

# THE WAR IN SPAIN

## A WEEKLY SUMMARY

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### GERMAN EXPANSION AND SPAIN

FROM the moment when Herr Hitler gave the word of command to move, until German troops, supported by aeroplanes, entered Vienna and took control of Austria, less than 48 hours elapsed. As an exhibition of totalitarian power-politics, cynicism and Hitler's uncanny instinct for choosing the right moment to strike, this latest example of Fascist intervention in the affairs of another and almost helpless country, could hardly be bettered. The move was not unexpected; the actual moment took the world by surprise. In the same way, Italian and German intervention in Spain were not unexpected, but nobody foresaw the manner, the methods and the *extent* of that intervention, not even the Führer and Duce themselves. Few people, including those pro-Franco elements in Great Britain who call themselves 'The Friends of Nationalist Spain,' can have a really clear conception of how great a danger these totalitarian power-politics and *Realpolitik* are to the best interests of the British Empire. If Hitler's brutal move into Austria can bring home to the friends of his Spanish puppets at Burgos and Salamanca some vague idea of the principles of rascality they are supporting, then it may not be entirely in vain from a pro-British point of view.

Spain is, alas, bound up with Italian and German plans for expansion, and that expansion has as goals the destruction and dismemberment of French and British oversea territories. Italian policy has been openly declared, and more than preliminary steps have been taken to put it into action. The Mediterranean has already the salient characteristics of an Italian Sea, and our great trade-route—"life-line" it has been called—can be cut and rendered useless at any moment. When an indiscreet rebel General blurts out that Gibraltar will soon be Spanish and that one Italian is worth two Spaniards, we ought to know the way the wind is blowing.

The German use of Spain and Morocco as sources of strategic minerals is so obvious that Herr Hitler has not refrained from saying so in public. Spain—especially the present Franco's Spain—occupies first place on a list of Europe's producers of Manganese, Lead Ores and Copper; second place for Silver and Copper Ore; fourth place for Zinc Ore; and Government Spain is first for Mercury and Potash. That does not include Morocco, another magnificent source for strategic minerals. As *The Economist* stated (May 15th, 1937): "If General Franco is victorious, Italy and Germany will obviously obtain access to much-needed supplies of strategic minerals for their drive towards self-sufficiency in the face of exchange difficulties . . ." As an example of what Germany is now drawing from Franco, one need only mention the latest available figures: 97,000 tons of iron ore in December; 152,000 tons in January. These metals are used for—armaments! That is the German aspect of Franco's "Christian Crusade."

It is interesting to note that the German demand for colonies has grown in strength since the Italo-German invasion of Spain, just as Italian intervention in the Peninsula has increased since the partial liquidation of their Abyssinian problem, and the increasing demands of Italy for recognition of that conquest. But the German cry for colonies is not really aimed at African objectives. German National Socialism is based on a far-reaching plan of organic action, of which the ultimate goal is a European War—that relentless and ruthless war dreamt of by Ludendorff and Goering: the sort of war that not merely ends with conquest

but in utter destruction and extermination. The colonial question *interests Germany only in so far as it is a means towards that end*. German industry, man-power and diplomacy are lined up in preparation for the sudden onslaught that is at this moment being planned: an onslaught of which the various steps are the occupation of the Ruhr, and of Austria (already achieved), then of Czechoslovakia and finally the domination of France and England. Hitler calculates that the result will leave Germany with the complete mastery of Europe. But Spain must be his—first.

Before the European War of 1914-18, Germany had Togoland, the Kamerun, German South-West and East Africa. She wanted more, but England and France would not countenance the loss by Portugal or Belgium of any of their colonial possessions. Those German colonies were not rich, but their political and strategic values were considerable. If they were to be returned now, their value from a strategic point of view would be enhanced. At this moment the whole relations between colonial powers are changed. Portugal shouts aloud the glories of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, but merely whispers good-will towards England over a post-prandial glass of port wine. She controls the Azores, Madeira, Cape Verde, Moçambique and Angola. And Franco? He has a grip on the Canaries, the Balearics (with Italy), Ifni, the Spanish Sahara, Spanish territories in Guinea and Morocco. What magnificent jumping-off grounds for attacks on Britain's shipping and possessions, not to mention those of France! It may be assumed that, if Franco should win, his *junta* would dominate Portugal as easily one might wind up a watch. Hitler and Mussolini would, of course, dominate Franco as easily as they now do.

