

THE WAR IN SPAIN

A WEEKLY SUMMARY

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SPAIN—AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

IT should hardly be necessary to emphasise that control of the Mediterranean is of great importance to Great Britain. Mr. Anthony Eden has stated: "*For us, the Mediterranean is not a short-cut, but a main arterial road.*" Hence, from the point of view of naval policy, we must at all times be able to use this essential route. Our foreign policy should be calculated to produce the same result. We should be friendly with those countries likely to help us against enemies who might threaten our shipping in the Mediterranean; and we should fortify ourselves in every possible way so as to render harmless the attacks of possible enemies. One has only to look at the map to realise how vitally important Spain is to Great Britain in regard to our control of the Mediterranean—a control which we have maintained hitherto, and in a manner satisfactory to friends and neutrals in time of war. This route is now more important to us than ever, because about a quarter of our petroleum comes on the Iraq pipe-line to Haifa, a Mediterranean port. A supply of petroleum is vital for modern war. In all, about sixty million tons of British shipping pass through the Straits of Gibraltar every year, and the Mediterranean route halves the distance from England to India—where nearly one half of our military effectives are normally stationed. Without the raw materials which reach us via this great route, about 40 per cent. of the working population would be unemployed; and the average man's income would decrease by about 30 per cent. Loss of control of the Mediterranean would be an economic and military disaster. For France the Mediterranean is also vitally important, because of her North African possessions with their immense reserves of man-power and their rich sources of raw materials, foodstuffs and supplies generally.

During the European War of 1914-18 Italy chose the side of the Allies against her former friends the Central Powers, which meant that, notwithstanding the submarine menace, our control was never very severely threatened. Since then Fascism has arisen to power in Italy, and with it the whole Italian outlook in regard to the Mediterranean has changed. Whether for bargaining purposes (by making himself a nuisance to Great Britain and France) or whether to obtain actual military dominance in that area, is immaterial—Mussolini has worked incessantly to gain control of what he claims is an Italian Sea! He has repeatedly declared in effect: "*The Mediterranean is Our Sea—Mare Nostrum.*" We will not tolerate a day longer than we can help, this Franco-British power all around us. We must dominate the Mediterranean. To do so, we must have a great Navy, a great Air Force. The Mediterranean must be *ours!*" He has built a great Navy and Air Force; and is increasing them every month. Yet, Italy's position must always be weak so long as England has effective control of Gibraltar and Port Said, the gates of this route. Her important coast towns are exposed to sea attack; and her inland to aerial. Three-quarters of her imports and two-thirds of all her sea-borne traffic must pass through the gates at each end of the Mediterranean. Lack of raw materials—essentials such as coal, iron, oil, wool, cotton, etc.—is a source of continual worry to Signor Mussolini and his lieutenants. Furthermore, England dominates Italy's route to Abyssinia, the country from which the Italian Fascists hope to obtain much natural wealth. In short, as things stand now, England and France can virtually cut Italy's throat at any moment they chose to do so. That is Mussolini's nightmare. He has sublimated it in the slogan *EXPANSION OR EXPLOSION*. That is why he was delighted to take advantage of the Spanish Generals'

Conspiracy—not in *their* interests, let it be noted, about which Mussolini cares not one hoot—but in the interests of Italian dominance of the Mediterranean: chiefly against Great Britain. One might think that a far-seeing statesman—a Canning or a Palmerston—in Mussolini's position would make the best of a weak strategic position by a close friendship with England and France. That the Italian Dictator cannot do, because the aggressive Fascist creed is diametrically opposed to all that England and France stand for. Such a friendship would crystallise and perpetuate Italian "weakness" in the Mediterranean, which the *Duce* dare not accept in view of the bombastic, melodramatic claims he has made. He dares not hesitate or stop, let alone climb down a little—for he is like a man riding a bicycle who is able to keep his balance so long as he does not slow down too much. Hence, the Mediterranean must be exploited to the full.

