist Russia or the Balkans. A British Consular Report for the year 1924, describing the housing conditions of the Spanish workers, stated that rents were so high in relation to wages that in the workers' districts several families were obliged to occupy a flat scarcely large enough for one childless couple.

Just as everything in this country, hermetically sealed and isolated by the barrier of the Pyrenees, is subject to laws of a markedly peculiar and individual nature; just as the Spanish Church still marches under the banner of Ignatius Loyola and Torquemada and the Spanish landed proprietor under the banner of the medieval feudal lords, so too has the Spanish workers' movement, from the very outset, developed its own specific peculiarities.

When in the 'seventies, at the time of the First International, the European workers' movement experienced its first split and Marx and Bakunin parted ways for ever, the Spanish workers' movement split up into two sections, the adherents of Marx, who called themselves *autoritarios*, and the adherents of Bakunin, who called themselves *anti-autoritarios*, enemies of authority. The former group became the germ of the Spanish section of the Socialist International, with Madrid as its stronghold; out of the latter there grew up

the F.A.I., the "Iberian Anarchist Federation", with its stronghold in Barcelona.

Spanish, or more correctly, Catalan anarchism is a national phenomenon, and there is nothing to correspond with it in the rest of the world. It is a complete fallacy to look upon Spanish anarchism as nihilism or as a purely negative movement. The anarchistic doctrines of Bakunin, Kropotkin and Co. are, on the contrary, based on an incurable and fanatical optimism, namely on the theory that human beings are born good, and that only institutions and tyrants are to blame for the evils of social life—hence the naïve conclusion that it is only necessary to shoot down these tyrants and abolish these institutions for all to be well with the world and for the golden age to be ushered in. The classical theory of Socialism, according to which a transitional stage of pedagogic rule on the part of the most highly developed section of the community must intervene after the downfall of the old system until all traces of the obsolete régime are obliterated from social life and the consciousness of man, and until the transitory régime itself gradually withers away, when, as a result of the improvement in material and ideological standards, it has become superfluous, and the ultimate stage of "ideal anarchy", that is, of absolute freedom, is reached—this theory of a "roundabout way" to human happiness the Anarchists reject. As a logical consequence of their anti-authoritarian attitude, Anarchists proclaim their belief in the policy of direct action.

The extraordinary receptiveness of the Catalan workers to the teachings of Bakunin may have its roots in the infinitely easy-going, optimistic character of this Mediterranean people, and partly, too, in Catalan particularism and love of independence, which has always impelled the Catalans to adopt an antagonistic attitude towards Madrid. The Catalans, just like the hopelessly impoverished Andalusians with their predominantly illiterate population, must



have been particularly receptive to a theory that spoke of the abolition of all authority as of some magic potion which would immediately put everything right; after all, they have always come across the worst side of every form of authority. There is a very old and very popular exclamation current among the Catalans; when a woman breaks a crock or loses a button, she always says: "That's the Government's fault." This saying reveals perhaps part of the secret of Spanish anarchism.

It is, on the other hand, clear that a party which is built up on the principle of the rejection of authority, even, indeed, the rejection of authority within that very party, provides a particularly happy hunting ground for *agents provocateurs*, spies, and other corrupt elements. This is one of the more shady aspects of the Anarchist doctrine, and both the F.A.I. and the C.N.T., the party and Trades Union of the Anarchists and Anarcho-syndicalists, have had to suffer seriously from it. And even more seriously, of course, has the Spanish Republic suffered from it during the Civil War. The savage street fighting in Barcelona in April, 1937, was undoubtedly precipitated by *agents provocateurs;* but if it were not for the historical factors indicated above the influence of individual *provocateurs* would never have sufficed to kindle a fratricidal war behind the lines of the Civil War.

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In the year 1929 Primo de Rivera's Dictatorship collapsed. The Monarchy survived it by only one year.

The revolution that followed was a bloodless one. The Dictatorship, and with it the Monarchy, exposed to the two-fold pressure of the economic crisis and the liberal tendencies of the masses, fell to pieces like a dilapidated building.

When, on April 14th, 1931, the Spanish Republic was proclaimed, the progressive parties in Spain found themselves

saddled with a completely bankrupt country which had only just shaken off the nightmare of the Middle Ages. The tasks which awaited the young Republic were enormous, and it did not prove equal to them.

It was with extreme timidity and hesitation that the Republican Government tackled the burning problems that faced it, stirring up the embers of a smouldering crater, so to speak, with a drawing-room poker.

The most urgent problem of all, the problem on which Spain's very existence depended, the question of Agrarian Reform, was for all practical purposes pigeon-holed. In some districts small collective farms under State control were established—enough to rouse the reactionaries to fury, but not enough to ensure a livelihood for even ten thousand starving peasants. The technicians and officials of the "Institute for Agrarian Reform" carried out their task of parcelling out the land at a snail's pace; and when the peasants clamoured for greater speed, here and there simply taking possession of the land, the Minister of Agriculture responded to the outcry of the starving peasantry in the now classic sentence:

> "The Law of Agrarian Reform lays down certain time limits within which the reforms must be carried out; and we have no option but to abide by these limits."

The time limits laid down by the Law of Agrarian Reform provided for the annual settlement of 50,000 peasants; it would have taken exactly forty years to provide even the class of landless agricultural labourers with land. But the systematic sabotage practised by the old bureaucracy and the adroitness of the landed gentry in pulling wires made it impossible for even this minimum programme to remain anything but a Utopian dream. From 1931 until the beginning of the reaction of 1933, out of a total of forty-five million hectares of cultivable land forty thousand



hectares in all were divided up amongst the peasants; that is, exactly ·009 per cent.

This was the state of affairs that was labelled by the reaction as "Communism and Anarchy".

On the other hand the first Government of the new Republic carried out a certain number of reforms. The separation of Church and State was decided upon, at least on paper, secular schools were established, and the confiscation of the property of the Jesuits was contemplated.

More concrete measures included improvements in the terms of leasehold contracts, and laws for the protection of agricultural labourers. Thus, for example, the decree dealing with the *términos municipales* laid it down that the landlord no longer had the right to hire non-local labour in order to bring down the wages of the labourers in his own village. An eight-hour day for agricultural labourers was introduced, and in Andalusia and Estremadura the daily wage rose from three to eight pesetas. The unspeakably wretched and illiterate masses learned, during this first period of the Republic, to enunciate once again a word that had been for centuries forgotten: the word "hope".

> "Our wives were able to return home at five o'clock in the evening," related a peasant who was in prison in Seville in October, 1935, "and prepare the meal, and also had time for sewing and seeing to the children's clothes. We were able to go to meetings of our organisation, and spend a little time gossiping in the street. . . ."

A March wind of optimism swept through the tortured land. At a time when the preparations of the Right to drench the young Republic in blood were in full swing, the Socialist leader Fabra Rivas declared with pride:

> "This is the real revolution. Let us see who will now dare to rob the peasants of the gains they have achieved. . . ."

Well, someone did dare. The power of the reaction in Spain was unbroken. The Republic had not laid a finger on the conspiratorial officers' associations, it had not purged the State machinery of the old bureaucracy or put an end to its sabotage. The Army and the Civil Guard remained what they had always been. The key positions, both military and economic, remained in the hands of the enemy.

Insignificant as were the reforms introduced by the Government, the governing caste yet felt them to be a threat to its inherited privileges. It was not concerned with mere questions of detail; its struggle was from the start aimed at the uprooting of all the seeds of a new liberal era in Spain and the restoration of the Dictatorship.

The offensive on the part of the reactionaries began with a highly organized plan of sabotage on the part of the big landowners in the spring of 1933. All of a sudden there was no more work to be had on the land. True, the agricultural labourer had the right to demand an eight-hour day and a wage of eight pesetas, but work he could not find. The landowners persisted in this tacit lock-out: they let their land lie fallow, and turned it over to pasturage; where formerly two hundred labourers had been employed, two or three shepherds now sufficed.

The position rapidly worsened; this policy of blackmail on the part of the governing caste succeeded in defeating almost every one of the Government's paper reforms. Expectation turned to disappointment; and in the elections of the autumn of 1933 the Right scored a victory.

But the old, worn-out trimmings of the Monarchy had vanished; the reaction in Spain had provided itself with a brand new modern façade. From now on it was to imitate with remarkable adroitness the methods of totalitarian dictatorship.

Antonio Primo de Rivera, son of the late Dictator, founded, strictly after the pattern of the German Storm Troops, and under the tutelage of German instructors, the *Falange Española*.



Gil Robles, nurtured in the subtle traditions of the Jesuit Seminary in Salamanca, created in the *Acción Popular*, a party thinly disguised as Republican, a sanctuary for all the big landowners, wealthy peasants, and upper middle-classes, who, as in so many other countries of Europe, were panic-stricken at the collapse of economic stability and were seeking asylum and refuge in Fascism.

> "Society has one enemy alone: Marxism. It must be extirpated root and branch. And only if the conservative classes take advantage of the political opportunities of the moment will the glowing dawn of a better life break for them."[1]

The third leader of the reaction was Calvo Sotelo, monarchist, big landowner, and the strong man of the *ancien régime*.

In the other camp, the first tendencies towards the formation of a common defensive *bloc*, composed of Liberals, moderate Socialists and Trades Unionists were discernible.

Thus, even in the first few years of the Republic, the two fronts which were to face each other in the Civil War of 1936 were already taking shape.

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Immediately after the elections of November, 1933, which put Alejandro Lerroux into the saddle, the great offensive against the Republic and its reforms began. Tension in the country increased. The economic crisis became more acute, unemployment reached the record figure of 1,500,000, the price of bread rose by sixty per cent, and the price of potatoes was doubled.