There is already in existence a strong Germano-Italian-Portuguese bloc, and, if it is successful in Spain, then the first important step will have been taken towards African dominion by Germany. Italy has enough for the moment in Africa; and so has Portugal. Hitler fully realises that the key to the solution of his colonial problem lies in Europe, and that the point of it is in Spain. His interest in Spain is a double one: material and political, as much one as the other.

Hitherto France and England have succumbed to Germano-Italian acts of aggression, apparently on the grounds that the more energy Italy wastes in African adventures the less strength she will have for European; and because they do not feel strong enough to call Herr Hitler's bluff or stop his blackmail. France has advanced well on a programme of self-defence; and England has started a vast armament programme. It may be too late. German industry—perhaps the most highly organised and efficient in the world—is producing artillery, aeroplanes, bombs, tanks and armoured cars in fantastic quantities. In preparation for "The Day" which, if it follows Hitler's custom, will be a Friday evening after the British Cabinet and the key officials of Civil Service, Army, Navy and Air Force have left for sea or countryside to enjoy a well-earned rest.

How different the position might be if England had in July, 1936, allowed international law to run its course and permit the Spanish Government to buy arms to suppress a rebellion of traitorous generals who had already sold their country to the totalitarian States. How different, if "Non-intervention" had worked fairly, and prevented the invasion of Spain by the enemies not only of the masses of the Spanish people, but of England and France. Somehow, it does not require great vision or imagination to appreciate the point.



## The War at Sea

On March 6th, a naval engagement took place between rebel cruisers and loyalist destroyers, of which the following is the loyalist official report:—"While sailing last night (March 6th), at 12.45, the greater part of the fleet, composed of two cruisers and the Second Destroyer Flotilla, saw the rebel cruisers "*Baleares*," "*Canarias*" and "*Almirante Cervera*," with which we were not able to engage, because they sailed away at top speed. The destroyer "*Sanchez Barcaiztegui*" fired two torpedoes at them, but without result. The squadron changed direction and sought a meeting with the enemy, who may have intended to cut off the retreat of the First Destroyer Flotilla which had been sent on a reconnaissance. At 2.15, three rebel cruisers were seen to port, sailing in the opposite direction to ourselves. A violent artillery duel took place at a distance of four to five thousand yards. Our destroyers were then ordered to attack with torpedoes, which they did, the "*Sanchez Barcaiztegui*" launching four, the "*Antequera*" five and the "*Lepanto*" three. At 2.20, a great explosion occurred on board the second ship in line (the "*Baleares*"). One of the torpedoes had hit its mark. The light of the explosion showed clearly that the "*Almirante Cervera*" was third in line. The enemy fire ceased, and our fire ceased as well, in order to prevent the possibility of confusion with our own ships. Our cruisers and the two destroyer flotillas entered Cartagena at 7.45 this morning without having suffered the slightest material damage, nor the least accident to any member of the crews, all of whom conducted themselves heroically."

## Rebel Report of the Battle

The rebel report of the sinking of the "*Baleares*" was issued next day at Burgos, and described it as resulting from a "lucky shot from an enemy torpedo," attributing the misfortune to "muscovite criminality," and complaining of the unjust handicap of non-recognition of rebel belligerency. The loss was described as unimportant. Another Note rendered thanks to the British destroyers "*Kempfenfelt*" and "*Boreas*," which rescued the survivors of the "*Baleares*" while the rebel vessels "*Canarias*" and "*Almirante Cervera*" made off at full speed to the Italian base at Palma when Government aeroplanes attacked them.