The story of Mussolini's Mediterranean campaign is well known, and his anti-British activities recorded: his declaration that Malta is Italian "irredentist" territory; his appeals on the radio to our native populations with the object of stirring up dissaffection—the Cabinet has recently had to counter them by ordering the British Broadcasting Corporation to begin the transmission of programmes in Arabic. The fortification of the Island of La Pantelleria, situated about half-way between Sicily and the African coast—most dangerous for our shipping—was one of Mussolini's strongest tricks. Then came the cynically-planned Abyssinian campaign. Italian strength in the Mediterranean grew, but one factor was missing to complete it: control of the Spanish coast. Germany and Italy agreed that control of Spain was necessary for them—for Germany to obtain ores and submarine bases for use against British shipping in the Atlantic, and to Italy for the reasons already given. Spain, the Balearics and the Canaries, the Columbretes and a few other less known Spanish possessions with Morocco—these are the keys of the situation. If Germany and Italy have a subservient Spain, then Gibraltar's strategic value is nullified. At Algeciras and on the Moroccan coast great fortifications with heavy artillery are already in place, and although they could never smash the Rock of Gibraltar, they could in half a day render the harbour useless for naval purposes.

This, then, is the appalling situation which Members of the British Parliament have to face. It has been permitted to arise because of a complete miscalculation in the summer of 1936, when the pro-German and pro-Fascist Spaniards started their rebellion against the elected democratic Government of their country. The English Government's miscalculation was that the rebel generals would win outright in a matter of weeks. Those who knew their Spain and the capacity of her people were aware then that Franco could not win—even with Mussolini and Hitler to help him. It were better that England recognised her mistake and turned towards the people of Spain and away from the small anti-British section represented by the rebel leader Franco. The Spanish *people* will not betray us into the hands of Dictators.

Those who are friends of England (apart altogether from the friends of Spain) should miss no opportunity of publicising as forcibly as possible these simple facts: that it is in *England's* interest to have a friendly Spain and not a Spain dominated by a small, cynical *Junta* under a Dictators' puppet such as Franco. The friendly Spain is Government Spain, and the hostile is the idealised Spain of the Fascists—"Nationalist Spain."

Who are the anti-British Spaniards?

It is most instructive to turn back and examine the files of English newspapers in 1914 with a view to estimating the feelings in Spain when Europe was plunged into war. Here is what *The Times* (September 24th, 1914) said: "The Carlist and Catholic press naturally inclines to the German interest as representing the principle of autocracy in a death struggle with Liberalism. . . . While the Conservative A.B.C. has been frankly Germanophile since the beginning of the war, the Liberal and Republican press is, generally speaking, on the side of the Allies." On October 10th, 1914, *The Times* continued: "These ideas . . . become strong and articulate in the classes composing what is called Society, and the higher and more ancient the Society, the more definite they become. . . . Against this dull background of prejudice and sentiment there may be discerned a more vital current of opinion. That whole band of liberal spirits . . . who may be described as European in outlook, and who draw their inspiration from Paris and London rather than from Rome, are beginning to perceive that this is a war between freedom and tyranny and their sympathies are developing accordingly." And on September 8th, 1915: "Those reactionaries in Spain who are opposed to the ideas for which France stands, make common cause with our enemies."

The italics are ours, because we wish to emphasise that the position is the same to-day: Liberal and Democratic Spain is pro-French and pro-British, while the Spanish Monarchists, Clericals and reactionaries generally are openly hostile to us. Mr. John Walter, in a signed article from Madrid, and published in *The Times* of October 5th, 1916, analysed Spanish feelings to precisely the same effect, and mentions by name some of the prominent leaders of thought and public opinion who were on our side: including Señor Azcárate, a veteran member of the Cortes (uncle of Don Pablo de Azcárate, the present Ambassador of Spain at the Court of St. James) and the writer Luis Araquistain, who was Ambassador in Paris. One more quotation from *The Times* of October 3rd, 1917: "As the German cause gradually wanes . . . the Germans are trying desperately to poison the business relations between the great Spanish exporting houses and their English customers. . . . (Little newspapers are in German hands entirely) while others are directed by priests under high ecclesiastical patronage. All alike traduce England and the English with a unanimity and a persistent animosity which betray a remarkable unity of purpose and control."