The workers prepared to carry on a struggle against their starvation wages; strikes broke out and were bloodily suppressed. The despairing peasant masses waited in vain for the promised distribution of land; here and there, in

[1] Gil Robles, in the year 1934.

Andalusia and Estremadura, they began to cultivate any land on the estates of the nobility which happened to be lying fallow—and paid for their precipitancy with torture and death. Gil Robles was openly demanding "the immediate liquidation of the legacy of the April Republic".

On June 5th, 1934, 500,000 poor peasants and labourers went on strike throughout Spain. The Government replied with a declaration of martial law and the introduction of a Press censorship. The strike collapsed.

Towards the end of August, 1934, the sister of Primo de Rivera, the Fascist leader, fired six fatal revolver shots at Juanita Rico, a young Socialist girl, from her car. This assassination went unpunished; but 70,000 Madrid workmen attended the funeral of the victim.

Revolution was in the air.

Six weeks later, on October 4th, 1934, when the President of the Republic, Alcalá-Zamora, invited three members of the Gil Robles party to join the Government, it broke out.

On that same night of October 4th the workers' organizations issued a call for a general strike throughout Spain.

The Government gave its troops orders to shoot.

On October 6th clashes, provoked by officers of the army and the Civil Guard, occurred in the working-class districts of most of the large towns of Spain. Inadequately organized and without a unified leadership, the insurrectionaries succeeded only in isolated districts in gaining the upper hand. In Madrid the movement collapsed; in Catalonia an autonomous Republic was proclaimed, but twenty-four hours later its President, Companys, was forced to surrender. In the Basque country the struggle continued for a fortnight. But the greatest conflict of all flared up in Asturias. It proved to be the dress-rehearsal for the Civil War of 1936.

When Gil Robles' party attained power, the miners of Asturias knew what was in store for them.



They remembered that in Germany too the Dictatorship had begun with the formation of a government in which the party aiming at dictatorship was at first in a minority. They knew what was meant when Gil Robles heralded "the glowing dawn of a better life for the conservative classes": the dissolution of their Trades Unions, the reintroduction of the ten-, twelve- and fourteen-hour day, the lowering of wages by a third to a half; starvation, misery and humiliation.

After five days of street fighting in Oviedo, the Asturian miners gained the upper hand. In 1934, just as in 1936, they were unarmed. They fought with axes and picks against machine-guns, they clambered over walls, their pockets filled with dynamite, lit the fuses with their cigarettes, and were themselves blown to bits if they were too slow or a bomb exploded too near them. Mieres, Sama de Langreo, the entire mining district, were successfully held against the Government troops. The garrison at Gerona mutinied, took its officers prisoner, and went over to the miners.

The Asturian People's Republic was proclaimed, and a militia of 15,000 men created.

The first clause in the very first decree promulgated by the Asturian People's Republic laid it down that anyone caught looting would be summarily shot. All the money in the province was called in, and the revolutionary committees issued food tickets which the shopkeepers were obliged to honour. Canteens and municipal kitchens were set up; the sale of alcohol was prohibited.

Seldom before have revolutionaries been able to bring forward such incontestable testimony as to their discipline and humanity as were the Asturian miners. General López Ochoa, the Commander of the Government troops, himself paid a positively staggering tribute to the good conduct of his opponents. The substance of his testimony

was referred to by Fernández Castillejo, a Conservative member of the Cortes and a Captain on the General Staff a few weeks after the defeat of the Asturian Republic, in the following statement:

> "The stories of the atrocities committed by the Asturian revolutionaries are the fabrications of an exaggerated and base propaganda campaign. I condemn the events in Asturias with all my heart, but I must also condemn the exaggerated and base campaign of which they have become the object. Acts of cruelty, which I deplore as much as anyone else, were an exception and by no means the rule. General López Ochoa has given me the most emphatic confirmation as to the correctness of this view.
>
> "I have no hesitation in declaring that all the stories of the crucifixion of officers' sons, and of the tearing out of children's eyes, are a complete fabrication.
>
> "The revolutionaries killed all those who resisted them with armed force, but as a rule they respected the lives of their prisoners."

This astonishing declaration is supplemented by a whole string of evidence. The conservative Madrid newspaper "Stampa" for example, published an interview with one of the former political prisoners of the Asturian miners—the secretary of the Oviedo Master Locksmiths' Association.

"We were not ill-treated," he declared. "Our guards did not speak to us except when bringing us food. Curiously enough, our fare consisted of ham and coffee with milk. Perhaps they had nothing else; there was a food shortage."

Judain, a municipal employee, another prisoner of the miners, likewise declared to the representative of the "Stampa":

"We were decently treated. We were given bread and ham three times."

"Is it true that the revolutionaries have a contempt for money?" asked the somewhat naïve reporter.



"Yes, it seems so. They had all the municipal funds in their possession, but they did not touch any of the money. The leaders in particular seemed to be curiously puritanical. Before I was arrested I saw two miners come into an inn and begin to drink some wine. Shortly afterwards one of the revolutionary leaders came in and shouted at them: 'Are you here to get drunk or to carry on the revolution?' And they crept away like two scolded children. . . ."

The first Government troops despatched by Madrid against Asturias went over to the workers. The world began to sit up and take notice. Within a few days the Lerroux-Gil Robles Government was in an extremely critical position. It could no longer depend on its troops; one of its leading officers, Lieutenant-Colonel López Bravo, openly declared:

"My men will never fire on their brothers."

At this point, Gil Robles conceived a brilliant plan to save the situation; he sent for native troops from Morocco and for the Foreign Legion to crush the Asturian miners.

Forty thousand men in all were despatched, under the command of General López Ochoa, to destroy the Asturian People's Republic. Thirty thousand of these were barbarian African tribesmen.

While this force was still on the march, one of its officers, Colonel Doval—two years later he was one of the rebel Generals—declared that he was determined

> "not to spare the life of a single revolutionary, and to wipe out the revolutionary brood even in the mother's womb."

Even the Government in Madrid felt some qualms when they saw what was about to happen in Asturias. The Minister for War, Diego Hidalgo, declared:

"The only argument against the use of African troops is that they are utterly lawless and unrestrained in war, and are therefore liable to offend against the laws of common humanity. . . ."

On October 14th, shattered by air raids, blown to pieces by heavy artillery, Oviedo fell. On October 19th, López Ochoa, the Commander-in-Chief of the Government troops, marched into the mining towns of Mieres and Sama de Langreo, in the heart of Asturias. The struggle was over. The blood bath was just beginning.

It assumed such terrible proportions that the whole of Europe turned its gaze in the direction of Asturias. Men, women, children and old men were butchered indiscriminately, without trial, without any consideration of whether they had taken part in the fighting or not. They were thrown into rivers, shovelled into common graves. The wounded were finished off in the hospitals with bayonets and rifle-butts.

The number of those massacred in the White Terror in Asturias has never been established. But eye-witness accounts, photographs and documents exist in plenty.

One of these documents is a report, signed by 564 political prisoners, eye-witnesses and observers, which was published by del Vayo in the spring of 1935. Among other things it states:

"Apart from the individual cases mentioned below, we wish to state that the following methods of torture were employed: burning of the genital organs and other parts of the body; crushing of the testicles; crushing of the hands and the lower extremities; blows with hammers on hands and knees; the forcing of needles under the finger-nails; the scalding of various parts of the body with boiling water; the forcing of victims to kneel down on sharp stones; and mock executions.



"Some victims were compelled to dig their own graves, others were buried up to the knees. Apart from these tortures, which present only a very incomplete picture of the appalling reality, the following were the methods of torture most frequently used: a prisoner's hands would be bound behind his back with a rope, and he would then be hoisted into the air by this rope and swung backwards and forwards. Sometimes tubs filled with water or sacks of sand were fastened to the victim's feet, so that his limbs would be torn from their sockets. Another procedure was to beat the soles of the victim's feet with clubs or rifle-butts, whilst at the same time he was prodded with bayonets or shots were even fired off behind his back. Other prisoners were placed in ice-baths until their skin became inflamed and peculiarly sensitive to the beatings which followed. Maria Lafuente, the sister of Aida Lafuente, who was shot by the troops, was forced to strip for her examination."

This is merely a brief extract from one of many similar documents.

After a ten days' massacre the Gil Robles-Lerroux Government considered that the time had come to apply the brakes. The African troops were withdrawn.

But the courts were still busy turning out death sentences as though on a conveyor belt; in Madrid, Oviedo, Barcelona, Santander, Zamora, Leon and Gijón, 40,000 prisoners were sentenced to a total of 300,000 years' penal servitude.

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October, 1934, is a date that should be remembered. For the first time in recent history a European Government used coloured troops against its own subjects. Translated into terms of English conditions, this would be comparable to the Home Secretary's giving orders for native Indian

or African troops to be brought to England to put down a miners' strike in South Wales. The Church, in the name of Christianity, drove the Moors out of Spain; a true son of the Spanish church, in the name of Christianity, now called them back again.

A decade earlier such a thing would have been impossible in Europe. The Europe of the Locarno period, the Europe of Stresemann and of MacDonald in his heyday, would have reacted to this piece of barbarism with a storm of indignation, as it once did to the Armenian massacres. But the Europe of 1934 was apathetic, its senses were blunted and stupefied—who could still bother about what was happening in a remote country beyond the Pyrenees? The sentimental Europe of 1924 seemed to be as remote as the Europe through which Yorick wandered in his coach. "The end justifies the means" is the principle of modern dictatorship. "The end justifies the means" is the age-old maxim of the Jesuit fraternity. The synthesis has been consummated in the person of Gil Robles, alumnus of a Jesuit Seminary and pioneer of the Fascist movement in Spain. His development is a symbol of that ultra-modern form of reaction which is bent on driving mankind back to the Middle Ages with the help of tanks and the radio.