## Tonnage of the two Fleets

In No. 7, page 26 of this Summary, we gave a statement of the two fleets. Here is a revised and more up-to-date statement, with certain corrections and additions:—

### GOVERNMENT FLEET

- 1 Battleship of 16,400 tons ("*Jaime I*").
- 2 Cruisers of 9,385 tons ("*Libertad*," "*Miguel de Cervantes*").
- 1 Cruiser of 6,140 tons ("*Mendez Nunez*").
- 12 Destroyers of 2,120 tons ("*Sanchez Barcaiztegui*," "*José Luis Díez*," "*Lepanto*," "*Churrua*," "*Alcala Galiano*," "*Almirante Valdes*," "*Almirante Antequera*," "*Almirante Miranda*," "*Escando*," "*Gravina*," "*Jorge Juan*," "*Ulloa*").
- 2 Destroyers of 1,337 tons ("*Alsido*" and "*Lazaga*").
- 2 Submarines of 570/715 tons (B.1 and B.2).
- 3 Submarines of 914/1,290 tons (C.1, C.2 and C.4).
- 3 Torpedo Boats of 190 tons (Nos 14, 17 and 20).
- 2 Gunboats of 800 tons ("*Laya*" and "*Tetuan*").

### REBEL FLEET

- 1 Cruiser of 10,668 tons ("*Canarias*").
- 1 Cruiser of 9,385 tons ("*Almirante Cervera*").
- 3 Destroyers of 1,400 tons ("*Velasco-Melilla*," "*Velasco-Ceuta*" and "*Velasco*").
- 5 Gunboats of 800 tons ("*Canovas del Castillo*," "*Dato*," "*Lauria*," "*Canalejas*," "*Larache*").
- 2 Submarines ("*Mola*" and "*Sanjurjo*").
- 2 Torpedo boats of 190 tons (Nos. 7 and 19).

## Note on the Fleets

Several ships of both fleets are undergoing repairs, including the Republican battleship "*Jaime I*" which, according to official statements, will soon be in action again. The Government destroyers "*Ulloa*" and "*Jorge Juan*" have been recently completed, and at least one more is almost ready for launching. Three heavy submarines, the B.1, B.2 and B.3, each displacing 1,370 tons, are in an advanced stage of construction.

Losses on both sides have been considerable. In April, 1937, Franco's one battleship, the "*España*" (15,450 tons) was sunk in the Bay of Biscay and, in addition to the "*Baleares*," he has lost several smaller craft during the past year. On the other hand, the Government battleship "*Jaime I*" has been under repair since last June, when it was damaged by an explosion. The cruiser "*Libertad*" has also been under repair for some time and several submarines have been seriously damaged or sunk. (The destroyer "*Ciscar*" was sunk at Gijón.)

The Spanish Government claims that Franco's fleet has been reinforced by several Italian vessels. The "*Velasco-Melilla*" and "*Velasco-Ceuta*" are said to be the former "*Aquila*" and "*Falco*" of the Italian fleet. The submarines "*Mola*" and "*Sanjurjo*" were received by Franco from the same source, as were two other Italian destroyers now flying Spanish monarchist colours under assumed, but unknown, names. Readers of this Summary should refer to No. 8, page 31, in which we gave the names and numbers of German ships and submarines working on behalf of the Spanish rebel cause.