We may be quite sure of two things: (1) A victory for Franco is a victory for the permanent and unabashed enemies of England, and (2) a victory for the Government is a victory for the majority of the people and those sections of public opinion that have been and are friendly towards England and all democratic countries.

England's Opportunity

Mr. J. R. J. Macnamara, M.P., in *The United Services Review* of January 13th, 1938, writes as follows:—"It is no good pretending that British people generally, including those in the Dominions, especially Australia and New Zealand, are not worried at the continuance of the Spanish hostilities. This is even more of a source of anxiety to France. It is true that as every day goes by Britain becomes stronger. Anything that can be done to gain time is being done. However, one must also remember that Germany is also approaching nearer to the time when she will be at the peak of her strength, to the time when she could, if she so desired, risk a major war against almost anyone, especially if she has a few allies. A running sore in Spain would be a great asset to anyone looking for trouble. In my view Germany could have won the war in Spain for Franco long ago had she so desired. But does she so desire? Has she not, in fact, often laid a restraining hand on Italy in Spain, telling her she must not go so far, as she will only upset England further? I am convinced that Germany does not want Franco to lose. Is there also not the possibility that she has no intention of letting him win, either, if she can help it, anyway not yet? A peaceful Spain under Spaniards is undoubtedly what Britain desires to see. Then would it be possible to negotiate with Spaniards over such matters as the guns near Gibraltar. Under war conditions it is more difficult, for why should not a nation at war have guns where it pleases? Gibraltar is very vulnerable to attack from the land. In her exposed harbour no ships could anchor if guns from the Spanish mainland were hostile to them. Guns on either side of the Straits, together with mines in them, supported by fast coastal craft, could make the Straits themselves impassable, too, or virtually so. The Abyssinian war, and later the piracy, provoked the majority of the British and French fleets into the Mediterranean. What a gift to someone in the future who could once again provoke these fleets into the Mediterranean and, having got them there, bottle them up there and fight the war elsewhere!"

Behind Franco's Lines

Representatives of foreign newspapers who go to Franco's territory are few in number and well chosen. Any suspicion of impartiality on the part of a writer means that he is not permitted to cross the rebel frontier. The only newspaper correspondents who move about with any sort of freedom behind Franco's lines are the Portuguese, Germans and Italians—because, if the messages they send are not suitable for totalitarian consumption, they can be adjusted by the well-controlled editors and press bureaux in their own countries. English and American correspondents are either escorted about by rebel Press Officers or kept under strict observation. The rebel censorship is efficient.

The press organisation on Franco's side works to foster and propagate abroad the idea that in the insurgent zone life is well-ordered and, above all, that the mass of the population is sympathetic to the rebel cause. A powerful indication of the underlying feeling of the civil population was given to the world when the first loyalist troops entered Teruel on December 21st, 1937. *They cheered the Government troops.* Even Franco's soldiers, including many Falangists, when taken prisoner, *showed their relief by singing republican songs.* When this became known at Salamanca, it had a demoralizing effect on Franco's staff—especially the Spanish element of it. To his unpopular Germans and Italians, it was a sinister joke.

On January 1st, 1938, there were no less than four considerable guerilla wars proceeding behind the rebel lines: in Asturias, Galicia, Extremadura and Andalucía. The activities of these *guerrilleros* are often so embarrassing that Franco has to take extreme steps to prevent leakage of news. This explains the frequent frontier closures. In Galicia, for example, anti-rebel guerilla fighters have been operating around the province of Pontevedra since the beginning of the war. There are many such bands in other parts of the rebel zone. The men in Galicia have been busy around Vigo; and even in the town itself. Their leader is the well-known Antonio Gonzalez Fresco. Fresco fled with about ten men to the hills from Puenteareas at the beginning of the military rebellion. He was later joined by others. This unit continued to work havoc in the whole province of Pontevedra, especially in Vigo itself, raiding Civil Guard posts in small villages and walking off with uniforms to facilitate further raids. In Vigo the *guerrilleros* have raided often and successfully the southern suburb of Teis. They enter important towns and walk about unrecognised. One afternoon they stole supplies from the Hotel Moderno, one of the biggest in Vigo. Fresco, who led them, left his signature on a marble table in the bar, to show that he had been there. Two waiters were jailed for suspected complicity.

