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SPAIN IN CHAINS

BY

GIL ROBLES

Leader of Acción Popular

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THE SPANISH REPUBLIC: 1931 TILL 1936 ELECTIONS

UPON the establishment of the Republic in Spain on April 14, 1931, the Rightist forces were left completely disorganized. The ancient Monarchical parties disappeared, and only in a few provinces were the Traditionalists able to maintain any vestige of organization.

To meet the danger arising out of this situation, a nucleus of Catholics trained in the principles of traditional public law and inspired by the teachings of the Church, founded a political party, which was originally called National Action, although later, owing to Mr. Azaña's interdict, its name had to be changed to Popular Action.

The new party, which at first was mainly a conglomeration of what remained of the Rightist forces, secured but few seats in the Constituent Cortes, elected June 28, 1931. When, in October of that year, I was put at the head of Popular Action, convinced as I was that it was essential to act with greater vigor in Spanish politics, I directed all my efforts toward making it a homogeneous party, clearly on the Rightist side, and directed toward securing command of the Government through lawful means. The lines along which our action was determined might be summarized thus:

1. Popular Action loyally respected the constituted government, putting itself at its service in order the better to serve Spain.
2. Popular Action aimed at gaining control of power through lawful methods, repudiating all violent procedure.



3. Popular Action carried out the principles of democracy with integrity, abiding by the results of popular vote, whether favorable or adverse.

4. Popular Action wished to sway public opinion through an intensive and law-abiding campaign of education.

In accordance with these ideals, Popular Action began to act with extraordinary intensity and with magnificent practical results.

But the task was not easy. The Government, presided over by Mr. Azaña, launched a furious persecution against the Right Wing, not only by means of sectarian legislation, but also by arbitrary governmental action.

In the legislative field, the Cortes promulgated a Constitution not only laic, but anti-religious, which suppressed religious Orders and Congregations, confiscated Church property, deprived parents of the right to choose schools for their children, destroyed family ties and socialized private property. In the executive field, the Leftist Government impeded the spread of publicity, closed political centers, goaded the masses into committing the greatest excesses and imprisoned writers and speakers. During this period, the Government suspended 150 Rightist newspapers (the great Catholic printing press, *El Debate*, was alone suspended for six months), closed 320 provincial and local centers of Popular Action, levied over 3,000 fines, imprisoned or deported 470 leaders and publicists, forbade the holding of 280 propagandist meetings, and allowed the mobs to damage 80 houses belonging to members of the party. All the measures adopted against Popular Action were governmental. In no case was there a judicial mandate as ordered by law.

Mr. Azaña hoped to exasperate the Rightists by this policy and to dislodge them from the legal ground on which they stood. One Rightist sector

allowed itself to be carried away by violence and to be involved in the rising of August 10, 1932. This was not supported by the majority of the army, nor by public opinion, and it failed completely.

Popular Action clearly reaffirmed its determination to act in accordance with the law and to secure power through the vote. Its efforts were not vain. In the partial municipal elections of April, 1933, and in those of the electors to the Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees, Popular Action won a great victory. The elections showed up in bold relief the fact that the Left had lost tremendous strength, and the President of the Republic dissolved the Constituent Cortes.

Hereupon, the President, Alcalá Zamora, for the first time acted arbitrarily. Since the elections had shown that the country was inclined toward the Right, the logical thing was to form that kind of government. None the less, the President formed a Leftist Government—somewhat more moderate, however, than that of Azaña—presided over by Martínez Barrio, Grand Master of Spanish Freemasonry.

The Right Wing exercised the vote with absolute integrity. The Leftists, protected by the Government, were guilty of a number of violations, in spite of which they were defeated in the elections.

The new Chamber, elected in November, 1933, signified the triumph of Center-Right politics. It was composed approximately as follows: Popular Action, 120 delegates; Radicals 90; Agrarians 32; Catalonian Regionalists 26; Right Independents 14; Reformers 10; Basque Separatists 10; Monarchists 52; Independents 18; Leftists (Socialists, Left Catalonians, and Left Republicans) 102.

By a decided margin, the most numerous minority in the Chamber was that of Popular Action. Nevertheless, the President of the Republic, instead

of putting it in power, formed in place of it a Government consisting of Radicals, Farmers and Independents. This Government was not in the majority in the Chamber, and was only able to stay in power thanks to the support of the delegates of Popular Action, who, firm in their policy of abiding by the law, put the interests of the country over those of their own party.