Anyone who has spent even a few days in the rebel camp during the Spanish Civil War is familiar with that curious aroma blended of poison gas and incense which is so characteristic of Francisco Franco's modern crusade.

## CHAPTER III

# THE OUTBREAK

AFTER THE EVENTS in Asturias the need was more and more urgently felt for all liberal forces in Spain to unite in face of the persistent attempts on the part of the Right to re-establish a dictatorship—a dictatorship which would be far more drastic than the régime of the late Primo de Rivera had ever been. After laborious negotiations a coalition between the progressive middle class parties on the one hand and the workers' parties and Trades Unions on the other was formed under the name of the *Frente Popular* or People's Front. At the elections to the Cortes of February 16th, 1936, this new political *bloc* gained a triumphant victory.

It was the most backward country in Europe, Russia, which in 1917 was the first to carry through a Socialist revolution. It was in the most backward country of Western Europe, Spain, that a progressive coalition of this new type first came to power. It may be to these facts that the tragedy of Europe and of the Left movement in Europe can to a considerable extent be traced.

The Spanish People's Front was made up of the three democratic parties: the Left-Republicans (the Azaña Party), the Republican Union (Martínez Barrio's Party), and the Left-Republican Party of Catalonia (Company's Party); and further, of the Socialist Party of Spain, the Communist Party of Spain, and the various small independent Socialist parties. The Anarchists took no part in the election campaign of the People's Front, and instructed their members to abstain from voting.

Despite the vigorous campaign of terror launched during the elections and the efforts made to suppress the propaganda of the Left parties, the People's Front won a clear victory.

The parties of the *Frente Popular*, including the Basque Nationalists, obtained 277 seats in the Cortes; in 1933 they had had 121. They had gained thus 156 seats.

The parties of the Right and the Right Centre, which later threw in its lot with the rebels, obtained 196 seats; in the previous Cortes they had had 352. They had thus lost 156 seats.

The proportion of the total votes cast for the Left was less favourable to it than the distribution of Parliamentary seats. The Left had gained a majority of the total votes, but this majority was not as great as the majority they gained in the Cortes. The old-fashioned and complicated Spanish electoral system was peculiar in that it increased the victory of the victorious party and intensified the defeat of the vanquished party. This electoral system dates from the time of the Monarchy, when the ruling caste wished to keep the minority parties out of the Cortes. For decades the Right had profited from this electoral system; now it suddenly turned out to the advantage of the Left, who were able to quote the proverb: "He who digs a pit for another, shall himself fall into it."

The main point is that the *Frente Popular* won a majority of the total votes cast. It was this victory which enabled it to benefit from those advantages of the electoral system from which the Right would have benefited had things gone the other way.

Not only were the Parties of the Right beaten, but their most outstanding leaders suffered personal defeat. Gil Robles stood as a candidate in three constituencies, one of them Madrid, and was defeated in two. Lerroux stood in two, one of them Barcelona, and was defeated in both. Primo de Rivera, son of the former dictator, and founder and



leader of the Phalanx, stood in eight constituencies and was defeated in all of them.

Four years after the proclamation of the Republic the way at last seemed clear for the transformation of the semi-feudal, old Spain into a modern democratic State. Even the most extreme section of the People's Front, the Communist Party of Spain, repeatedly and emphatically insisted that the object in view was not the realisation of Socialist demands but the introduction into Spain of "bourgeois democracy", that is, the realisation of those reforms which the middle-classes of the democratic countries of Western Europe had succeeded in obtaining by the second half of the nineteenth century at the latest.

For—and this fact is frequently overlooked when Spanish problems are under discussion—Spain was still, when the People's Front came into power in 1936, a semi-feudal country, with sharp social contrasts such as a Western European can scarcely conceive possible.

In November, 1935, after the events in Asturias, agricultural wages had fallen to a lower level than even under the Monarchy. Agricultural labourers in Andalusia earned from 1·75 to 2 pesetas (7*d.* to 8*d.*) per day. There were landowners in Estremadura who employed men for twelve hours a day and gave them one meal a day in lieu of wages. The landowners were taking their revenge for the fright that the first years of the Republic had given them.

All the protective legislation introduced by previous governments was repealed by the Gil Robles régime. The law rendering illegal the importation of non-local labour was repealed. The law with regard to lease-hold contracts was repealed, and more than 100,000 tenant farmers were given notice. The distribution of the land among the peasants was declared null and void, the new settlers were evicted, and the land was restored to its former owners, who let it lie fallow. Those feudal gentlemen who preferred to leave the land in the hands of the settlers were compensated

by the Government to the tune of 500 million pesetas, while the Church received in compensation for the losses she had suffered 300 million pesetas.

At the same time all unemployment relief was abolished, and the 873 million pesetas allocated to public works by the budget of 1933 was reduced in 1935 to 628 million.

The unrestrained tyranny of the feudal aristocracy was driving the Spanish economic system once more towards ruin. Whilst in most European countries a gradual recovery after the slump was discernible between 1933 and 1935, the curve of unemployment in Spain mounted steadily, reaching its peak in 1935. Meanwhile Spain became the country with the highest duties on consumers' goods in Europe.

The masses had returned to their old state of unspeakable misery and suffering. Still 10,000 Spanish peasant families continued to live in caves and sandpits, both in Andalusia and at the very gates of Madrid. Still the Statistical Year Book showed that out of every thousand deaths among the Spanish population 500 were those of children under the age of five. Still only forty-four out of every hundred adult Spaniards were able to read and write.

This was the heritage which fell to the lot of the Spanish People's Front in February, 1936.

On February 19th, the new Government was formed with Manuel Azaña as Prime Minister. It was a liberal Government, composed exclusively of members of the liberal centre parties—nine members of the Republican Left, three of the Republican Union and a non-political general at the War Office. No Socialists or Communists were included. In the decisive period from the February elections until the outbreak of the insurrection no Socialist or Communist was ever a member of the Spanish Government. The first cabinet in which the Socialists participated



was formed by Largo Caballero on September 4th, six weeks after the beginning of the Civil War.

This is a point which should be remembered, for, from the very beginning, the defeated Spanish reaction concentrated all its efforts on making the world believe that Communism had come to power in Spain. It launched one of the most perfidious propaganda compaigns Europe has ever known—and one of the most successful.

A few days after the elections, Azaña, the new Prime Minister and veteran of the Spanish liberals, gave an interview to the correspondent of the "Paris Soir":

> "Before the elections," he declared, "we drafted a programme of minimum reforms; we intend to adhere to this programme. I wish to govern according to the law. *No dangerous innovations! We want peace and order; we are moderates.*"

The propagandists of the Right, however, averred that Azaña was aiming at revolution and the disruption of society. The campaign went on, and the Government did nothing to stop it.

It looks, indeed, as though the Spanish Republic had learned nothing from the experiences of the past. Instead of once and for all sweeping away the economic foundations of feudalism in Spain, the "idealists and amateurs" strove to provide water-tight evidence of their own innocuousness; once more they surrendered to the fatal illusion that it was possible for the Middle Ages and the new era to live side by side in a state of idyllic harmony. The receipt for this tolerance was handed to them by General Franco on July 18th, on the point of a bayonet.

For the moment the reaction was engaged in rallying its forces. The more tender the Azaña Government's soft cooings, the more furious were the roars of the reactionary Press at home and abroad. During the Asturian insurrection

it had unearthed stories of the crucifixion of officers' sons; now "vouchers issued by the revolutionary committees as rewards for the violation of women" came to light. In April the Right pass from words to deeds. The *pistoleros* and assassins in the pay of the Phalanx ambush local Republican leaders and shoot them down. Bombs explode, fires break out. In Toledo the Cadets of the Military School break out of the Alcázar one night and invade the town, where they strike down the sellers of workers' papers and make the streets ring with the new battle-cry, "*Arriba, España!*" (Spain, arise!) "Just mischievous boyish pranks," says the Government, with a superior, paternal smile.

This is one side of the situation. On the other, the peasant masses of Spain were moving. The local village pundits had drawn their attention to the declaration of the new President: "No dangerous innovations." They could not make out what was happening. They had put this Government in power precisely because they had been hoping for dangerous innovations; the dangerous innovation of being able to send their children to school, the dangerous innovation of having land distributed among them, of taking possession of or leasing the land they had tilled.

The peasants could not make out what was happening in Madrid; and since they could not make it out, they began to act of their own accord. At first in Andalusia and Estramadura, then in other provinces, spontaneous mass occupations of the large estates were carried out. The peasants had realized that they would only get the land if they took the law into their own hands. Descending in a body on the landlords' estates, they planted themselves down on their beloved land and refused to budge.

Madrid began to feel that it would never get anywhere at the old bureaucratic jog-trot. Certain elements, it is true, within the Government, in addition to the clerical reactionaries, were in favour of the immediate despatch of troops against the peasants. And troops, indeed, were



despatched; 800 Assault Guards, together with the hated Civil Guard, penetrated into Caceres and Badajoz. But the peasants' movement was far too powerful, and it had the masses on its side. The Government withdrew its troops and despatched in their stead a staff of agricultural experts and officials of the "Institute of Agrarian Reform", who proceeded rapidly to legalise these occupations of the landlords' estates.

