

THE WAR IN SPAIN

A WEEKLY SUMMARY

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THE STRENGTH OF GOVERNMENT SPAIN

EVER for those who know their Spain very well, it has often been difficult since the beginning of the military rebellion to estimate the strength of the two sides in the struggle. Indeed, there was only one factor which seemed certain—the psychological. When the generals put their plan into action in July, 1936, it looked as if there was to be a *pronunciamiento*—and a successful one—of the old sort. They had on their side about 80 per cent. of the rank and file of the army and over 90 per cent. of its officers. They had the highly-trained Foreign Legion (which contained some of the finest rascals and cut-throats in Europe) and they had the Moorish Regulars: excellent shock-troops, especially for use against a civilian population. And then, as we know now, they had made arrangements beforehand with Germany and Italy for aeroplanes to cover the landing of the shock-troops: all of which worked according to plan. How could any Government face such odds? It was just as if nearly the whole of the British Army was turned against the Government and civil population of England, on the commands of a group of mutinous generals who had taken a solemn oath of allegiance to the King. In Spain there was that tremendous background of history to inspire the people, who immediately recognised in the rebellion an attempt of reactionary *absolutists* to gain control of the country in the interests of fast disappearing feudal privileges. The Popular Front Government knew this, and acted on it by issuing such arms and ammunition as it still held to the people—to peasants, labourers, workers, shopkeepers, barbers, doctors, writers, bootblacks or sculptors. A psychological miracle occurred. Galvanised into action, those inspired people, thousands of whom had never touched or even seen an army rifle in their lives, opposed a fully organised and trained modern army that had a plan. Although the rebel army advanced quickly over many areas, in certain vital places it was held and in others the rebellion was completely crushed, often with enormous sacrifices of life by what were hastily improvised groups of untrained men, some of them old, and occasionally aided by women. A morale had been created. From that moment the general success of the rebellion was in doubt. With the passage of time and the transformation of those early militia units into a good army, the failure of the rebels became certain. Franco could not take his main objective, Madrid. The collapse of his cowardly conspiracy seemed imminent. He had to send abroad for more armies—armies of infantry, artillery, etc.: Italians, Germans, Moors, Berbers, Ifnis—anybody willing to fight against Spaniards. He obtained masses of material, and thousands of foreign soldiers. Yet, to-day, he is further from victory than ever and, unless he can obtain about a quarter-of-a-million more foreigners to fight his battles, his defeat by the Government is merely a matter of time. He has been beaten by the morale and the spirit of the people. His boast to a British journalist: “*I shall win because I have better arms*” sounds hollow beside the claim of a people who know that they are fighting for liberty and against brutal oppression and who, therefore, continue to fight.

Elsewhere in this issue we give the startling figures of last year's aerial fighting. They show at least this: that if the Government's Air Force is not bigger than the rebels', it is clearly a better fighting force. The rebels' aerial success has been in the bombing of open towns and, it is an acknowledged fact of aerial warfare that attacking aircraft can always be certain of unloading bombs somewhere! It is doubtful if any anti-aircraft measures will keep away entirely the aeroplanes which will attack London in the next war, any more than they

did in the last. But defenders can make attacks costly. And, as we show elsewhere, that is what the loyalists have done to the rebels.

If we leave aside the Italian “victories” at Málaga and in the north last year, and look at the one continuous battle-front in Spain, we find that the Government won victories at Guadalajara, Peñarroya, near Córdoba, Brunete, Belchite and Teruel; and many minor events elsewhere. The defensive value of the loyalist forces is now magnificent. Their attacking value is fast approaching that of any regular army in the world, and it is better than most. The problem of transport has been virtually solved, and difficult lines of communications immeasurably improved. This, with the new army of three-quarters of a million men, renders a rebel victory a military impossibility.