The Leftists, meanwhile, enraged by the electoral defeat, openly gave themselves over to violence. The newspaper, *El Socialista*, daily incited its readers to launch a social revolution. In Parliament, the Socialist leader, Indalecio Prieto (in a discussion with me, in fact) announced that the Leftists would resort to violence in order to hinder the triumph of Rightist principles. The Leftist youth, armed and uniformed, were drilled in the mountains. Arms were deposited in the house of the Socialist delegate Lozano. Mr. Azaña and Mr. Cásares Quiroga gave bombs and rifles to the Portuguese revolutionaries, in order to provoke an uprising throughout the Peninsula. The province of Catalonia disobeyed the Government, and refused to carry out the decrees of the Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees. The month of October, 1934, opened in this atmosphere of insubordination. The Republic once more gave over the power to the Radicals, with the cooperation of Agrarians, Reformers and Popular Action.

The Leftists announced that, if even one Minister were named from the Popular Action party, they would stir up a revolution. So it happened. Mainly in Catalonia and in Asturias the Leftists unleashed a revolutionary rising which was responsible for more than 5,000 victims. The turbulent radicals set fire to or blew up entire sections in Oviedo, and destroyed such important buildings as the Cathedral and the University.

The movement was crushed by the army, but, when an attempt was made to impose sanctions upon the leaders, it was prevented by the President of the Republic, who, being secretly in accord with the Left, pardoned the principal leaders, among them Commander Perez Farras, who had fired at his comrades-in-arms. This encouraged the revolutionaries, and they secretly began again to lay their destructive plans.

The seditious rising of October, 1934, had proved that the army was practically destroyed by Mr. Azaña's policies during the period from 1931 to 1933. Many excellent officers had been discharged. Leftist soldiers occupied the most important posts. There were Communist cells in the barracks. There were neither arms nor uniforms to be seen in the parks and arsenals. To determine a way of ending a situation so menacing to Spain, I overcame the resistance of the President of the Republic when the crisis came in May, 1935, and I was named Minister of War.

Seconded by the illustrious General Franco, whom I named *Jefe del Estado Mayor Central*, and by the heroic and unfortunate General Fanjul, who was named Sub-secretary, and General Goded, who occupied the post of Director of Aeronautics and General Army Inspection, I undertook an active re-organization of the armed forces.

In seven months of intense work, administrative posts were purged, Communistic propaganda in the barracks was stopped, existing regiments were re-organized and new ones created, materials contracted for and great supplies of munitions manufactured. All these measures were taken by strictly just and legal acts, so much so that not once was there a voice raised in Parliament questioning an irregularity or abuse.

The other Ministers of Popular Action were

meanwhile developing an intensive social program. To begin with, the Minister of Labor, Mr. Salmón (who has just been shot by the Communists in Madrid), caused a hundred million pesetas to be voted for settling the workmen's strike, while the Minister of Public Works, Mr. Lucia (who was also assassinated in Valencia), prepared a works program costing three billions, to absorb the striking workmen. Thanks to the initiative of Popular Action, lands were given to the small laborers of Extremadura and a hundred million pesetas were voted, to be applied to agrarian reform.

The Leftists grew alarmed at the policy of Popular Action. They felt that, if it remained in power a few months more, the revolution would be impossible, because a strong army would prevent it and the lower classes would side with the party which concerned itself in so marked a manner with their welfare.

Popular Action would have to be expelled from power. How? By influencing the President of the Republic and breaking up the Government coalition. To secure this latter end, they denounced various administrative irregularities committed by the Radicals. The matter was taken to Parliament, it being shown that neither Popular Action nor the Government as such could be held responsible, but only certain members of the Radical party who held high administrative posts. The Radical Ministers, however, deeply distressed by this view, determined to resign, and thus they brought about the crisis.

It seemed natural that the President of the Republic should give over the power to Popular Action. It was the strongest party in the Chamber, where it had 120 delegates, and in the country, where it had almost a million sustaining members. It had proved its law-abiding nature and its spirit of co-

operation in supporting weaker bodies. No slightest stain of immorality had defiled its members. While in power it had given evidence of preparedness, energy and fertile initiative. In difficult moments it had firmly supported the existing Government, to which it had brought great nuclei of conservative opinion, and which would otherwise have inclined to anti-democratic solutions.