All such activities are small compared with the trouble caused to Franco's troops and troop-trains by *guerrilleros* on the Asturias front. In July, 1937, all trains to Pontevedra had to be stopped, because the activities of *guerrilleros* on the railway line were becoming so dangerous. This guerilla resistance to the insurgents continues vigorously in the mountainous Asturias, although full news of the warfare is difficult to obtain. The following is a translation of a report of a man-hunt which was published in the Bilbao Fascist newspaper *Hierro* of January 4th, 1938:—

"There was a happy ending to a hunt that took place in the hills near La Mosquera de Ciano, where a hiding place had been discovered of several 'reds' who maraud in the neighbourhood of Langreo.

"Forces of the local Falange, Assault Guards and Military, carefully placed, surrounded the village of La Mosquera. During this operation they were fired upon from a barn by machine-guns and hand-grenades. They replied to the fire and, by considerable shooting and the use of grenades, were able to silence the enemy. Making a reconnoitre of the barn, they found the bodies of a 'red' leader who had been isolated, and another 'red' who had been employed by him as chauffeur.

"They found a sub-machine gun, a machine pistol and an Astra pistol. In the interior of the barn they also found and destroyed several hand-grenades which had been left by the 'reds.' The only casualty among the Nationalist forces was the Chief of the Squadron of Militia of the Second Line, who was wounded slightly and assisted home.

"In the afternoon a Lt.-Colonel Delegate of Public Order for the Province visited the wounded man and congratulated the Falangists, soldiers and Assault Guards who had taken active part in this important service."

In Andalucía and around Córdoba the anti-Franco *guerrilleros* number many thousands. All information of their exploits is ruthlessly suppressed, but we shall provide some in these columns from time to time. There is no guerilla warfare behind the Government lines, where foreign journalists are welcome and move about with the utmost freedom.

Eye Witness Tells—

Correspondents have often heard with incredulity the point of view of Franco's officers and of the leaders of his mixed bands of supporters. Two months ago an officer of Franco's staff in a responsible position, explained the policy of extermination to the correspondent of *The Chicago Daily News* as follows: "We have to kill a third of the population of Spain. Sanitation, sewage and other results of pseudo-scientific progress were put into this country unhappily at a time when the upper classes were not strong enough to enforce the true destiny of Spain."

"In former times," Franco's staff officer explained, "before sewage, rats like Caballero would have died, would have been killed by plagues and epidemics. We must kill them, all of them—every rat in Spain who voted for the Republic."

"A titled gentleman who helps Franco on financial and economic policies carried the argument further. He said to the same correspondent: 'Spain will never have an unemployment programme again when once we have killed a third of the population.'

"After the capture of Toledo, where the loyalist wounded were burned alive in the hospital and thousands of non-combatants and prisoners were "executed," another of Franco's leaders boasted of the number he had killed himself. Patting his pistol, he said to this correspondent: "I killed 122 with this automatic." *The Chicago Daily News* continues: "Many a correspondent has spent weeks with the Franco army and come out without having seen atrocities. Correspondents are herded together by press officers and taken into villages hours after the 'mop up' work is done. No correspondent, however, who was enterprising enough to make contacts with colonels in the field, so that he entered villages with troops under fire, has escaped the machine-gunning of prisoners. Members of the Guardia Civil are segregated as a corps which served the Republic merely because it took over from the king. They are 'redeemable.' The others are lined up. When a village is taken there is a sudden and awful quiet as the firing dies away. Then throughout the whole of the half-destroyed village the machine-guns start—mowing down the prisoners. They are described to the party of journalists, who arrive hours later, as 'killed in the battle.' One can hardly blame a correspondent for disliking the arrest and brow-beating and danger of death which almost invariably follow for any journalists who are found without press officer escort. Journalists who avoid the front often miss killings behind the lines, too. This is difficult, however, if they bother ever to examine the civilian corpses which line the highways all over Franco's Spain in the early hours of every morning. Later in the day they are tossed out of the ditches and into the fields. This correspondent remembers too well the corpses of five peasant women in the Talavera-Madrid highway early one morning. The eyes of one of them were open in terror, and another had a rifle bullet through a hand with which she had tried to cover her face. Looking at these still warm corpses one could remember scores like them behind the Franco lines—men and women hurried out and killed in the night. And scores of 'reds dead in action' along the highway—only their hands were tied behind their backs! Using Talavera de la Reina as a behind-the-front base off and on for four months, this correspondent had a sleeping place near the prison. Every morning that part of town would be awakened by the volley of the executioners, killing fresh 'reds' in the prison courtyard. The incredible thing is that over the four months the killings never slackened. The enemies of Spain behind the lines were being harried out and still found for months after the Talavera area was occupied."