The achievements of the loyalist Navy are little appreciated in England, and many people believe that it is playing a part inferior to that of the rebel fleet. The reason is that the loyalist Navy has concentrated on a purely *defensive* policy—that of protecting ports and the merchant ships which go to and from Government Spain. Franco's Navy, in its attempts to effect a blockade, has concentrated on *piracy*. Clearly, there is nothing spectacular about the safe escort of shipping, whereas if a rebel pirate sinks a merchant vessel the information at once reaches the newspaper headlines. All Franco is doing is to shoot and run; the Government Navy is intent on protection. It is the policy of Franco to obtain *belligerent rights at almost any cost*, for that would give him the right of searching and taking ships which bring food and munitions to Government ports. It would also completely nullify the Nyon system of control. The chief point to be considered is this: the Government Navy *can prevent and is preventing a blockade of loyalist Spain*.

To make any sort of political comparison between the rebel and Government zones is merely to compare the functioning of a military dictatorship with the free functioning of a democratic system. The one represents oppression by force; the other an administration based upon the approval of the people. The days are past when groups or parties in Government Spain were at loggerheads, and in a state of confusion caused by the surprise attack of the rebels. Señor Martínez Barrios, Chairman of the Cortes (corresponding to our Speaker of the House of Commons), announced on February 11th that the political situation in loyalist Spain is one of absolute stability. Parties representing the Popular Front work in complete harmony with the Ministry. All problems of political ideologies have been shelved, and there is only one goal: to win the war. Apart from purely military censorship the press is free. There is no disorder anywhere. Nor is there any widespread anti-religious feeling (though there is a definite anti-clerical bias). Indeed, priests broadcast regularly from Barcelona, masses may be held in private, and there is a move to re-establish open worship in Catalonia.

To sum up, Government Spain is well organised, has an army that is getting bigger and better every day, and the morale of the population is superb. In that lies its strength. If the foreigners on Franco's side were removed, he would not last a month. Only one danger remains: that Hitler and Mussolini should decide to send more troops to the rebels. We advise our readers to contemplate the speech made by Mr. Anthony Eden in the House of Commons on 21st of this month. He did not trust Dictators. Nor does Spain.

TIME and "The Times"

The New York weekly TIME in its issue of February 14th, 1938, has a long article dealing with various aspects of the war in Spain. It gives the following interesting statistics:—

	Loyalist Spain	Rebel Spain
Population ..	14,000,000	10,000,000
Area ..	82,600 sq. miles	114,000 sq. miles
Armed Forces	800,000	450,000
Non-Spaniards in armed forces }	2%	35%

TIME goes on to quote the English authority, Captain Liddell Hart: "The fighting spirit seems to be stronger on the Barcelona Government side as a whole, except for certain sections of Franco's troops, such as the Navarrese and what remains of the Foreign Legion. The Government also seems to have the superiority in motor transport, and this is very important militarily. Any greater result than an initial success in a surprised offensive depends on the rapidity with which the attacker and defender can rush up reserves, to deepen or close the breach respectively . . . if the food situation (in loyalist Spain) can be improved and the civil population can hold out under the strain, *Franco's prospects may have definitely faded by the summer.*"

The Times Military Correspondent wrote on February 19th: "There is evidence to suggest that, while such troops as the Navarrese, the Foreign Legion, and the Moors combine determination with superior military experience, *fighting spirit is on the whole stronger on the Government side* . . . with each month that passes the Government's new army should improve in efficiency. Machine-power accounts for much in modern warfare and (the rebels) have owed most of it to foreign help. In home production, however, the Government would seem to have made such progress that they may catch up their enemy's lead unless the latter receive renewed quantities from abroad. Moreover, in one sphere of a less directly offensive nature, the Government appear to have the advantage already. In both quality and quantity their motor transport would seem to be superior to that of the other side . . . it would seem that the food situation on the Government side is improving rather than deteriorating. Should this continue, and so far enough to relieve the 'belt tension,' *Franco's prospects may increasingly wane.*" [Our italics.]