On the other hand, it was impossible to say that the Cortes was drained of life, since, within two years, it had approved nearly two hundreds laws.

The Leftists, nevertheless, threatened to withdraw from the Government if Popular Action were put in power. The President of the Republic, who did not want to antagonize the Leftists, and who was opposed to strong parties, handed over the power to Mr. Portela Valladares. The latter, who was not even a delegate, and who had neither voice nor influence in the country, was intimately united to the Leftists and was one of the foremost figures in Freemasonry. One month after Mr. Portela had formed the Government, the President, Alcalá Zamora, was dissolving the Cortes and undertaking to hold new elections for one who was an ally of the Leftists and a declared enemy of the Rightists.

Mr. Portela committed the greatest outrages. He supported the Left with all the official strength of the State, falsified the Acts through various circumscriptiions, allowed the masses to coerce the Rightist electors, and, on February 19, 1936, handed over the power entrusted to him to the revolutionary Leftists.

The law-abiding struggle of Popular Action had failed. The Leftists neither exercised the vote with integrity nor abided by its results. Vanquished in the realm of democracy, overcome in the realm of violence, they had triumphed by unconstitutional

means with the cooperation of the President of the Republic and the brazen help of a Mason.

The Leftists had put an end to democracy in Spain.

Preparations were openly made for the Communist revolution. To prevent it, I thought it right to resort to strong measures against those who were falsifying democracy and violating the basic laws of the Republic.

The Spanish Rightists, who had succeeded at the cost of the greatest sacrifices in directing the life of the country through the winding river beds of the law, now found themselves confronted by the most solemn duty of saving their country from Communistic barbarism.

The suprême moment of the Spanish civil war was approaching.

THE SPANISH REPUBLIC: FEBRUARY TILL JULY 1936

IT has been maintained both in Spain and outside it, so that even Rightists have admitted it as an incontestable truth, that in the February, 1936, elections the Left won a legitimate victory.

This point should be calmly and carefully examined.

Even if one admits the official figures published by the Central Census Committee (*Junta Central del Censo*), a body whose function is to be fully informed on electoral statistics, the anti-Marxist coalition secured in Spain about 250,000 more votes than did the candidates of the Popular Front. How, then, can the composition of the legislative Chamber be explained?

A number of causes contributed to falsify the result of the 1936 elections, to the extent of converting into victory for the Leftists figures favorable to the Rightist candidates.

In the first place, the Leftists benefited by the electoral law then in force in Spain. This law, which in the terminology of political science could be called the electoral majority system (*prima a la mayoría*), was planned to favor the candidates of the extreme parties.

And in actual fact, so it did. In accordance with this law, Spain was divided into very unequal electoral districts. Thus, for example, while the district of Alava elected 2 deputies, that of Soria 3, and that of Avila 5; that of Madrid elected 19, that of Barcelona 22, and that of Asturias 18. In each district, a single voter could not vote for all the candidates, the object of this being that minorities should, in this way, always secure seats. In the great cities, where the working population assured the

absolute certainty of a Leftist victory, the seats reserved for the minority were proportionately very few. On the other hand, in those districts where the Rightists were in the majority, the seats proportionately reserved for minorities in the Cortes were numerous.

An example will illustrate. Madrid was a markedly Leftist district. Madrid elected 15 deputies for the majority and 4 for the minority. Salamanca elected 5 for the majority and 2 for the minority. In the February elections, the Leftists secured 35,000 more votes in Madrid than the Rightists. In Salamanca, the Rightists secured 70,000 more votes than the Leftists. In Madrid the 35,000 majority votes gained for the Leftists the election of 11 deputies, and in Salamanca the 70,000 majority gained for the Rightists the election of only 3 deputies. The same thing occurred in Badajoz, Jaén, Licante, Murcia and Cordoba (Leftist districts) as compared with Sagovia, Avila, Soria, Alava, León, Zamora, Teruel, Ciudad Real, Cáceres, Castellón, Navarre, etc. (Rightist districts). From this initial injustice was born a Leftist ascendancy which in no way corresponded to the votes secured in the election.