During March about 150 peasants were settled on the land every day; by April this daily figure had risen to 500; by May to 1,000. At last the Spanish agrarian reform seemed to have been launched in real earnest.

In other respects, too, the Government had already done a certain amount. After the elections 30,000 political prisoners were set free; workers who had been victimised by their employers were reinstated; Catalan autonomy was re-established. The Cortes forced Alcalá-Zamora, unpopular because he had been President in 1934, to resign, and Manuel Azaña was appointed President of the Republic.

This was something, but it was not enough.

The people watched the preparations of the opposition, and had no wish to be deceived a second time. It realised what danger lay in the Government's vacillating, irresolute behaviour. The Government was temporising on both fronts, both with the masses and with the enemy in their midst, a line of conduct that was soon to prove fatal to it.

Excitement in the country reached fever pitch. On the one hand strikes and occupations of estates were increasing. Infuriated crowds made attacks on churches and monasteries; they had not forgotten that in October, 1934, the machine-guns of antichrist had been trained on them from the fortress-like sacred buildings of Spain, and they foresaw that on the next occasion things would be the same or even worse.

On the other hand the Generals and their allies were already openly preparing for the counter-attack. It was in vain that the clear-sighted demanded the disbandment of the reactionary para-military organisations, in vain that they demanded drastic action on the part of the Government against the flight of capital systematically organised by High Finance, which was bent on forcing the peseta down and driving Spain into bankruptcy.

On May 28th, in the small market town of Yeste, in the province of Albacete, an absurdly trivial incident (the felling of trees on the municipal high-road) was made the excuse for an organised and bloody massacre on the part of the Civil Guard, at the instigation of Phalangists. Twenty-three peasants were killed and a hundred wounded. A storm of protest swept through Spain. But the Minister of the Interior of the People's Front Government telegraphed his congratulations to the Commandant of the Civil Guard in Yeste.

Every child in Spain could tell that an insurrection on the part of the reactionaries was imminent; the very sparrows were crying it from the house-tops.

Ever since the spring both rumours and authentic information had been disseminated in Spain concerning the conspiratorial activities of the Generals. As early as March, General Sanjurjo had been negotiating with Hitler in Berlin; in May and June, in Alicante and Lisbon, the conspirators made their final arrangements with Italian and German agents. For two months the workers' youth organisations had been holding themselves in readiness every night for an alarm, keeping an eye on the barracks, waiting for the decisive moment. On June 18th, Paul Nizan, a French writer, published an article ending with the following sentence:

"The danger increases from day to day, because the forces on which the reactionaries depend have remained unassailed; because nothing or very little has been done to destroy Primo de Rivera's *Falanges* or Gil Robles' J.A.P., because nothing has really been done to purge the army, the police, the Civil Guard, the Assault Guard, the courts, etc., because the entire Governmental machinery of the Republican State remains exactly what it was under the Monarchy. A Fascist insurrection can be seen looming on the horizon of the Republic, and the social unrest, which is rife in the country and which is kept alive by the Right, is paving the way for it."



This was written, as has been said, on June 18th, 1936.

On July 13th, a popular leader of the anti-Fascist Assault Guard, Castillo, was shot down in the streets of Madrid by Fascists.

A wave of tremendous indignation swept through the workers of Madrid, and they streamed into the centre of the town.

The Assault Guard troop which the murdered Castillo had commanded seized Calvo Sotelo, the Monarchist leader and chief wire-puller of the reactionaries, carried him off in a lorry and shot him on the outskirts of the city.

This gave the conspirators the excuse they had been waiting for.

Five days later the military insurrection of the Generals, which had been expected for weeks, broke out.

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At eleven o'clock on the evening of July 17th, 1936, a motor lorry, filled with Foreign Legionaries drew up in front of the General Post Office at Larache, in Spanish Morocco. The officer in command ordered the astonished soldiers to occupy the building. At this time of night all the cinemas are closed down for half an hour to give the cafés a chance of doing some business; a crowd, therefore,

collected outside the General Post Office. In a few minutes a second lorry-load of soldiers drove up. The rumour soon spread among the crowd that a military insurrection was being planned. The soldiers in the second lorry, Moroccans, hesitated to enter the building, whereupon the young officer in command lost his head, and, drawing his revolver, shot one of them dead there and then. A brief and chaotic street battle ensued, and by the time the cinema interval was over, three soldiers and two officers lay dead on the pavement. These were the first victims of the Spanish Civil War.

By the morning of the next day, July 18th, all the public buildings in Larache, Tetuan, Ceuta and the other cities of Spanish Morocco had been occupied by native troops and Foreign Legionaries. The Divisional Commander, General Francisco Franco, had arrived by aeroplane from the Canary Islands, disguised as an Arab. He issued a proclamation to the inhabitants which was posted up in all the streets and also distributed as a leaflet. This proclamation announced that the Army had decided to "re-establish order in Spain," that General Franco had taken over the leadership of this movement, and that he "appealed to the Republican sentiment of all those Spaniards who were prepared to take their share in the task of restoring Spain".

The first step towards this "restoration" was the declaration of a state of war, the abolition of the right to strike, and the shooting of three thousand soldiers and civilians in Spanish Morocco who remained loyal to the Government.

The Spanish Government immediately demanded the surrender of the rebel General. No reply was vouchsafed to their telegrams.

On the evening of July 18th a Government plane flew over the mutinous garrison, dropping six bombs on the Military Headquarters at Tetuan and a seventh on the



Larache aerodrome. Whereupon Franco sent the following telegram to the Prime Minister in Madrid, copies of which were posted up throughout the town:

> "Now that I have assumed my new responsibilities, I wish to protest vigorously against the unspeakable action of the Government in instructing their pilots to shoot at the civil population, thus endangering the safety of innocent women and children.
>
> "It will not be long before the movement for the restoration of Spain will be everywhere victorious, and we shall then call you to account for your action. The reprisals that we shall take will be in proportion to the resistance you offer.
>
> "We explicitly demand an immediate cessation of this futile bloodshed on your part.
>
> "(Signed) Don Francisco Franco,
> Commander-in-Chief of the Fighting Forces in Africa."

This classic document supplied a foretaste of the propaganda technique employed by the rebels, a technique to which they were strictly to adhere during the months that followed. It was the old cry of "Stop, thief!", cunningly resorted to in order to shift responsibility from their own shoulders on to those of their opponents.

On Sunday, July 19th, a passenger steamer and an armoured cruiser sailed from Morocco through the Straits of Gibraltar. After a brief bombardment, a white flag was hoisted on the Fort of Algeciras, on the European side of the Straits. The two vessels then docked in the harbour of Algeciras and unloaded their human freight, which consisted of Moorish tribesmen in green turbans, Berbers from the Riff, and African mercenaries from the Foreign Legion.

The barbarians' crusade had begun; the Moors had returned to Spain.

On that same day, July 19th, the military insurrection also broke out in Madrid and Barcelona, Seville and Toledo, Burgos and Valladolid, and a number of other large garrison towns. The mutinous officers went to work everywhere in the same way, with a few trifling variations. In the Montaña barracks in Madrid they told their men that the Anarchists and Communists of Andalusia had risen and were burning the harvests, violating the women and murdering the children of Andalusia. In Seville, the capital of Andalusia, the soldiers were told that the Anarchists were looting Madrid, violating the women and burning the children of Madrid. In Barcelona, where such atrocity stories about the Anarchists would have had no effect, the rebel officers told their men that the Republic must be saved. Only in the Catholic province of Navarra, the traditional cradle of the Carlist wars, the only district where the broad masses of the people had clerical and Monarchist sympathies, were the people informed of the true reactionary character of the insurrection.

Typical of the confusion that the mutinous officers deliberately set out to create is the following scene which took place during the street fighting in Barcelona, and was described by Claude Blanchard in the "Paris Soir" of July 22nd:—

> "A great crowd of people begins to collect in the Square: soldiers from the rebel ranks fraternising with and discussing the situation with the Government troops. Only by telling them that the Republic must be saved have the rebel officers been able to persuade their men to take action. From the other side of the Square loyalist soldiers approach the rebel troops, tying white handkerchiefs round their sleeves to signify their peaceful intentions. It is impossible any longer to tell to which camp the various soldiers belong. I talked to a soldier from the Guardia de Assalto who had changed his views three times in the course of this one day.
>
> "It was undoubtedly owing to this confusion and the general obscurity of the situation that the rebels succeeded in occupying the Hotel Colón."



The conspirators had counted on a surprise victory; but they had reckoned without their host. For the first time in their existence the workers' organisations, the trades unions, the anti-Fascist Citizens' Defence Units, took the initiative, and within a few hours the People's Front had mobilised its masses. Thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people, poured into the streets, armed themselves as best they could, and besieged the mutinous troops in their barracks. In Madrid it took them twenty-four hours, in Barcelona two days, and in Toledo three days, to get the upper hand of the rebels. The peasants organised defence committees in the villages, built barricades, and took up axes and scythes in defence of the Republic.

Apart from Morocco, the insurrection was only successful in those towns where there were Staff Officers of high rank and strong garrisons: in Seville, where the strongest military units of the South were stationed; in Saragossa, where the most important military academies, and hence the greatest number of officers, were to be found; and in the garrison towns of Burgos, Valladolid, Vigo and Corunna. These were the towns in which the General Staff had taken care to concentrate the largest stores of arms and war material.

Most of the other large towns, all the rural areas, and the overwhelming majority of the population stood by the Republic.