Italian Protest

"Why was there no publicity for another incident at Santander, revealed by indignant Italian allies of Franco? Italian sources revealed that they had arranged terms for the surrender. The Italians had promised a large group of loyalists safe conduct. The loyalists were already on two British ships, the newspapers reported, when Franco sent orders that they were to be held. The Italians protested bitterly, but yielded. This gives some indication of the conditions which obtain on the Franco side. Without understanding them it is easy to assume that an armistice can be arranged for the withdrawal of foreign troops, during which the saner element of Spaniards on both sides will assert themselves and thus spare their country further bloodshed. Can the loyalists make a piece with a foe bent on their extermination? Can Franco stand without a foreign army of occupation? At the moment no one of these questions can be answered in the affirmative."—*Chicago Daily News*.

Manifesto against Franco

Disaffection increases hourly in the rebel camp. Perhaps the most serious cause of disagreement is that which has turned the Original Falangists against Franco and the groups which surround him. These Falangists—"Old Blue Shirts" as they

are called—feel that Franco has betrayed them. Their hatred is intensified because of the executions of numbers of those who originally founded the movement of the Spanish Falange. In addition to those who have suffered the supreme penalty, some are in prison, some have fled to France and many have died as victims of the "Law of Flight," which permits prisoners who attempt to escape to be shot. Martinez Anido is identified with this campaign against the Falange created by José Antonio Primo de Rivera—the real Falange which is *opposed to the invasion by Germans and Italians*. Unchallengeable proof of this state of things is to be found in a Manifesto which is being distributed in the whole of the rebel zone. It is addressed to true Falangists and to all Spaniards worthy of the name, and runs as follows:—

"Spain arise! For your country, for bread and for justice! Falangists, old and new Blue Shirts, members of the true Falange, interpreters of the thoughts of 'the Absent One!' (José Antonio Primo de Rivera). All you Spaniards who are victims of the wretches who have betrayed and conquered the legitimate Falange and Spain itself! The Absent One, the only true leader of the Spanish Falange addresses you in person through his last Testament. He speaks to you tenderly of the Falange miserably betrayed and destroyed by the followers of Franco and reactionaries. Circumstances force you to act. At this difficult time, decisive for the future of our country, the Absent One calls you to fight with death, without quarter or respite, against the wretches who have sold their country. He summonses you to fight so that, united in a holy fraternity with all anti-Francoists, you may save the national existence and independence. We must act at once. United by the expressed will of the Absent One and inspired with the true spirit of the Falange, we must be ready to attack the wretched traitors who have sold us, and to impose order on the country by providing bread—and justice. We must finish once and for all with those who for selfish interest and personal privilege shed Spanish Blood and destroy our country."

"We must finish once and for all with foreign exploiters."

"SPAIN FOR THE SPANIARDS!"