While we agree in general with both these estimates, we would point out that they both fail to take cognisance of the following facts, which are common knowledge to observers who have recently visited Franco's zone: (1) Franco's original shock-troops, Moors and Legionnaires, are exhausted or decimated, and, although he can still obtain Moroccans and fill up the Legion with Galicians, the quality of these new additions cannot compare with that of the old ones; (2) The best of the Carlists are dead, wounded or exhausted; (3) No account is taken of the Carlist-Phalanx hostility to one another, and the hostility of both to one or other set of foreigners on Franco's side; (4) Franco fears to put into the field large numbers of his old regular army, because they go straight over to the Government side. Again we come back to that old position: if Franco does not obtain considerable help from Hitler or Mussolini, or both, he has lost. One must not be perturbed by small advances or retreats, attacks or counter-attacks, such as the most recent phase of the Teruel battle. The Government attack on Teruel in December had done its job: distracted Franco from his main attack. He has made a tactical error in attempting to retake the town and, if he should do so, it would not make the slightest difference. He would merely be where he was before, more precariously, shaken and diverted from his long-planned general offensive.

Franker than Franco

In the Italian publication *Il Regime Fascista* of January 28th, 1938, there was an article under the title: "*Fascist Wings in the Service of Latin Civilization*," signed by Giacomo Munaro. It is a résumé with inflated comments of Guido Mattioli's book *L'AVIAZIONE LEGIONARIA IN SPAGNA* (Legionary Aviation in Spain). The following extracts are from the book: "The best productions of world-technique in aeronautics have been involved in scientific war, in which each day the prowess of our Blue Knights is demonstrated. Our Air Legion has conquered its enemies everywhere, and Italian high-speed aeroplanes have lived up to their magnificent fighting quality and unassailable strength, splendidly enhanced by the marvellous qualities of our pilots. Red Aviators . . . have encountered an overwhelming superiority in our Legionary Aviation . . . General Franco rose in July, 1936, against the ignominy of the Communist invasion (!); our Legionary Aviation made a beginning in the autumn and, since then, has become mistress of the skies in tormented Spain." The book goes on to cite dozens of 'Glorious Episodes,' and one gains from it an idea of the imperative necessity to Franco of that Legionary Aviation.

Without it the rebel 'Crusade' would have been checked at the start or confined to Morocco. Legionary bombers and chasers won the only victories of which 'Nationalist' Spain can boast. "The struggle has been severe, very severe," the article continues, "but our Legionaries have won the day—in every sector on all fronts, Legionary Aviation has given no truce to the enemy in the air or on the ground. From Barcelona to Madrid, all fortifications have been bombarded by 'Nationalist' planes. From Bilbao to Santander and Gijón, from Saragossa to Brunete, from Teruel to Córdoba, our Legion 'planes and pilots were masters of the skies: *masters without dispute.*" The prowess of Legionary Aviation, Mattioli rhapsodises, "which has been announced to the whole world clearly demonstrates one thing: the high-minded attitude of those anonymous heroes who fought and are fighting for civilization. This heroism and bravery are symbolised by the letter M, which stands for Mussolini who, in flying himself incessantly, gives an example to Fascist pilots. In that far-off year 1923, during a meeting in the Grand Hotel in Rome, at which all the Eagles of Italian Aviation were present, our Duce said at the end of his speech: '*I myself will give you courage,*' and it is this which has given and gives to Legionary and Fascist pilots the marvellous heroism which has filled the world with admiration." The following is a Spanish comment on the above: "Read, we beg you, read this, Lord Plymouth, impassive chairman of the impassive Committee of Non-Intervention, and see that your colleagues also read it. Mattioli states what we all know: all, including the innumerable victims in our bombed open towns. No doubt the German Colonel von Paenecke echoes in the *Reichswehr Annual* (1938) the protests of German aviators, when he says that the Germans are all-important in Spain. The Italians show no exceptional courage in the air, and fly too low. They are brave when it comes to bombing without risk our villages, hospitals, orphanages, maternity homes, libraries, museums and similar 'military' objectives. Yet, when Republican chasers arrive, prudence seizes those intrepid hearts filled with favour for Mussolini and imperial enthusiasm. One notices that neither Mattioli nor Von Paenecke mentions *Spanish* aviators. Where are they? Nobody knows anything about them! Allocated probably to aerodromes for office work and subordinate jobs, cleaning motors, sweeping about, kitchen duties . . . Franco aviation! Italian according to the Italians; German according to the Germans. Spain has furnished neither men nor machines. It might be useful if Lord Plymouth were to read Mattioli's book to some of his colleagues on the Non-Intervention Committee."