The comparative inactivity of the Republican fleet up to now can only in part be considered due to the necessities of *convoying transports and protecting the approaches to Government harbours*. The two main difficulties have been of personnel and equipment. Since Indalecio Prieto was put in supreme charge of the armed forces about nine months ago, he has concentrated on the training of new officers, gunners and sailors, many of whom were already proven on the field of battle. As in the Army, a number of officers remained loyal to the Government; and continued to occupy important positions. On the other hand, many new men have won rapid promotion to high office during the course of the war. One of the men who has played a leading part in the reorganisation of the Navy is Don Valentin Fuentes. When Franco's forces were closing in on the Asturias, Captain Fuentes was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Republican forces in the Bay of Biscay, and distinguished himself in very difficult circumstances. Soon afterwards he was appointed chief of the Naval General Staff and, on February 19th, 1938, he was gazetted Rear-Admiral. Another recent promotion was that of Lieutenant Manuel Nuñez Rodriguez. He was appointed Commander of the cruiser "*Miguel de Cervantes*," which played a prominent part in the battle of March 6th. A number of ships are at Cartagena incomplete or in need of repair. They have not been put in fighting trim owing to the difficulties of obtaining the necessary parts and armaments in face of the "Non-Intervention" Control.

As will be seen above, the Government has superiority in tonnage. If the sinking of the "*Baleares*" can be taken to indicate that problems of personnel and equipment are largely solved, it is evident that Franco would be in difficulties unless his allies came to his assistance. Available information indicates that they have already done so, and one may expect them to render still further help. Some mystery exists about an old warship, the "*Navarra*," which has long been so useless as to be little better than a hulk. Her appearance in a metamorphosed condition on Franco's side is now expected. She may prove to be a completely new ship of German or Italian build! It should be mentioned that both sides have a number of miscellaneous units: auxiliaries, mine-layers, trawlers, etc., used for work along the coasts.

One effect of reducing Franco's Navy is to render less dangerous the grant of belligerent rights to the rebels. It also reduces his so-called blockade of Government territory.

## War on Land: Guadarrama and Aragón

On March 9th, a rebel offensive on a front of close on 90 miles began in Aragón. The Government forces had been awaiting it for several days, as their scouts had reported concentrations of men with *immense* quantities of material behind rebel lines, with long-range artillery and at least 200 aeroplanes of the most modern types, tanks, etc. The main part of the attack was on the Saragossa-Teruel line. The weight of the attack drove back the Republicans at several points, but this was a very different withdrawal from those of the early days of the war. Now the Government had a well organised army, and, although the superiority in materials was on Franco's side, he met resistance at every point with fierce counter-attacks. Hence, the see-saw nature of the fighting. There is no question of the rebels being able to thrust a wedge with sufficient success to threaten seriously the whole line of defence, as they might have done had they attacked first with vigour and skill at Teruel. The battle is a heavy one and may be expected to continue for some time.

In the Guadarramas the rebels also attacked with some success at first, but the positions won were re-taken by the Government troops, who counter-attacked with great strength.

## Help from Germany and Italy

At the moment of the English Cabinet crisis, resulting in the resignation of the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Anthony Eden, much evidence was available to indicate that *neither Hitler nor Mussolini had the slightest intention of withdrawing their forces from Spain*, or abating by one ounce that material help they are rendering the so-called Spanish "Nationalists." Indeed, information from German ports showed that, from the end of 1937 onwards, the amount of munitions of war, aeroplanes and material generally despatched to the rebel zone had more than doubled. As for the Italians, not only did they continue to



send material, but they are again sending men fully trained and equipped for war: 5,000 Italians landed in Cádiz in the first week of March—2,500 from the "Hospital Ship" "*Gradisca*" and 2,500 from Italian destroyers accompanied by the flagship "*Antonio Pigafetta*." Also: new Krupp naval guns and fortifications have been erected at Torremolinos; small-arms and anti-aircraft guns were landed on March 7th at Algeciras from Italy; and, although it is an old story, very well known, the survivors of the "*Baleares*" rescued by the British units, proved to be mainly Germans and Italians (which may account for their having been left in the lurch by the other two cruisers, which are believed to be manned mostly by Spaniards). It will be recalled that Mussolini continued to land troops in Spain after having signed the "Gentleman's Agreement" not to send any more. This is what is called "Non-Intervention" by the Dictators.