"Let us prevent, by your vigorous and valiant action, this executioner Martinez Anido from continuing to apply the 'Law of Flight' to our heroic comrades of the true Spanish Falange. Let us prevent the continuation of mass-executions of innocents who refuse to submit themselves to the feudal doctrines of a handful of wretches who have the name of Spain constantly on their lips but never in their hearts. Thousands of our comrades languish in Francoist prisons and many have been murdered by the minions of Franco and Martinez Anido. As for the Falange leaders—those dogs who have shamefully submitted to Franco, who have dared to silence the voice of the true Spanish Falange and of true Spaniards—they deserve to suffer the fate of traitors. Let their blood flow to save not only our country but, with it, the Falange and the Spanish people. Let us act immediately, fellow-Falangists, to liberate those who suffer an unjust captivity. Better a death worthy of a Falangist and a Spaniard than the slavery to which reactionaries would condemn us in an unholy alliance with the foreigner. Spaniards! Unite as brothers with the true Falange and we will finish with traitors and stop this fratricidal war!"

More about Teruel

The *Berliner Tageblatt* of January 18th, published a long and careful survey of the operations around Teruel by Colonel von Xylander, Professor at the War Academy, Berlin, in which is the following conclusion:—"With the fall of the town, the goal of the 'Nationalist' counter-offensive, ceased to exist. A new advance towards low-lying Teruel, would not give strategical advantages and would also not be of importance for future operations, since the annihilation of the adversary at that place would seem to be impossible because of the configuration of the front. The Republicans have not merely won a success by taking Teruel and inflicting losses on the 'Nationalists.' They have above all else shown that their recently trained troops are stronger than one had generally supposed them to be; and that their Commander, for the first time in this war, had imposed his will on the enemy and shown himself clever. The plans of Franco to undertake a great offensive elsewhere cannot materialise for a long time. One may speculate that the fault is partly Franco's, who has tried to save Teruel, instead of making sure—now more than ever before—of a decision in a place chosen by him."

Decomposition and Demoralisation

Franco has been compelled, by force of circumstances at Teruel, to break up a great concentration in Guadalajara where, for purposes of revenge and prestige, he had planned an onslaught on Madrid. All his best shock-troops—the Navarrese, Moors, Legionaries and later the Italians—were thrown into the fight at Teruel. The Carlists, his crack troops, became so demoralised that on January 7th two whole companies of them went over in

a body to the Government, after a struggle of great intensity near "The Tooth." General Queipo de Llano has surpassed himself recently in the insults which he has been bellowing on the radio, not only against the Republicans, which one expects, but against the rebel Commander of Teruel, Rey Dancourt, a soldier who did his best in difficult circumstances. According to Queipo, Dancourt surrendered traitorously, not because he was defeated, but because of the French blood which he had inherited from his mother. The demoralisation and decomposition caused by Teruel is spreading up and down the rebel lines: 200 of their soldiers were recently shot at Huesca because they were implicated in a plot to desert to the loyalist side. A Colonel who occupied a high post deserted to Gibraltar and immediately went to the Spanish Consul to offer his services to the Republic. The frontier problem was mentioned in our first issue—news received during the week shows that all Franco's precautions cannot stop the flow of deserters into France. Unemployment increases, wages are low and prices rising to a point at which only the well-to-do and foreigners (who benefit by the exchange) can purchase prime necessities. The feeling of depression all over rebel territory is causing a panic amongst the rulers. General Franco is a sad, bewildered man, with enemies increasing all around him. He has been compelled to fall back on the only weapon left—terrorisation—both to preserve order behind his own lines and to attempt to reduce the civil population in Government territory to a state of distress. He condemned 1,000 Basque soldiers to death, shot 320 in December and 31 on January 10th—these at Bilbao and Santona alone. His attempts during the last month to terrorise civilians in loyalist territory are dealt with below.