And now we turn to another story which, we think, will surprise our readers almost as much as it surprised us. It is the *Official Record* of the achievements of the Republican Air Force during the year 1937. They have given a magnificent account of themselves, as the figures show. They are used for defence and purely military purposes. Since Indalecio Prieto's Order of February 3rd, 1938, they will not be used against the civil population in Franco's zone.

Rebel versus Loyalist Aircraft—Official

Loyalist Aircraft Brought Down			Rebel Aircraft Brought Down		
		Total			Total
January	Bombers	.. 3	January	Junkers	.. 3
	Chasers	.. 1		Chasers	.. 13
	Reconnaissance 'planes	.. 1		Heinkel	.. 3
February	Bombers	.. 2	February	Mark Unknown	5
	Chasers	.. 3		Junkers	.. 4
				Heinkel	.. 11
March	Chasers	.. 3	March	Mark Unknown	6
	Bombers	.. 2		Junkers	.. 1
				Fiat Chasers	.. 14
April			April	Fokker	.. 1
				Heinkel	.. 2
				Fiat Chasers	.. 8
May	Chasers	.. 6	May	Sea-planes	.. 5
	Bombers	.. 2		Heinkel	.. 5
				Junker	.. 2
June	Chasers	.. 5	June	Fiat Chasers	.. 4
	Bombers	.. 3		Mark Unknown	2
	Sea-planes	.. 2		Fiat Chasers	.. 36
July	Bombers	.. 7	July	Junkers	.. 1
	Chasers	.. 12		Mark Unknown	2
	Sea-planes	.. 1		Fiat Chasers	.. 48
August	Bombers	.. 4	August	Heinkel	.. 13
	Chasers	.. 6		Junkers	.. 9
				Reconnaissance 'planes	.. 5
				Mark Unknown	3
				Junkers	.. 2
				Fiat Chasers	.. 12
				Twin-engine machines	.. 1
				Mark Unknown	15

Loyalist Aircraft Brought Down			Rebel Aircraft Brought Down		
		Total			Total
September	Chasers	.. 6	September	Fiat Chasers	.. 15
	Bombers	.. 3		Junkers	.. 3
				Romeo	.. 3
				Twin-engine machines	.. 3
October	Bombers	.. 3	October	Fiat Chasers	.. 14
	Chasers	.. 1		Savoia	.. 1
				Junkers	.. 2
November	Chasers	.. 3	November	None	
December	Bombers	.. 3	December	Junkers	.. 4
	Chasers	.. 6		Fiat Chasers	.. 10
				Sea-planes	.. 1
				Messerschmitt	1
Total of loyal aircraft brought down during 1937			Total of rebel aircraft brought down during 1937		
92			293		

Land

It is often difficult to explain to an industrial people like the English how vital land is to an agricultural people like the Spanish. In Spain 80 per cent. of the population depend on land directly or indirectly for their very existence. We therefore make no apology for attempting to set out simply the main points of the land problem.