In the latest rebel offensives large numbers of Italian prisoners have been taken. Franco's Army is being reorganised, so that attacking units may contain 40 per cent. of Italians and 20 per cent. of Moroccans and 40 per cent. Spaniards—officered chiefly by Italians with German specialists in the background. As is well known, Franco cannot trust his Spanish troops; *the reorganisation is due to Italo-German request*; and Spanish officers must take minor jobs. Mussolini and Hitler hope, by this reorganisation and by virtue of new masses of material, terrorisation from the air and greatly increased sea activity, to reduce the Government to surrender this summer. That is the meaning of the recent rebel moves, *dictated by the Dictators*.

### Catalonia

The London *Times* of March 12th published an article by a "Catalan Correspondent" which contains statements that are not very accurate and often foolish—"At first the Catalans showed no enthusiasm for the civil war," it says, against every type of evidence available—but which also brings out clearly certain aspects of the present situation in Catalonia that are not usually realised in England. "Don Luis Companys," it says, "... has succeeded in domesticating the revolutionaries, and also in putting straight his line of conduct with the Catalan nationalists. Fear of friction with the Spanish Government has disappeared. But now the Catalans ask themselves whether, having disarmed the revolutionary horde, they are to fall victims to General Franco. This reflection brings every Catalan to his feet to espouse a cause that for him is no longer a social issue but a national one. For him the rebels are not fighting so much against Communism as against Catalonia. This incorporates Catalonia definitely on the side of the Republic, but it raises the Catalan problem once more. Catalonia is the authentic 'nation of workers'! ... Nationalist territory has become susceptible to German penetration. ... There can be no peace by separate negotiation." The "revolutionary horde" referred to was, of course, disarmed—to be turned into sections of the new People's Army! Hence, the point of the *Times* writer is a little obscure, except that one may perhaps explain it by the other statement which, in effect, means that Catalonia is united to a man against the utterly repugnant totalitarian alien ideals imposed by foreign Dictators on Franco and the self-styled "Nationalists." *A propos* of this, we reproduce parts of Company's Speech to the *Generalitat* (Catalan Parliament) on March 1st. It breathes the spirit of Catalan feeling, and gives some idea of what Franco's problem would be in Catalonia in the event of a rebel victory. The Catalans detest everything for which Franco stands, and have a long history of liberal and anti-despotic spirit, combined with the courage of their convictions.

### President of Catalonia's Speech

"From our experience in the past, close study of the facts of the day and a perspective of the future, our parliamentary life becomes ever more imbued with the spirit of socialism. Though often wrongly interpreted and disgraced by unworthy practices, socialism is the only formula on which a spiritual conquest can be based. For the combat, its only arm is the energy and intelligence which direct the people into the path of peace, towards the emancipation of humanity, in a constant and ever-ascending progress of civilization. Sr. Terradellas, Minister of Finance, has just given us a report on the work already realised, and sketched for us the general lines on which the future financial life of our country will be organised. You will have noted that Sr. Terradellas at the beginning of his speech, referred to the connection between the problem with which he dealt and the general orientation of the Government in matters of a political order. In reality, in the work of finance, like that in all departments of the Government, has had to adapt itself to the realities of public life, and to exercise functions outside the statutory limits. The final explosion which shook Spain came as the result of a long internal struggle. The privileged class which provoked it had weighed like lead upon the life of the country. At this

moment of crisis the Government of Catalonia, like the Government of Spain, had before all else to aid in the defence of the Republic whose very existence was threatened by the treason of the military rebels who brought an army of invasion to Spanish soil. That we have been able to surmount such difficulties is largely due to the unity of all anti-fascist forces. Under the Republic the life of the State consists in the free functioning of directing democratic organs. From the impulse of the people, the Republic has formed an army with technique and discipline, with a courage and moral that are the admiration of the world. On the rebel side the people are not fighting for their independence. On the contrary, new contingents of foreign regular troops are arriving from day to day. The result: confusion, violence, lack of personal security, constant crimes. This means that whatever aspect the fight may have for any one of us personally, the first condition is that we fight for the *independence of the Spanish Republic*. Catalonia will continue to fulfill her duties and to guard the rights of the Catalan Constitution.