As though this were not enough, the Leftists, protected by the President of the Council, Mr. Portela, a Mason, committed in many provinces the most repugnant atrocities. In Lugo the Rightist candidates and leaders were imprisoned, and the Civil Governor forcibly borrowed all the automobiles belonging to conservative individuals, in order that the Leftist elements might take possession of the election certificates of each electoral college. In the district of Pontevedra, Government agents seized by main force the election certificates of 230 precincts of the districts of Tuy, Lalin, L'Estrada, etc., and falsified them in order to bring about the triumph of the Left and of the President of the

Council, who had been defeated in the previous Cortes. In the district of Corunna, the Rightist candidates were locked up in the offices of the Civil Government and obliged to sign a certificate in which they appeared to have been defeated. One of the candidates, Mr. O'Shea, was threatened at the point of a gun until he signed it. In Cáceres, the Government police seized the election certificates and falsified them unfavorably to the disadvantage of the Rightists.

With these methods, the Popular Front reached the Cortes with a small majority. To make it larger, the Cortes themselves annulled the elections, totally or partially, in the districts of Granada, Cuenca, Salamanca, Burgos and Santander, where the Rightists had been victorious. In this way, the Leftists achieved a majority which allowed them later on to commit the greatest abuses. After this experience, how were the Rightists to have faith in democracy? In 1934 the Leftists, not satisfied with the defeat of the previous year, overstepped the limits of legal procedure and started a revolution. In 1936 they violated and falsified the result of the vote in order to secure power. Whose fault was it that the Rightists should have withdrawn from a legal fiction which served only to annihilate them?

The Rightist attitude is justified if one considers that the power seized through such shameful means served the Leftists as a means of openly preparing the way for a social revolution.

The Leftists' first act was to approve an amnesty which set at liberty all those who had been indicted for the revolution of 1934. Men responsible for fires, sackings, assassinations, and violations of the law, were not only pardoned, but glorified as public heroes.

The Leftists immediately took over the Presidency of the Republic, abusively dismissing from office Mr. Alcalá Zamora, without taking into account

the services he had rendered them from his exalted position.

There followed an implacable persecution of Rightist soldiers and officials. In virtue of a law passed by the Cortes, the judges and magistrates (including those of the Supreme Court) who did not adhere to the Popular Front were deprived of office.

As though this were not enough, the Leftist Government encouraged all labor agitations and strikes, the object of which was to ruin employers, sow the seeds of anarchy, and pave the way for a social revolution.

In barracks and arsenals leaflets were distributed inviting the soldiers to assassinate their commanding officers. In the streets of Logroño, the mobs assaulted various officers and wounded a General. The soldiers killed two peasants in lawful defense, and the mobs, directed by the Governor, in one afternoon set fire to seven churches.

In Cádiz, in Alicante and in Granada, the Leftist masses sacked and burned churches, theatres, business houses and residences. The Civil Governor forbade the militia to turn out.

In Madrid, the Communists burned three churches, one of which (that of St. Louis) was situated fifty yards from the Ministry of the Interior. The Minister watched the fire from his apartments, without allowing the militia to go out and put an end to the disorder.

The principal offices in many provinces were held, not by men indicted for purely political offenses, but by common criminals. Fires, assassinations, bombings and armed assaults took place daily. I myself had occasion to report in Parliament several hundred assassinations, without the Government's being able to deny a single one. Spain was dizzily descending the slope of anarchy.

Little by little, political direction fell into the hands of Socialism, whose extremist sector, powerfully influenced by Russia, was headed by Largo Caballero, termed by his followers the Spanish Lenin. There is a very simple explanation of this phenomenon.

The conglomeration called the "Popular Front" was integrated by the Marxist labor parties and by various factions of what were called Republican Leftists. Strictly speaking, these lacked a program. Their ideal was the laic Republic, persecutor of the Church. Their program was reduced to an out-of-date anti-clericalism. The Spanish Leftist Republicans had spent the years during which the Spanish monarchy was in power proclaiming a platform calling for the suppression of religious Orders, the secularization of cemeteries and divorce. Having obtained all this in the Constituent Cortes, the Leftist Republicans found themselves disorganized and confused. With regard to social problems—the hub of modern life—they had no practical formulae nor even a definite theory. If they were not to disappear, they had no other choice, since the masses were headed along the road of class struggle, but to unite with the Marxist parties, whose servants and henchmen they gradually became during this period.