It is now just over two years since the electoral victory of February, 1936, returned the Popular Front Government. Since then representatives of the old privileged classes have tried, first by economic sabotage, then by a military revolt, then by the open terrorism of civil war and finally by an alliance with alien powers (Germany and Italy) to prevent progress in the Government's programme. Despite the strain imposed by war conditions, the Republic has pushed steadily ahead with its programme of land reforms, developing its liberal projects for the transformation of Spain from semi-feudalism into a modern democratic state. For over 150 years competent authorities have agreed that the key to this transformation must lie in a solution of the agrarian problem, but until the advent of the Republic in 1931 the fact that any serious agrarian reform must depend upon a re-distribution of land was carefully ignored. How badly this re-distribution was needed is evident in the Monarchy's statistics, which reveal that 1 per cent. of the population owned 51.5 per cent. of the total land; 14 per cent. of the population owned 35.2 per cent.; 20 per cent. of the population owned 11.1 per cent.; 25 per cent. of the population owned 2.2 per cent.; and 40 per cent. of the population owned nil! From these figures two facts stand out: (a) the tremendous extent of the large estates, and (b) that the land actually in the possession of the peasants was split up into very small holdings.

Clamour of the Landless

Although not all of them squeeze a living from the soil, *three out of every four Spaniards are peasants*, and their increasing desire to possess and work land for themselves has been a dominating factor in recent Spanish history. The first actual intervention of the State in agrarian problems dates from the 16th century. Hardly had the Moors been driven out by the Catholic monarchs than the clamour of the landless brought forth a succession of schemes for resettlement of depopulated areas. Paper projects, they proved abortive, but their historic purpose found fulfilment in the fact that later they provided precedents for the Second Republic's measures. In the early 19th century disentanglement—a new panacea—was tried, but it merely speeded up the extinction of middle farmers, concentrating the land still more in vast estates and small holdings. In 1812 feudal estates were abolished, but the persistence of Church and landed aristocracy was such that by 1825 they had re-appeared. Discontent among the peasants grew. The First Republic (1873) promised them land. It did not keep its promise and was overthrown. At the birth of the Second Republic (April, 1931) the pledges made 50 years before were renewed, and the Government settled down to a consideration of Spain's appalling agrarian problem. They found that only 40 per cent. of the land was actually in use; of that one-quarter lay fallow. About one hundred thousand landowners held almost 30 million acres. The Duke of Medinaceli owned more than 200,000 acres. The Duke of Alba (rebel Agent in London) held almost 100,000; De la Romana held almost as much; and Count Romanones owned 37,000. At the other end of this absurd scale were 5 million landworkers, who owned nothing. Living in conditions of the utmost misery they envied their "luckier" brothers, the 1,173,000 small-holders who between them worked 15 million acres, an average of about 13 acres apiece. Every acre of these small-holdings was burdened with oppressive dues which, while making it impossible in the majority of cases for the farmers to adopt improved methods of agriculture, served to support a horde of absentee landlords and "Señoritos" at Cannes, Biarritz, or

on their occasional visits to San Sebastian, Madrid and during Holy Week at Seville. An additional source of income for the absentee lords came from portions of their huge estates which they let off to farmers. In turn the farmers sub-let portions to sub-tenants and so on. The poor peasants who tilled the soil found themselves cut off from the proprietor by nests of middlemen. The general "lack of land" (!) forced the peasants to agree to short-term leases and, under the laws which the estate owners had drafted, improvements which had been made to the property during tenancy reverted to the landlord when the lease expired. But not *all* the absentees tapped this source of feudal revenue. Some—like the Marquises of Carabes—thought it beneath their dignity to have their domain cultivated at all. They preferred to let their lands lie idle while the peasants starved.