The Civil War had begun.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE BACKGROUND

AT FIRST SIGHT it is not altogether easy to understand how a small group of officers could have attempted to force its will on a country which had, only five months before—in the February elections—decided in favour of democracy and against dictatorship. Still more paradoxical does it seem that, despite the unequivocal hostility of the masses, such an attempt should have been to a considerable degree successful.

From the point of view of Franco and his friends there existed three factors which offered, if not a guarantee, at least a fair prospect, of success.

Firstly, they had at their disposal a considerable number of non-Spanish troops, including Moors and Foreign Legionaries; the para-military organisations of the *Falange Española* and the *Requetes*; and the majority of the regular army. Further they were in control of all the most important arsenals. Secondly, they counted on taking the country by surprise and, by the employment of terroristic measures, paralysing the resistance of the unarmed, untrained masses. Thirdly, they had been assured of the active political and military support of the three European Dictatorships, the Dictatorships of Germany, Italy and Portugal, the exponents of whose political doctrines they felt themselves to be, and under whose tutelage they acted. We shall deal with this question in a later chapter.

### 1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE SPANISH ARMY

Army officers and civil servants have always played an outstanding part in the political life of Spain. As in the



case of all countries where pronounced relics of feudalism persist, the most important posts in the civil service and the higher ranks in the army have always been occupied predominantly by aristocrats. The number of officers, and particularly officers of high rank, has always been enormous. In 1931, in a regular army numbering 105,000 men, there were 195 generals, 5,938 officers above the rank of captain, 5,281 captains, and 5,707 subalterns. In addition there was the Reserve with a further 437 generals and 407 officers of high rank.

This meant that in the Spanish Army there was:—

*one active general to every* 538 *soldiers*
*one officer between the rank of captain and colonel to every ten soldiers, and*
*one officer to every six soldiers.*[1]

As a comparison it may be stated that in the French Army in 1935 there was one officer to every nineteen soldiers. This means that there were, relatively, three times as many officers in the Spanish as in the French Army. In the old days people often smiled at the Byzantine structure of the Spanish Army, and, since Spain had not been at war for almost a century, it had the reputation of being a "comic-opera army". A complete fallacy. The Spanish Army might not have been very effective in a European conflict, but it was an army admirably adapted for use in Civil War.

> "It would be erroneous to imagine the Spanish Army as a huge military machine powerfully organised to obtain the highest possible fighting efficiency out of the large portion of the Budget which it consumes. The Army is a bureaucratic machine which spends most of the money paid to it in salaries for generals and officers, a lesser amount in war material, and a still lesser sum in

[1] *Annuario Estadistico*, 1931.

preparing for war. The Army, in fact, is more important as an instrument of home politics than as a weapon of war."[1]

From time immemorial it had been a traditional feature of Spanish political life that army officers should form themselves into associations or juntas, which plotted, carried out *coups*, and generally meddled in politics on their own, always pursuing a policy which was in the interests of the ruling caste to which they belonged. All the most important reactionary changes in recent Spanish history were initiated, or at least decisively influenced, by these officers' juntas; Primo de Rivera's Dictatorship, for instance, was established by means of a *coup* on the part of a group of officers.

The Republic did not succeed in republicanising the army; it did not even seriously attempt to do so. In June, 1936, Paul Nizan, a French journalist whom I have already quoted, wrote from Madrid:

"There are only a very few Republican officers. I was told that only three per cent of the officers in the army were Republican. I tried to get confirmation of this, but was told by an officer in close touch with the Prime Minister that my informant was an optimist."

Four years after the proclamation of the Republic, and four months after the victory of the People's Front, liberal newspapers were still banned in the majority of Spanish barracks; the officers, on the other hand distributed Phalangist literature amongst their men, and organised Phalangist cells.

On June 2nd, 1936, six weeks before the insurrection, which everyone could see coming, the "Mundo Obrero" of Madrid wrote in a leading article:—

"There is still hope of saving the situation. But we must go about it systematically. All these people must

[1] Salvador de Madariaga, "Spain," Ernest Benn, 1930.



be thrown out of the army, and it must be reorganised and staffed with Republican, democratically-minded non-commissioned officers and men."

This sentence was deleted by the censorship authorities of the People's Front Government—so great and deeply rooted was the inferiority complex of the civilian politicians of the Left in relation to the army.

The officers' juntas succeeded in converting large sections of the army into a malleable instrument for the carrying out of their policy. Nevertheless they did not trust their men, large contingents of whom, indeed, particularly in Catalonia and Madrid, went over to the Government. They preferred from the start to base their plan for the "restoration of Spain" on the support of the Foreign Legion and Moorish troops.

The Foreign Legion, that twentieth century army of mercenaries, had proved its peculiar aptitude for the carrying out of organised massacres during the events in Asturias. As for the native standing army in Morocco, it consisted, at the beginning of 1936, of somewhere about 12,000 men, but after three months of the Civil War the number of Moroccans on the Spanish war front was estimated at about 40,000 and after a year at about 80,000. Franco had replenished his store with men taken from half-savage desert tribes; his recruits were no longer regular native troops, but guileless savage warriors, around whose necks their sergeants hung religious medallions with the image of Christ on the Cross, telling them that they were magic amulets.

The Phalanx, the actual backbone of the rebel troops, was founded by Primo de Rivera, son of the former Dictator. After the February elections the number of Phalangists began suddenly to increase at a very rapid tempo. The ruling caste, seeing its privileges threatened

by the electoral victory of the democratic parties, put its sons into uniforms, and those sections of the lower middle class who had leanings towards Fascism followed its example.

The programme of the Phalanx can be summed up in a few words: the establishment of a corporate state, the leadership principle (it is even ready to discuss the possibility of a monarchy, although Alfonso has never been particularly popular among the younger Phalangists), and national agrarian reform without expropriation, that is to say, no agrarian reform at all. Here too, as in all their propaganda, what they are "for" is given far less prominence than what they are "against". They are against the Marxists, against the Jews, against the Freemasons. The slogan "against capitalism" is relegated to the background, for Spain still lives in a semi-feudal era. The hatred of Freemasonry, on the other hand, is pushed well into the foreground, for Freemasonry has actually played a very large rôle amongst the liberal progressive elements in Spain.

These are merely nuances. Fundamentally the Phalanx reflects with striking exactitude the ideological features of the German, Italian and French semi-military Fascist organisations. To anybody with a knowledge of everyday life in Rome or Berlin their activities are uncannily familiar. The Phalangists act as an auxiliary police force; at night they make raids on the small towns in the possession of the insurgents and track down any revolutionary squad they may find chalking up slogans on the walls of the houses. They are at constant loggerheads with the regular army. E. L. Taylor, a correspondent of the "Chicago Tribune" and one of the ablest experts on the Spanish Civil War, has summed up the chief function of the Phalanx in a single sentence:

> "They play a minor part in the actual fighting, but they like to take over the duties of the police and to supervise the carrying out of executions behind the line."



Very different from the tough, ill-disciplined mobs of the Phalanx are the so-called *Requetes* or "Carlists", the second semi-military organisation on the side of the rebels. Whereas the Phalanx consists essentially of a mob organised on ultra-modern Fascist principles, the Carlist organisation embodies those elements in Spain which are most strongly bound to tradition. They are fanatical adherents of the principle of absolute monarchy, and equally fanatical doctrinaire Catholics, who, out of honest conviction, would welcome a Holy Inquisition for the salvation of mankind. Their chief support is drawn from the Catholic north-west provinces: Burgos, Navarra, Pamplona. The same cannot be said of the Carlist officers, who are for the most part aristocrats, sons of landed proprietors and social snobs whose Catholicism and monarchist principles are simply an excuse for resisting every progressive trend of events.

To pit against these rigidly disciplined *cadres* of professional soldiers the Republic had only its untrained masses, unused to any form of discipline.

The European public imagines that in Spain two armies are fighting against each other. This is a mistaken conception. In Spain a well-trained professional army, reinforced by vast contingents of non-Spanish troops, and supplied from abroad with the most up-to-date military equipment, is fighting against untrained masses, held together by no military discipline, but only by their common political ideals, without officers, without experts, without technicians, without adequate arms and war material.

I should like to give just one example of the crippling effect of this lack of trained troops on the Government side.

At the beginning of the Civil War the Government Fleet was about equal to the naval strength of the rebels. Nevertheless, the rebels displayed immeasurable superiority

in the prosecution of the war at sea; the warships of the Republic lay idle in the harbours for months on end because their officers had either gone over to the rebels or been shot, and no one knew how to control the complicated ironclad leviathans.

## 2. The Treatment of the Civil Population

This main difference between the two armies, the fact that one is a professional and the other a people's army, not only explains to a great extent the military success of the rebels; it explains also the principal difference in the way in which the two sides treat the civil population, hostages and prisoners of war; their methods of warfare.

The Spanish rebels found themselves objectively in the position of an alien invading army. The masses sympathised either actively or passively with their opponents. There was only one method of forcing the masses in the districts which they took to become neutral: the method of terror.

Sadism always plays a rôle in terror, albeit a secondary one. There may be sadistic impulses in individuals and groups of individuals in both camps. What is of importance is the value placed on such latent psychic factors.

In the theory and practice of the rebels organised massacres are assigned a decisive rôle—one has only to remember Badajoz, Toledo, Guernica. Franco acted under an historical compulsion, he was the helpless tool of that logic of history which leaves a minority determined to assert itself against the majority no choice of methods. Terror was not merely an attendant phenomenon, but a vital function of his insurrection.