"Present circumstances have necessitated the moving of the Government of the Republic to Catalonia. This facilitates closer contacts and the solving of many problems relating to the respective jurisdictions of the two Governments—with victory the supreme end in view. Apart from the legislation made and executed by the Government of the Republic, there is also legislation made by the Government but executed by the Catalan Government, and there are laws made and executed by the Government of Catalonia. We are proud that all the Ministries of the central organs of the Government are now housed in Barcelona, capital of our autonomous region. Measures and the laws which correspond only to the rest of the Republic, and the legislation which applies to the whole territory—including Catalonia—but which it is the function of the Catalan Government to carry out, may be the cause of slight obstacles in the smooth running of the whole. But these will be surmounted by a loyal interpretation of the constitutional laws, and the respect for democracy which allocates to each individual his duty in his own sphere of action, and lastly by our belief in the ideal, which urges us to bring every force into play for the realisation of that unity which means victory. When we met on August 18th last, I spoke of the enormous moral importance of our war, in its beginning, during its course, and in the profound influence that it must have on the world of the future. That has been amply proved. It cannot be too often repeated. Everyone of us would sacrifice all for the victory which opens the road to the future. In the Army victory depends on unity, discipline, unified command, military efficiency in all the ranks. This has been achieved by the abnegation, firmness and morale of the people, coupled with a technical efficiency and capability of direction which brings me now to pay tribute to Indalecio Prieto, the Minister of National Defence. The war is with us in the rear-guard: in the sorrow of the mothers, the tragedy of the children, the austerity and energy in the life and the work of the citizen. In politics there may be an honest difference of opinion as to the road which leads to victory. But one thing must be realised by all: We must support the Government, whatever Government represents us democratically and constitutionally, with all our strength and without reserve. The collaboration must exist not only in words, but in the actions of each individual according to the range of his physical and mental powers: the workman in the factory, the peasant in his work on the land, the official in his work of co-ordination, the intellectual in the light of his special knowledge. No special preference should be given to one or the other unless it be to those men now on the battle fronts, who are to us an example of sacrifice, optimism and serenity in the face of danger.

"Catalonia has given and will continue to give the utmost to assure victory. Catalonia has suffered from the imperial and despotic rule of our adversaries under the régime of foreign monarchs. But she has never been dominated. On July 19th, 1936, the forces of the *Generalidad*, the Catalan Government, with the support of the whole people, fought and defeated the fascist traitors in Barcelona. It was the Catalan Militia which in that July—almost unarmed and with no real military direction—forced the Fascists back to the middle of Aragon and held the line for so many months. Catalonia has given and will give *all* to the war, knowing that victory means liberty and peace. Hundreds of thousands of Catalan soldiers are fighting on all fronts of the Republic. The little bronze shield bearing the coat-of-arms of Catalonia which they wear upon their breast gives courage to these men as they stand in the trenches beneath the banner of autonomous and democratic Spain. The war material manufactured here is Catalonia's new contribution to the defence of Spain. An illustrious Catalan, a Member of our Parliament, has written the following lines: 'Catalonia can never resign herself under a regime of tyranny and despotism. She *lives* in anguish by their existence. If this statement be true—that the periods of greatest liberty are also those of the highest stand-



ard of civilisation—cannot be applied to all countries it can to many and notably to Catalonia. *Catalonia is neither willing nor able to adapt herself to absolutist, anti-liberal tendencies. She cannot, like some countries, submit to rigid authoritarian formulas, at the same time preserving the permanent values of her national life. Catalonia, when she finds herself submitted to these formulas retires into herself and offers an obstinate resistance.* The springs of spiritual life dry up when our earth is not salted with liberty. That admirable description of the conditions of the Catalans comes from the pen of our friend Rovira Virgil. In to this love of liberty, democracy and the Republic are gathered to-day all the energy of our race.