Law of Agrarian Reform

That the peasants had remained silently submissive to this economic tyranny for so long was only explained by their sheer ignorance and by the control which great landlords, assisted by priests and backed by the army, exercised over their tenants. The masters evicted the recalcitrants and bribed the servile with less onerous leases. To remedy this situation the Second Republic prepared a Fundamental Law of Agrarian Reform. It was intended to embody a complete Law of Property together with the State's entire social agrarian policy. While this was in the process of elaboration (some 17 months) subsidiary laws were passed to cover immediate necessities. These dealt with accident compensation, rents, wages and compulsory cultivation. The accident compensation clauses merely brought Spain within the orbit of the Geneva International Labour Office Agreement of October, 1921, for extending the benefits of Workman's Compensation Insurance to agricultural labourers. The rent clauses took official cognisance of the fact, previously ignored by the landlords, that land rents, during the wartime boom had soared by 185 per cent., while produce prices were only 67 per cent. above 1913 levels. To remedy the discrepancy Mixed Tribunals were established to decide just rents. Wage Acts fixed a minimum normal agricultural labourer's wage at 4s. a day (9s. a day during harvest time). This served to raise the average annual earnings of land workers from £40 to £75. A compulsory cultivation clause was intended to prevent economic sabotage, and give municipal authorities power to carry on cultivation where owners had deliberately abandoned work and left their farm lands barren. There was no mention of expropriation in the original draft of the Agrarian Reform Law but, in its final form, approved by the Cortes (September 15th, 1932) it incorporated a special section directed against the supporters of General Sanjurjo's attempted *coup d'état*. This clause ordered the confiscation of land belonging to the leaders of that attempted military rebellion. Feudal dues were abolished and a method was outlined for the purchase of estates in the provinces of Andalucía, Extremadura, Ciudad Real, Toledo, Albacete and Salamanca; for division and colonisation. To administer this vital law the Institute of Agrarian Reform was created. It co-operated with provincial councils and locally with the peasant communities. A compromise between socialism and liberalism, the law did not decree the nationalisation of the confiscated or purchased estates, neither did it give them to the peasants as freehold property. It vested ownership of the land in the Institute, which was empowered to *lease it to peasants for equitable rents*. Lumbering slowly and inefficiently into action, the Institute of Agrarian Reform had hardly scratched the surface of its vast task before the landowners manœuvred a political crisis, which caused the Cortes to be dissolved. Hampered by every possible obstruction from the class of wealth and privilege, the Institute had in its first year settled 28,195 peasants on 220,000 acres of land, and granted them credits totalling £150,000.

Feudalist Reaction

The election of 1933 handed back power to the representatives of the old régime, who at once began to uproot all the work of their predecessors. Never openly denying the people their trifling benefits, nor openly contradicting the aims of the Republican Government, they emasculated agrarian progress by a hastily passed "Reform" Law of Agrarian Reform. The declared purpose of this measure was the continuation and rounding-off of the previous legislation. In actual fact, it prevented peasants from achieving the slightest concession; and it restored to the old landowners the most important of their archaic privileges. It cancelled expropriation and, besides handing back estates to former owners, it gave them a bonus in the form of two years' rent, to cover the period of occupation. *Under this clause fourteen landed proprietors collected £750,000 from the Spanish taxpayers.* Estates were then repurchased from their owners, at a new valuation fixed by the proprietors themselves. Under the law, which was described by Church and aristocracy as the "Peasants' Charter," the peasant received nothing which he had not already got, and 14 rebellious noblemen received £9,500,000 in return

for some 950,000 acres. The success of this nobility-sponsored method of "Agrarian Reform" was seen by the end of 1935, when a statistical survey revealed that 95 per cent. of the total agricultural undertakings in Spain comprised only 12½ million acres, while 0.35 of the total comprised 22,000,000 acres.