The rebel leaders have more or less frankly admitted this fact. Queipo de Llano has announced several times from the broadcasting station in Seville that his aim is not only to conquer, but to extirpate the enemy. Lieutenant Yagüe, in an interview given to the representative of the "Deutsches Nachrichten Büro" after the fall of Badajoz, declared:



> " . . . the fact that the conquest of Spain by the Army is proceeding at a slow pace has this advantage; that it gives us time to purge the country thoroughly of all Red elements. . . ."

Conclusive evidence of the deliberate and systematic character of the Franco terror is provided by a document found on Manuel Carracha, a rebel officer who was taken prisoner on the Guadalajara front on July 28th. It was a copy of a circular addressed to the higher ranks of the officers in the rebel army. The document runs as follows:

> "One of the most important tasks, if victory is to be assured, is the undermining of the morale of the enemy troops. The enemy has neither sufficient troops nor sufficient arms to resist; nevertheless the following instructions must be rigidly observed:
>
> "(1) In order to safeguard the provinces occupied, it is essential to instil a certain salutary terror into the population. When the troops occupy a place, the local authorities must first be taught a lesson in respect; if they have escaped, a similar procedure must be adopted towards the members of their families. In every case the methods resorted to must be of a clearly spectacular and impressive character, and must indicate clearly that the leaders of the troops are determined to proceed with like severity against anyone who offers resistance.
>
> "(2) Occasionally it will be convenient to requisition all the metal to be found in the public buildings or in the private houses of partisans of the other side.
>
> "(3) It is essential that in every town occupied, information shall be obtained from the priest or other reliable persons as to the views of the leading members of the community. If there are members of the *Falange* in the town, or officers or non-commissioned officers who have been able to escape the Red Terror, they are

to be enlisted. Any tendency towards laxity in the performance of their duties, or signs of insubordination on the part of the troops must be proceeded against with the utmost rigour. The same holds good for desertions. The rapidity with which we attain ultimate victory will depend on the merciless severity of the punishments meted out in such cases.

"(4) Every town along the enemy's line of retreat and all the areas behind the enemy lines are to be considered as battle zones. In this connection, no differentiation must be observed between places harbouring enemy troops and those not doing so. The panic experienced bythe civil population along the enemy's line of retreat is a factor of the utmost importance in contributing towards the demoralisation of the enemy troops. The experiences of the last world war shows that accidental destruction of enemy hospitals and ambulances has a highly demoralising effect on troops.

"(5) After the entry into Madrid, the officers in charge of the various bodies of troops are to establish machine-gun posts on the roofs of all the high buildings dominating their particular district, including public buildings and church towers, so that the surrounding streets are within range of the machine-guns. In the event of any opposition on the part of the populace, the streets should be put under fire without any further parleying. In view of the fact that large numbers of women are fighting on the enemy side, there should be no distinction of sex in such cases. The more ruthless we are, the more quickly shall we quell hostile opposition among the population, the more quickly will the restoration of Spain be effected."

* *
*

Even Terror has its gradations, its evolutionary history, its theory. Danton was a dilettante in the application of Terror, Robespierre was a systematic exponent of it. But



the methods of Terror employed by the nineteenth century bear the same relation to those of the twentieth century as does a post-chaise to a motor-car. Nowadays the aim is no longer to defeat the political opponent but to destroy and exterminate him. This may seem merely to be a nuance; in reality it is a kind of revolution within the realm of Terror—if one may say such a thing.

The Spanish insurgents have adopted in every detail the ultra-modern theory of Terror. This statement too seems to be a platitude. It is not. How concretely and consciously this theory was put into practice, can best be illustrated by a few quotations taken at random from the German Press.

> "The Generals looked for guarantees of victory not primarily in military successes, but in a systematic and thorough cleaning-up of the hinterland. . . ."[1]

> "Fortunately the old attitude of sentimentality has been dissipated among the Nationalists, and every soldier realises that a horrible end is better than endless horrors. . . ."[2]

> "The Marxist parties are being destroyed and exterminated down to the very last cell far more drastically even than here in Germany. Every house, every flat, every office is kept under constant observation and supervision. . . . Every single citizen, moreover, is continually drawn into the whirl of political excitement, made to participate in triumphal celebrations and mass demonstrations. The principle of modern Nationalism 'No opponent but shall be destroyed' is thoroughly carried out. . . . Just as here in Germany. . . ."[3]

It is difficult to convey any idea of the scenes that occurred during the first few days after the revolt in the districts

[1] Kurt Kränzlein in the "Angriff" of November 10th, 1936.
[2] The "Angriff," September 17th, 1936.
[3] "Essener National-Zeitung," October 13th, 1936.

occupied by the rebels. The reports available are naturally few and far between; and the accounts of fugitives, passed on at second or third hand, are either incomplete or exaggerated. We know how much harm the preposterous atrocity propaganda engaged in by both sides caused during the Great War, and the author shares the repugnance felt by every newspaper man with a conscience at the thought of allowing himself to be drawn into such slimy depths. Nevertheless there is a form of journalistic vanity which is just as dangerous as the indulgence in unscrupulous and tendencious propaganda; I call it "objectivity neurosis." The journalist who is determined at all costs to give proof of his objectivity often succumbs to the temptation of maintaining silence with regard to concrete facts, because these facts are in themselves so crude that he is afraid of appearing biased. English journalists in particular, with their traditional feeling for level-headedness and decency, have often had to complain of this difficulty. But a civil war is in itself a somewhat indecent affair. "Damn it," a correspondent of a conservative paper who had just returned from rebel territory once said to me, "sometimes one would really rather be writing for 'The Daily Worker'."

In selecting the facts related below I have eliminated wherever possible second-hand accounts, only taking into consideration those facts which either have been communicated by people whose trustworthiness is beyond doubt, such as Professor Ortega y Gasset, Bourcier of the, if anything, pro-rebel "Intransigeant," and others, or are based on the personal experiences and investigations of the author in both rebel and Government territory.

The most authoritative document with regard to the rebel terror in the first few days of the insurrection is a memorandum drawn up by the Governing Body of Madrid Faculty of Law and published by its President, Eduardo



Ortega y Gasset, a lawyer of international reputation and of the old Republican school. Here are some extracts from it, arranged by me in geographical order:

*"Civil wars, that divide families and breed hatred, have always been prosecuted in a particularly ruthless manner; the crimes that are being committed by the insurgents at the moment, however, surpass anything that has hitherto been known in the way of organised savagery. The spirit that inspires these retrogade hordes is that of the Carlist wars, the spirit that existed under the fanatical and intolerant régime of Ferdinand VII. Once more the red caps of the 'Requetes' have risen up from the blood-drenched Spanish soil; once more Bishops and priests play their part in dastardly guerilla warfare. They give their blessing to the Moors, who have been called in to strangle the Spanish people, and hang round their necks medallions of the crucifixion, telling them that they are magic amulets."*

*"It is impossible to include in this document all the atrocities which the insurgents are perpetrating on the martyred Spanish people. Every day that passes brings new scenes of horror. We will quote only a few of them here which illustrate graphically the criminal methods against which we appeal to international opinion."*

*"The rebels, in all the districts occupied by them, systematically shoot workers carrying a Trade Union card. The corpses are left lying on view in the streets or heaped up in the cemeteries, each with the card of a Trade Union tied to leg or arm, in order to show the reason for the execution."*

*"In the town of Seville alone, and independently of any military action, more than 9,000 workers and peasants were executed. The Moors and Foreign Legionaries went through the streets of humble one-storey houses in the working class districts throwing hand grenades through the windows, killing women and children. The Moorish troops gave themselves up to sacking and plundering. General Queipo de Llano describes scenes of rape on the wireless with a coarse relish that is an indirect incitement to a repetition of such scenes."*

At this point I shall interrupt the memorandum of the Faculty of Law in order to supplement its description of the incidents in Seville.

During the Civil War I was twice in Seville; the first time from August 27th to 29th, 1936, as a journalist, the second time from February 12th to May 12th, 1937, as a prisoner. Both what I heard in Seville and, to some extent, my own experiences there serve to confirm the authenticity of the above document. I should like to quote another eye-witness account, that of Jesús Corrales of Algeciras, a hotel employee.

Corrales fled from Algeciras eight days after the insurrection, when he found that the rebels, failing to find him at home, had shot his twenty-one-year-old wife, Gertrudis Sarmiento, his two-year-old son, Ricardo, and his eight-months-old daughter, Carmen. His flight took him via Seville to Portugal, and from there via Corunna, Vigo and San Sebastian to France. I met him at the end of October in Paris, where I had an opportunity of examining his documents and checking his statements by my own personal knowledge of Seville. Here follows his sworn statement, for which I take full responsibility:

> "In Seville, in a small street of the district of San Bernardo, I saw with my own eyes the shooting of a group of about 150 prisoners, amongst whom there were some women. In order to keep the refractory population in a constant state of terror, General Queipo de Llano gave orders that the prisoners should not be shot, as at first, in the barracks, in the prison or the cemetery, but in the streets of working-class districts, and that the corpses should be left lying in the streets for from twelve to sixteen hours, after oil had been poured on them so as to avoid the possibility of epidemics. Mass executions had therefore been carried out since the last few days of July, according to a systematic plan, in the districts of Macarena, San Lorenzo, San Bernardo and Triana alternately. The total number of those shot when I arrived in Seville was estimated at 7,000, i.e. a daily average of 100 to 150 people. The usual procedure was for the delinquents to be transported in lorries to the street chosen for the execution, where they were made to get out of the lorries in groups of ten and were then shot. Such horrible scenes took place, however, that the procedure was later on simplified and the prisoners were shot one by one in the back of the head with revolvers as they got out of the lorries."