Terror from the Air

The recent military policy of the rebels, baulked on every front and beaten at Teruel, is to attempt to terrorise the civil population in loyalist territory. According to an aviation officer of the Italian Army, interviewed in Paris: "It is inhuman, but war is not efficacious unless such methods are employed. We criticised the Germans for their atrocities in Belgium, but we were unreasonable. To-day we recognise that it is necessary to follow their example." The interviewer expressed doubt as to the efficacy of such bombings in Spain, to which the intrepid aviator replied: "No. They are efficacious. The news of the destruction of his family destroys the soldier's nerves, relaxes his discipline and reduces his combative spirit." There seems to be one weakness in this argument, so far as Spain is concerned. It is that when Franco's German or Italian aviators bomb loyalist towns and cities, they must kill friends and relatives of people residing in rebel territory, or perhaps even fighting for Franco. So that Franco is providing another example of his stupidity (not to mention brutality). Furthermore, such bombings force the Government to take reprisals. During December and January rebel bombings of undefended towns, civilians, and even hospitals reached great intensity—culminating in a terrible raid on Barcelona on January 19th, when six of Mussolini's latest model Savoia bombers flew from the Italian Air Base in Majorca, dropped a dozen half-ton high explosive bombs on non-military objectives, killed hundreds of men, women and children, did an immense amount of damage and, in less than 90 seconds, had made off. Six hundred ambulances were rushed to the scenes of destruction—residential districts—but, as they were unable to cope with the slaughter, vans and lorries were used to pick up the dead and the pieces. Some civilians were caught in the explosions and tossed half a block high. Four blocks of flats crashed into ruins or were burned, and the concrete roadways were split open for 50 yards. Incendiary bombs were also used. From one warehouse alone over 200 victims were collected. There remained only the tragic task of identifying large numbers of the killed, sometimes the only means being scraps of clothing. This was the worst raid Barcelona had experienced. At the little seaside resort of Benicassim, chosen by the Government for hospitals because of its good air and delightful atmosphere, and with nothing military in it except wounded or convalescent soldiers and Red Cross, another raid brought destruction. In Valencia a house full of nuns was bombed. In fact, the story could be extended to a whole list of towns in Government territory. The effects? A wave of horror and indignation with determination instead of demoralisation. If the Civil War in Spain has taught the world one thing, it is that such air raids (even those on the scale of Guernica and Durango) cannot demoralise a population of Spaniards united against a cowardly enemy. Madrid has suffered them for 18 months, and is Madrid demoralised? It is doubtful if any city in history has given such an example of fortitude and morale—as good to-day as a year ago. That is what the rebels are up against and that is what is making them desperate.

THE INCREDULITY OF THE CREDULOUS



"Tell me, is it true about Teruel?"

"No doubt. The Bishop of Teruel has confirmed it!"

Attacks on Ships

The British ship *Thorpness* was deliberately bombed in Tarragona Harbour on January 21st while unloading coal: four men were killed outright, three blown into the sea and seven wounded. Another British ship, the *Clonara*, was attacked by an unknown submarine. The American oil-tanker *Nantucket Chief* was seized by the rebels on January 19th. Where stands International Law to-day?

Nervousness on the Huesca Front

As these lines go to press, only a narrow strip of land (about 1½ miles wide) connects the important town of Huesca with the rest of insurgent territory. This bottle-neck is raked by Republican rifle and machine-gun fire for two miles on either side. The city is hemmed in by Republican trenches, the advance posts of which are only a mile away to the north, 150 feet from the Asylum to the east, and on the south side are in the cemetery itself. The Lérida and Saragossa roads are cut. The Jaca road is so fiercely swept by Republican fire from positions established in the terrain west of Banastas that all traffic has been stopped. The rebels have had to build a new and precarious line of communications in a trench passing further to the west. On the other side of it, Republican infantry is established north of the villages of Banaries and Huerrio, 1,500 feet from the Alerre station. Their fire crosses that of the forces south of Banastas. Rebel troops in this sector show signs of great demoralisation since the fall of Teruel and are constantly deserting in groups. Foreign aircraft in the service of the rebels appear to be nervous and constantly on the look-out for concentrations which might indicate a large-scale Republican action in this sector.

Catalonia

Throughout the whole Province of Calalonia law and order is perfectly observed, and crime lower than at any period during the last 30 years. To quote the words of President Companys spoken on January 19th: "In these intense times in which we live, Catalonia must continue to give proofs of solidarity, abnegation and energy to reach the only goal which matters: victory. To that end our Government will collaborate with the Republican Government with all its might, and will contribute all its energy." A great war industry has evolved from the improvisation of the early days of the war, and is now working with efficiency in providing the new armies with munitions and material. It is estimated that in April, 1938, this industry will be able to produce all the aeroplanes required. Franco has to obtain all his munitions and aeroplanes from his German and Italian allies.