Popular Front sets to Work

In February, 1936, the Popular Front Government picked up the broken threads of early progressive legislation. Pushing ahead with renewed energy, they were able to accomplish more in a few months than the 1931 Government had accomplished in two years. The Decree of March 20th, by intervening between the peasantry and landlords, enabled the work of reform to proceed apace. While leaving the proprietor in direct control of his estate, it removed his right to enjoy it as a weapon of tyranny in return for certain economic rights. The use of land and the means of cultivating it in peace were given to the peasants. On the eve of the Civil War, 150,000 families had already been settled, and the Institute reported that credits of £1,250,000 had been advanced to enable poor workers to develop holdings. The outbreak of the military rebellion stimulated rather than retarded the work of the Institute. A Decree of October 7th, 1936, a war measure, confiscated without compensation the estates of those who had taken up arms against the elected Government. An abundance was suddenly made available for the settlement of the peasants. New problems arose. Machinery was needed to take the place of the men who had rushed to stem the rebels, and later the foreign invasion. An adequate food supply was essential. Harvests required protection. Agricultural production needed stimulation. In the face of these problems the Institute of Agrarian Reform broadened the scope of its activity and created additional apparatus to enable it to handle new questions which arose each day. Special departments were formed, charged with maintaining of the seed supply, the manufacture of agricultural equipment and so forth. Agronomics became a study of vital importance. Technical schools were established for the training of scientific farmers. Close ties were woven between the Institute, the Banking system, the Co-operatives and Industry. Legal ownership of some 10,000,000 of the 37 million acres of cultivated land in all Spain is vested in the Institute. It is being leased to the peasants at equitable rents, and the Institute has devised a means by which ownership can be transferred to the tenants on easy terms. Credits are granted by the Agricultural Credit Banks, the amount of the loan being based on the peasant's prospective earning power. A five-stage-plan for the solution of the most pressing questions of Spanish Agriculture has been drawn up. The first stage of this plan—"Agriculture and War," has already been accomplished. Institute experts look with optimism towards the future, and are already at work on the succeeding stages to ensure that Spain's century-old agrarian question shall reach an equitable solution based on principles of social justice. The Government is determined that Spanish soil shall be worked by Spaniards; that the workers shall reap the benefits; that absentee landlordism shall end; that the parasites who do not work shall not prevent others from working. This is what masses of Spaniards are fighting for.

Pamphlets

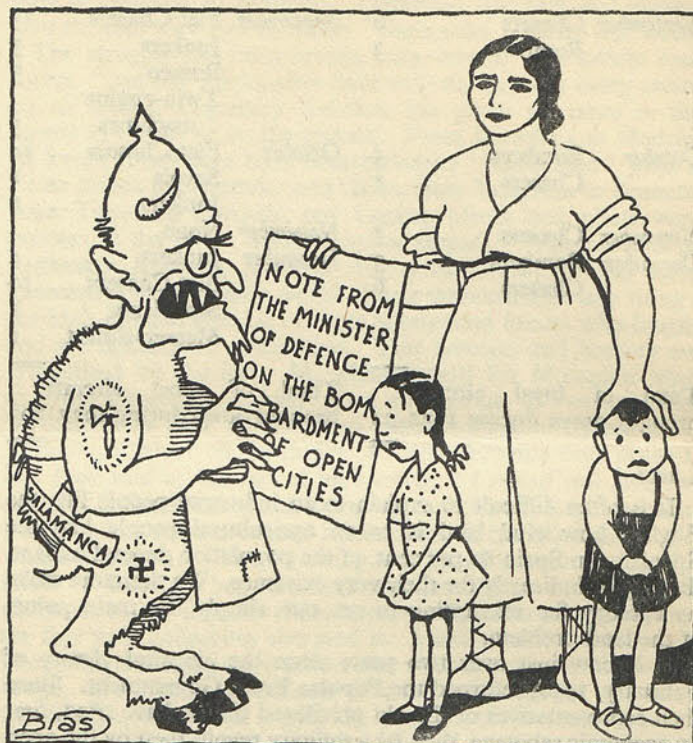
We have published the following pamphlets:—*Education in Republican Spain*, price 2d. *Foreign Journalists under Franco's Terror*, by a Journalist, price 2d. *Controversy on Spain*, between H. A. Gwynne, Editor of the *Morning Post* and A. Ramos Oliveira. Price 6d.