By way of a further check here is a message from Wormser and Maurel in the distinctly pro-rebel "Paris Soir," describing events in Seville on July 20th, 1936.

> "A merciless 'purge' was carried out with hand grenades and knives. No quarter was given. . . . On the orders of Queipo de Llano all the houses in the working-class districts of Triana were obliged to keep their doors and windows wide open and all the males were carried off as prisoners.
>
> "The next day, at dawn, 150 people were shot; on the day after there was a second holocaust, accompanied by cries of 'Long Live Spain'."

This account shews that the memorandum of the Faculty of Law in no wise exaggerates, but rather falls short of the full truth.

> *"In Algeciras," continues the memorandum, "the pregnant wife of a Trade Union official who had fled to Gibraltar was forced to drink a mixture of castor oil and petrol and then sent to join her husband. She died the following day. A large number of other women were forced to drink the same mixture. The Moorish troops amused themselves by throwing bombs at bakers' shops where working-class women were standing in queues."*

Here again some amplification is necessary. The author stayed in Algeciras on August 30th on the way from Seville

to Gibraltar. He was told that in this little port, where the Foreign Legion and Moors from Africa first touched Spanish soil, about 400 people had been murdered, among them a particularly large number of infants and children. The author was given by a customs official the following list of names of persons executed in his own circle of acquaintances.

Don Lino García, Lieutenant-Colonel, Republican.
Don Cayo Salvadores, Professor, a high official in the Educational Service, Chairman of the Republican Association, Freemason.
Don Miguel Puyol García, Journalist on the staff of "El Noticiero."
Ricardo Núñez, customs official.
N. Candel.
Rubio, President of the local Red Cross.
Romero, postal employee.
Ortega, Socialist town councillor, telegraphist.
Montesinos, customs official.
Lucas, postal employee.
Francisco Domínguez, Socialist town councillor.
Fermín Sánchez, Socialist town councillor.
Andrés Rodríguez Peña, schoolboy from La Linea.

The lawyers' report continues:

"*In Granada more than* 5,000 *workers were shot; similarly all the freemasons were arrested, after the card-index of the local lodge had been discovered. The prisoners were taken to the cemetery and compelled to dig a common grave for themselves, in which they were then shot.*

"*Among those murdered was the poet García Lorca, the leading spirit of the younger generation of Spanish writers.*

"*In the hamlets of Pedro Abad, El Carpio and Espejo, after the shooting of the militiamen, their wives were violated and their breasts cut off.*



"*In the little town of El Carpio, near Córdoba, which was recaptured by the Government troops,* 200 *workers had previously been shot in the cemetery; the members of their families were marched to the cemetery accompanied by the village drummer, to take their last farewell of their husbands; and when assembled there, they were shot down by machine-guns on the orders of a Captain of the Foreign Legion.*

"*Six members of the F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation) were locked up by Phalangists in a hut, which was soaked with petrol and set alight. All that was found of them was their charred corpses.*

"*In Baena (Córdoba), according to the testimony of Antonio Moreno Benavente, of the Socialist Group, who managed to escape when the rebels took the town, the rebels shot everyone whose name appeared on the files of the workers' organizations. Their cruelty, as in other places, took the form of compelling the victims to dig their own graves. They took the presidents of the Socialist Group and the Socialist Youth Party, Gregorio Lonzo and Manuel Sevillano, and the Secretary of the Socialist Youth, Eduardo Cortés, tied them together and shot them, while the families of the three men were made to look on. On the* 29*th (of August)* 296 *out of the* 375 *members of the parties mentioned were shot. On the* 9*th of August,* 30 *workmen were forced to repair the fortifications of the historic castle of the town, and after forty-eight hours of incessant work without rest and without food, during which they were urged on with whips, they were thrown from the castle rock into the depths below. Three of them had already gone mad.*

*The Civil Governor of Corunna, Pérez Carballo, was shot, together with his wife, a member of the Librarians' and Archivists' Association. The deputies Aliseda, Martín de Nicolás Dorado, Antonio Acuña and many others were also executed. . . .*"

Here too the objective recital of the bare facts by the Faculty of Law falls short of the grim reality. I am in possession of a more detailed account of the murder of the Governor of Corunna and his wife. The circumstances

were communicated by the Portuguese Consul in Corunna in a secret report to the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Avenol Montejo. This report came to the knowledge of the then Spanish Ambassador in Lisbon, Sánchez Albornoz, who communicated its contents to me.

The Civil Governor of Corunna was a Professor at the Madrid University, by name Pérez Carballo. Shortly before the insurrection broke out, he had married Juana Capdevielle, a Librarian. Carballo, with a handful of loyalists, defended the Prefecture building of Corunna for some hours, after which he was taken prisoner and shot.

His wife, who was pregnant, collapsed and was taken to the military hospital.

Since the leaders of the Phalanx, brought up as they were in religious traditions, shrank from shooting a pregnant woman, an abortion was performed on Juana Capdevielle in hospital. After a successful operation—pregnancy had reached the fourth month—she was carried on a stretcher to the cemetery, lowered into a newly-made grave, shot as she lay there and covered with earth. As a result of this scene one of the stretcher-bearers went insane and had to be put in an asylum.

Let us revert to the memorandum:

> "*In Saragossa more than two thousand workers were killed. Dr. Alcouldo, a well-known philanthropist, who belonged to no party, was shot, and also his seventeen-year-old son. After the shooting of the boy they made the old man wait for several hours, on the grounds that he must be allowed time to mourn his son.*
>
> "*In Caspe (Aragon) a certain Captain Negrete gave orders for the mother, the sister (who was married to a Colonel of the Civil Guard), and the four-year-old daughter of la Torre, the Mayor, who had been murdered some days previously, to be shot. When fighting broke out, the rebels fired from the balconies of the houses, using their hostages, the wives and children of the members of the Left as living barricades.*"



Confirmatory evidence of these facts is supplied by the following item in the "Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant" of September 5th or 6th, 1936:

> "When the Government troops advanced, the Captain of the troops of Phalangists (in the district of Caspe, D.V.) made all the women and children form a chain, so that the militia would be forced to stop shooting, to avoid hitting innocent people. The gallant Captain held the little daughter of the Mayor by the hand . . ."

Thirty-five days after the outbreak of the insurrection, Jesús Monzón, leader of the People's Front in Navarra, succeeded in escaping from rebel territory. His account is of particular value, since it gives a clear picture of the terroristic methods employed in the very stronghold of the insurgents.

> "On Sunday, July 18th, two aeroplanes flew from Madrid to Pamplona. Their pilots called on General Mola, the Commandant of the Garrison and conveyed to him a message from Franco with regard to the revolt in Morocco. An hour later the Commandant of the Civil Guard, a loyal Republican, was shot. The Civil Governor entered into negotiations with Mola and capitulated. He received permission to leave the town with his wife.
>
> "At the news that the Governor of the town had left, an enraged crowd collected in the market-place, thirsting for victims. The first to be killed were some Carlists who, owing to their red belts and ties, were taken for Marxists. The alignment of social forces in Navarra, Spain's Vendée, was still very unfavourable to the 'Frente Popular', the membership of which was only two or three thousand.
>
> "Anyone known to be a Left-Winger was killed; for example, Firco, Secretary of the Red Aid, Bengaray, President of the Republican Party, Cayuela, Secretary of the Socialist Party, Arris, Vice-President of the Left Republican Party, and Stella, Mayor of Pamplona, a

Catholic and Basque Nationalist. The massacres continued the whole forenoon; nearly every teacher in the place was killed.

"Thus during the first two days of the insurrection five hundred people lost their lives in Pamplona. In the whole of Navarra there were over seven thousand victims.

"On Sunday, July 19th over a hundred wives of the murdered 'Left-wingers' were herded into the market-place. There their heads were closely shaven, this being the greatest possible disgrace for a Spanish woman, and they were driven through the streets with placards hung round their necks on which was written 'I am the wife of a Bolshevik'. Others were put in the pillory and spat upon by the crowd."

From Burgos itself, the rebel capital, as good as no reliable news has filtered through. There are a number of rumours and atrocity stories, of which the following message from Emmanuel Bourcier in "l'Intransigeant" of August 20th, 1936, seems trustworthy.

"In Burgos an officer suggested that we should visit the prison. 'How many prisoners have you there?' I asked.—'One thousand five hundred.'—For some reason or other the visit to the prison did not take place that day. On the next day I mentioned the matter to another officer. 'You want to visit the prisoners?' he remarked casually. 'It would hardly be worth your while. There aren't many of them.' 'How many?' I asked. 'About twenty,' he replied.

"He did not say what had become of the rest. Neither I nor my fellow-journalists dared to put any questions. . . . "[1]

In October, 1936, the Spanish Minister of the Interior in Madrid gave me an opportunity of speaking to a number

[1] Emmanuel Bourcier in "l'Intransigeant," of August 20th, 1936.



of fugitives from various places in Northern Spain that were in rebel hands. I spoke in all to twenty-nine. Two of them seemed to me particularly reliable.

Esteban Liras, an agricultural labourer from the village of Peñafiel, told me:

"In the village of Peñafiel, from which I come, the rebels arrested the Mayor, Celestino Velasco, and a great many others.

"He was taken to the main square, where petrol was poured over him and he was set alight. Everyone was made to look on. The rebel Commandant made a speech in which he declared that this had been done to serve as an example to all those who opposed the restoration of Spain."