"The *Generalidad* is the historical name of the Government of the Catalan Democracy. Beneath the tree of democracy the troubled soul of Catalonia will always find shelter and a new stimulus to progress and emancipation. I am the President of the *Generalidad* which, with the Republic, has regained her former liberty and autonomy, and acquired duties and rights to which it has been faithful. Under the sway of foreign ideas Castile lost her liberty under the domination of Austria. Catalonia lost her liberty under the hand of the first Bourbon. The real Spain with her deep love for individual and collective freedom was silenced, and to-day we are faced with an enemy who represents the complete opposite to the true nature of the Spanish people. The greatness of a race cannot be measured by the size of its territory, but by what it leaves as a heritage to humanity. The world is now trembling with the fight between the totalitarian conception and the ideal of liberty. Catalonia as a people is temperamentally sympathetic to all countries in which democracy is stamping out doctrines of oppression and violence. Within our autonomous constitution and with the Republic stands Catalonia, and he who, born in our beloved country, land of peace, well-being of culture and of justice, does not come to her defence is neither Catalan nor worthy to be free."

### The Balearic Islands

One of the most curious statements which we know is that one to the effect that the Balearic Islands of Majorca and Ibiza are not Italian Colonies and constitute no danger to British interests. Everybody knows perfectly well that, with the exception of Minorca, the Balearics have already become Italian property to all intents and purposes; that Majorca is the principle jumping-off ground for aerial attacks against the Mediterranean coast of Spain; and that the Italians have made a great aviation centre and a submarine base there. The control of the Italians is so complete that the island may be said to be entirely in the hands of foreigners. This occupation of the Balearics was planned so far back as 1923, when Primo de Rivera all but pledged them to Mussolini. To those who are interested in the whole story of the betrayal of these islands, we recommend the book *Mussolini a la Conquesta de las Baleares*, by Professor Camilo Berneri (published in the Biblioteca Universal de Estudios Sociales, Union 7, Barcelona, 1937). This is a well-documented and sober book, which marshalls the evidence in a form that is impressive. From it one sees how wonderful an instrument for Mussolini Franco has been; for, with an unpatriotic traitor like Franco, there was no need for the Italian Dictator to launch a straightforward invasion. He merely had to wait for the outbreak of the rebellion planned by the Spanish generals and then "lend help" which, to be sure, meant that he could occupy Majorca with their approval and collaboration. The barbarities practised by those Italians in the first months of the rebellion are unspeakable. Witnesses testify that at least 5,000 people of Majorca were murdered between July and December, 1936; and the liquidations are not yet ended. *The Times* of March 19th, 1937, reported the public execution on February 24th at Palma of Don Emilio Darné, the Mayor of Palma, and of three other men who had hitherto taken a prominent part in the life of the Island. They were taken before the gates of a cemetery where 3,000 people had been assembled to witness the scene. The Mayor was a sick man, so his captors gave him two injections to liven him, and he was shot seated on a rock. *The New York Times* reported the whole incident in circumstantial detail. The Italian chief of the island was Count Rossi. In October, local Spaniards who resented Italian domination plotted its overthrow. Result: 22 Spanish officers above the rank of Captain were shot, including Lt.-Cols. Alvarez Ossorio and Torre, with 18 members of the crew of the *s.s. Ciudadela*. In Ibiza thousands of Government supporters die unofficially, often after liberation and are "shot while attempting to escape." One man who was slightly wounded lay for some hours among the corpses of his companions and managed to get away from it all to tell the horrible tale. It should be noted that newspaper correspondents do not visit the Balearics, where "control" by the Italian garrison is stricter than anywhere in rebel territory.