Almost ready: *The Military Situation in Spain after Teruel*. By Air-Commodore L. E. O. Charlton, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. (Price to be announced later).

All except the last are now available from United Editorial Limited, 11, Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1, postage being in each case 1d. extra.

Foreign Journalists under Franco's Terror deals with a subject which is a commonplace in Fleet Street, but is not known to the public at large. It has been compiled by a journalist whose *bona fides* we guarantee. After reading the evidence which the pamphlet contains, it will be obvious why he refuses to permit his name to be published. In the opinion of the *Morning Post*, "Such British newspapers as continue to be represented on the insurgent side are likely to be reduced to propaganda sheets on which it would be unwise to rely for accurate information." That in itself should be sufficient to indicate the value of 'news' and comment published in this country by the pro-Franco press. But since the *Morning Post* made that statement, the position has become even worse. No journalist is permitted in Franco territory unless his personal sympathies are with the rebels and the Fascists. The pamphlet provides a well-documented account of the adventures and vicissitudes of many journalists who

PEARLS



Loyalist: "I wish to save my children, so I offer you a chance to behave humanely."

Rebel: "Bah-ah!"

attempted to provide foreign readers with objective accounts of life and conditions in the rebel zone; of journalists threatened with death; and of journalists imprisoned or detained. Every journalist is escorted about by press officers, and none is permitted to see anything which might tarnish the false façade of high-mindedness which the rebels have vainly endeavoured to maintain. Contrast this with the fact, verifiable by anybody in Fleet Street, that journalists are welcomed to Government territory and given every facility to move about freely and see just what they wish to see. The little pamphlet is a valuable contribution to an understanding of rebel psychology.

Controversy on Spain (72 pp., 6d.) is of very great value for this reason: it provides the views of an English journalist whose absolute honesty is beyond question, but who has chosen to espouse the rebel point of view. Unfortunately, his knowledge of Spain and Spanish political history and affairs is on a par with that of hosts of English people, which is to say that it only touches the surface. Mr. Gwynne writes well and forcefully and does his best with the scanty information he has. But he is completely overwhelmed by his opponent, who has the inestimable advantage of knowing his subject backwards, and the ability to marshal his facts in a ruthlessly logical sequence. The Editor of the *Morning Post* complains that Mr. Oliveira's statements are twice as long as his. Why? If Mr. Gwynne chooses to make definite statements such as "... the alleged massacre at Badajoz is now well known to be a fable," is it not the duty of Mr. Oliveira to provide evidence that the massacre did take place? And to set out that evidence must necessarily occupy far more space than the statement in question. That evidence happens to be two long quotations from the *Times* on the subject of the Badajoz massacres, and the *Times* is not accustomed to publish made-up stories on so serious a subject as mass-executions. The *Times* correspondent quoted an eye-witness: "Badajoz," says the witness, "wore an appearance of murderous chaos. . . . Mass executions continued in the Toros Square . . . the streets were full of dead bodies." And in a later message: "Reports from a variety of sources make it seem only too likely that Irun will pass, with Badajoz, into the history of the civil war as a name for cold-blooded slaughter. The Foreign Legionaries and Moroccan troops are stated to be sparing not a single man, woman or child who falls into their hands." The *Irish Press* (pro-Franco in sympathy) reported of Cáceres: "We saw Franco's army executing 'Reds' each morning in massed groups. They machine-gunned the condemned people, beginning at their ankles and directing the fire up along their bodies." The italics are ours. Why should Mr. Gwynne persist in accepting rebel propaganda in the face of such reliable sources as the *Conservative Times* and the Catholic, pro-Franco *Irish Press*? He appears to be incorrigible, but it is surely bad controversy on his part not to admit what is based on sound evidence even if it is against him.