Jesús Oyarzun, a farmer from Segovia, told me:

"In Segovia mass executions take place at night in the cemetery. A searchlight and two machine-guns are used. As a result of this summary procedure it often happens that men and women who are not yet dead but only wounded, are thrown into the mass grave. This story has got round amongst the prisoners and their fear is that they will be buried alive; for we have all long since ceased to be afraid of death alone. I was repeatedly a witness of these nocturnal executions and again and again saw individuals—usually women but sometimes even men who were about to be shot—throw themselves at the feet of the Phalangist and Foreign Legionaries, clasp their arms and feet and implore them —not to spare their lives, but to shoot straight or, if possible, to shoot them out of hand."

And so on, and so on, and so on.

The overwhelming majority of the facts quoted date from the first few days of the insurrection, and come from

districts which fell into the hands of the rebels before the beginning of the actual struggle. These were not reprisals carried out during the war, but terrorist measures, of a prophylactic, preventive nature.

The number of victims who were executed immediately after the beginning of the insurrection in order to inspire terror in the populace, has been estimated at about 50,000.

But this was only the beginning.

### 3. Help from Abroad

"A glance at the map will suffice to show what would be the strategic importance of Spain in a Franco-German war. . . ." This is the opening sentence of a memorandum of the German Press Director in Spain, Herr Reder, dated May, 1935. It provides the *leitmotif* of German foreign policy in Spain since the beginning of the National-Socialist régime.

On July 20th, 1936, the day on which Franco's insurrection was put down in Barcelona, the Republican Authorities seized a number of files and documents left behind by the leaders of the Nazi Federation in Spain when they fled the town. These documents contained valuable evidence of the part played by Germany in fomenting the rebellion.[1]

An essential feature of German Mediterranean policy was that a pro-German régime, if possible of a dictatorial character, should be established in Spain and that pro-Nazi feeling should be fostered among the population.

Ever since 1934 Germany has been mobilising its forces to this end. Spain has been flooded with Nazi propaganda material, smuggled in with the help of the German consuls in the various ports. In 1935 360,000 pesetas were expended by the German Propaganda Ministry and other departments in an effort to influence the Spanish Press, half of which sum consisted of bribes paid to Spanish journalists. Examination of the card indexes of the Iberian Nazi

[1] Cf. "The Nazi Conspiracy in Spain," Gollancz, London, 1937.



organisation in Barcelona, which formed part of the confiscated material, revealed the fact that twenty-two Spanish newspapers were already regarded as pro-Hitler, among them the "A.B.C.", the most widely read paper in Spain. A whole string of organisations were engaged in propagating the doctrines of the Third Reich in Spain, and playing into each other's hands: German diplomatic representatives and consuls, branches of the NSDAP (National Socialist Party of Germany), the German Workers' Front, the Nazi Women's Organisation, the *Fichtebund* (another very patriotic organisation), German export firms and shipping companies, and above all, agents of the Gestapo, the German secret police. The 5,000 German Nazis in Spain were preparing the ground for Spanish Fascism.

A Reichswehr agent by the name of Gunz, who posed in Barcelona as the representative of a German industrial firm ("Windkraftzentrale Wilhelm Teubert, Berlin") cooperated with the German consuls in Seville and Alicante in organising secret deliveries of arms from Germany to the Spanish General Staff. Gunz was furthermore a connecting link with General Goded, the leader of the insurrection in Catalonia, and with General Milan d'Astray, founder of the Foreign Legion.

Gunz was only one of the many German intermediaries in Spain. Agents of the Reichswehr, experienced plotters and putschists, who had gained their experience through having fought in the *Freikorps* and taken part in underground activities against the Weimar Republic, were at work in all the important Spanish towns, in the Moroccan ports and in the Balearic Islands.

During February and March, 1936, General Sanjurjo, who had been chosen by the rebels to lead the insurrection, stayed in Berlin. While there, he visited the important armament centres, arranged for deliveries of German arms for the insurrection and took part in a number of political discussions.

In May, in Alicante and Lisbon, final arrangements were concluded between the rebel leaders and the authorised representatives of Germany and Italy.

There can be no doubt that Italian diplomatic and military activity played a no less effective part in paving the way for the Spanish insurrection. The Italians, however, were not so courteous as to leave behind compromising documents in Barcelona when the insurrection broke out, and Italy's part in the preparations for the insurrection is not known in such detail as is that of Germany.

All the better known and more striking, therefore, was the rôle played by Italy after the outbreak of the Civil War.

The military insurrection broke out on July 18th, 1936. Two weeks later the rebels were in possession of a brand-new air-fleet of German and Italian planes, manned by German and Italian pilots, mechanics and instructors; Italian tanks were already in action at Badajoz; Irun was being bombarded by German heavy artillery. Together with war material, technicians also were pouring into the country, from tank mechanics to General Staff Officers. Italian regular troops landed in Majorca; and by the end of October this largest of the Balearic Islands had become virtually an Italian possession. Week by week the number of foreigners in the rebel army grew. In the middle of November, when the Civil War had lasted for four months, Frank L. Klukohn, the correspondent of the "New York Times", wrote:

> "The rebel army is not the same army that it was at the beginning of the rebellion. Italians, Moors and Germans are now the backbone of General Franco's army. . . . "

On November 18th, by which time the capital and three fifths of Spain were in the hands of the constitutionally elected Government, Germany and Italy proclaimed General Franco ruler of Spain.

During the winter months of 1936–7, Italy landed



85–90,000 infantry in Spain, while Germany took over various specialised technical functions in the rebel army: motor transport, tanks and anti-tank guns, anti-aircraft guns, coastal batteries, and heavy artillery.

On February 9th, 1937, the Italians captured Malaga.

On April 26th the Germans destroyed Guernica.

On May 31st, German warships bombarded Almería.

On June 27th, Hitler declared in a public speech in Wurzburg that Germany desired a victory for Franco because it needed Spanish steel for its heavy industry.

On June 26th, 1937, Mussolini declared through his mouthpiece the "Popolo d'Italia" that Italy had never been neutral on the Spanish question, and that a victory for Franco meant a victory for Italy.

In this way the two Dictatorships officially and expressly admitted their own share in the preparation and prosecution of the Spanish Civil War.

The statements made by the insurgent leaders were no less relevant and explicit. General Queipo de Llano openly stated to the author that his ideal was to establish a State after the German and Italian model. General Ponte Masso de Zúñiga, Commandant of the rebel forces in Saragossa declared (in a statement to the "Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro" of September 21st, 1936):

> "Our aim is to create a new Spain. Germany will provide us with a model. We not only admire Adolf Hitler, we reverence him. . . . "

Similar declarations have been made by nearly all the prominent rebel leaders. Finally General Cabanellas, who, as President of the Burgos Junta, acts as a kind of Prime Minister in rebel territory, made the following statement to the German Press ("Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro" of September 15th, 1936):

> "General Cabanellas, President of the Burgos National Junta wishes to inform the German people that Spain

—whatever may happen—will never forget the kindly sympathy and the moral assistance rendered to it by Germany. . . . Your Führer and your people are standing guard in the East. . . . We shall stand guard in the West. . . . "

It was only bit by bit that the world learned these facts. But Franco and his friends knew, long before they precipitated the insurrection, that they could count on events taking the course they did.

The world learned also, of course, about the French airplanes, Russian tanks and Mexican munitions supplied to the Spanish Government. Some of the reports in this connection were exaggerated, most of them were true. The simple truth is that the Non-Intervention agreement, which was based on the absurd assumption that the legal Government and the leaders of an open rebellion should be treated on equal terms, never really worked on either side. But the help from abroad which the Spanish Government received was only a fraction of what was due to it as the legal Government of a sovereign state with the full right to purchase war material—the help from abroad which the rebels received in the preparation and carrying out of the insurrection, constituted, on the other hand, an open breach of international law, and arbitrary interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.

Equally marked is the difference in the composition of the foreign troops fighting in Spain. On the one side is the International Brigade, the strength of which, after a year of civil war, is estimated at 15,000. It consists of volunteers from all parts of the world, private individuals actuated by purely personal convictions. There have been men of this kind in Europe ever since the time of Lafayette and of Byron. More than half the International Brigade consists of political refugees from the Dictator States of



Germany, Italy and Austria. The remaining large contingents are made up of Englishmen and Frenchmen who have managed to make their way to Spain despite the veto of their own Governments. As to Russia, there is no Russian infantry in Spain, but there is a number of Russian pilots and tank drivers—estimated at about 200—who are in Spain with the tacit approval of their Government. They are the only foreigners on the Government side who cannot be regarded as purely volunteers in the above-mentioned sense. As regards leadership, on the Government side there are two foreign Generals: Kleber and Julius Deutsch. Both are political refugees, persecuted by their own Governments; Kleber a Communist from a Central-European country, Deutsch a Social-Democrat, a former Austrian Minister of War.

On the other side are the 8,000 to 10,000 military experts and technicians officially despatched by the Reichswehr and about 100,000 Italian infantry, commanded by Generals on the active list, and recruited from the local groups of the *Fascio*. Their casualty lists are published in the official organs of the Italian Government, and their deeds officially glorified by the Duce, while State pensions are awarded to the dependants of the fallen. In other words, they form an army of intervention, which is waging war against the Spanish Government—a regular war with the only difference that, in accordance with the new practice in diplomacy, there has been no declaration of war. There was no declaration of war, either, in Abyssinia, nor in the case of the Sino-Japanese war. To pretend that the Italians who co-operated in the taking of Malaga, Bilbao, Santander were private volunteers is as good as to pretend that Manchuria was conquered by private Japanese individuals and Abyssinia by private Italian individuals,—an hypothesis which can scarcely be said to be altogether convincing.