### Behind Franco's Lines

The Spanish Government has hitherto refrained from publicising atrocities committed under "Franco's Rule," but in view of the persistent campaign of calumny carried on by rebel propagandists—a campaign which every visitor to Government territory knows to be 75 per cent. falsehood—we have now prepared a documented and detailed statement collected from witnesses behind Franco's lines. In due course the whole book, which is now going through the press, will be published. Here are a few extracts:—

**Basque Country.** "There are over a million Basques, a distinct race with their own traditions and customs, who have an age-old sense of democracy, family life, and personal property, deep religious sentiments and who, until 1839, had their own legal, judicial and military administration. . . . The programme of the rebels, . . . is to destroy and eradicate all that is traditional to the Basques, their language, social institutions, culture and religious usage. . . . Father Luis Ramirez has given the following account of how Mass is celebrated in Vitoria on Sundays: "All the women suspected of liberal tendencies are in prison, all except those who have been shot. Their heads have been entirely shaven except for a little pig-tail to which a red-and-yellow ribbon, the Monarchist colours, is tied. On Sundays they are brought from the prison to the church. They are made to march between two files of Phalanxists and *Requetés*, at the time when the streets are at their fullest through all the principal thoroughfares of the town. The women have to keep raising their arms and shouting '*Arriba España*.' The Fascists laugh and the whole town makes a laughing stock of them, following them to the church to hear Mass. On the return journey the spectacle is repeated. The "Conquerors" leave the church, prayer-book in hand, followed by the 'Conquered,' heavily shackled. There are terrified children among them, children of loyalists who have been shot by the Fascists and who now accompany their mothers in this ignoble procession. Children whose souls are being poisoned. Mothers whose hearts are breaking!"

Refugees from Guipúzcoa tell of thousands of murders committed in Irun and San Sebastian, where no distinction was made between Leftists, Basque National Party and priests. There were very many deaths in Zarauz, Deva and Pasajes, and in Hernani alone more than 370 people were shot. The population of Irun used to be 18,000. It has been reduced to 3,500. Sixty per cent. of the inhabitants of San Sebastian left, but not all of those who remained did so of their own free will. Jean Pelletier, taken prisoner by rebels on board the *s.s. Galerna*, told how when he was in the Ondarreta prison at San Sebastian, hundreds of executions were carried out every night. Public report estimates the number of Roman Catholic priests who have been shot at about 30. We cannot, however, support the statement by proofs. Still, on November 18th the bodies of four priests were buried in the cemetery at Vera (Guipúzcoa) where more than 150 Guipuzcoans were shot. It is no easy task to trace these deaths, and to find out dates and places, for the executions have been surrounded with mystery. We can, however, give the following names with certainty and have details of the actual executions:—

**DON ALEJANDRO MENDICUTE.** About 45 years of age: chaplain of Hernani (Guipúzcoa). A great Basque orator and sociologist; arrested in his village, and thrown into the prison there, where he remained 10 days. Shot during the night of October 23rd, on the cemetery stones of his village—according to public reports, in the presence of the vicar, his brother, who would not leave him in his hour of tragedy.

**DON MARTIN LECUONA and DON GERVASIO DE ARBIZU.** Both of the Parish of Rentería (Guipúzcoa).

**DON JOAQUÍN ARÍN, DON JOSÉ MARQUEGUI and DON LEONARDO DE GURIDI.** The first a vicar—archpriest of the important Parish of Mondragón (Guipúzcoa), and the two others, curates of the same parish.

**DON JOSÉ SAGARNA.** Twenty-four years of age, curate of the little parish of Berriatua (Biscay).

**FATHER OTANO.** Of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in Tolosa (Guipúzcoa).

**DON JOAQUÍN ITURRI-CASTILLO.** Vicar of Marín (Guipúzcoa), aged about 30 years.

**DON JOSÉ PENAGARICANO and DON CELESTINO DE ONAINDÍA.** The first was curate of Marquina-Echeverría and the second curate of Elgoibar.

**DON JOSÉ DE ARIZTIMUNO (AITZOL).** He was given the *coup de grâce* by a young "Señorito" (dandy) belonging to one of the best families in Bilbao. The priest was famous in the world of Basque letters.

**DON JOSÉ DE ADARRAGA.** A priest of great age. He was shot at the same time as Father Ariztimuno.

(To be continued.)