When the Popular Front secured control of power in February, 1936, the Socialists and Communists demanded of the Leftist Republicans that they alone form the Government. In that way, as they disposed of the votes of the majority in the so-called Parliament, they obliged the Leftist Republicans to govern according to their wishes. The Marxists lost none of their strength, and awaited the opportune moment when, with their former allies destroyed, they could obtain control of power and impose the social revolution from above.

To hasten the weakening of the Republican Leftists, maintain the revolutionary spirit in the working classes, and break down the economic resistance of the conservatives, the Marxists engaged in a series of strikes. These strikes were not aimed at obtaining economic reforms which were more or less justified.

A curious fact to be noted is that these strikes were not directed, as a general rule, against the major industries, but against small proprietors and against employers of moderate means. The intention was to ruin these latter, to convert them into desperate proletarians, who would have no alternative but to join the revolution.

The organisms of the Department of Labor (*Jurisdicción de Trabajo*), dominated by the Socialists, approved such scandalously excessive terms for agricultural labor that they clearly revealed a revolutionary purpose. In a certain town in the province of Malaga, the workingmen went so far as to demand thirty pesetas a day for four hours of work. In all the provinces, when harvest time came, the Marxists demanded daily wages which amounted to fifty per cent more than the value of the product harvested. The small farmers, unable to pay these wages, turned over the crops to their farm-hands, resigning themselves to losing the value of the rent of the land, the seed, the fertilizer, the taxes and a year's work. Nevertheless, the laborers were not satisfied, and the Government demanded that the daily wages be paid. When the proprietor had no money or credit left, the laborers sold his cattle and chopped down his trees. On many occasions, the owners fled from the towns and took refuge in other places. To such extremities as these did the Marxist persecution arrive. Many landowners were even assassinated without so much as their murderers being arrested, much less being brought to trial.

This disruptive social policy yielded its natural fruits. In the rural areas economic reserves were exhausted, owners fled, crops were abandoned, the number of striking laborers increased, hunger reigned in homes, and despair gained new recruits for the revolution. The Socialist leaders purchased arms and munitions with the proceeds of syndical price quotations, and distributed them among the hungry and maddened laborers.

The Leftist Republicans began to take alarm. They wanted to put a stop to the evil, but it was too late. Madrid's building strike was the best proof of this. So excessive were the demands of the workers, that the Government suggested a compromise in which their demands were curtailed, although immense gains for them were recognized. The employers accepted under compulsion from the Government. The workmen refused, and began to practise innumerable acts of sabotage. In one week alone ninety bombs exploded in the buildings under construction in Madrid.

There was now no normal outcome for the situation. We, as the Deputies of the Rightist parties, who continued to fight on legal ground, could not succeed in restraining Spain's course toward the abyss. The Leftists had secured control of power with utter disregard of every democratic ideal, and were now utilizing their power to lead the country into a Soviet regime.

It was no longer either right or possible to ask the Rightists to keep within the bounds of a legality which served only to crush them. The Leftist Government lacked legitimacy of origin and of execution. Its action was not directed to the common good but to the destruction of society. It was no longer a duty to obey a power which was habitually and seriously unjust. The Spanish Rightists found themselves faced by a situation uniting all the con-

ditions which, according to the traditional doctrine of Catholic political ethics, justified resistance to oppression, not only passively, but actively, through the use of armed force.

No one in Spain doubted it was progressing toward a solution by force. I personally heard important members of the moderate faction of the Socialist party say that the anarchic policy initiated in February was paving the way for a military coup.

Everyone considered an uprising imminent. The assassination of Mr. Calvo Sotelo at the hands of the Government, the very Government which the same day tried to murder me, was the spark that set national indignation ablaze.

Those who affirm that the Spanish Nationalist movement is a purely military rising, in the style of various occurrences of the nineteenth century, are mistaken. The Army was the initiator, and is the efficacious instrument of victory. But behind it, without distinction of regions or of social classes, are all Spaniards who are not resigned to falling into the clutches of Communism. It is the rising of a whole nation, which, in saving itself, shall save all Western civilization.

Within the movement are all of our Rightist parties, both those who have always favored solutions by force, and those of us who have loyally struggled on the footing of democracy.

All, except the Basque Catholics, whose conduct should be separately examined.

THE SPANISH REPUBLIC AND THE FUTURE

IT is logical that, once the determining factors of the national Spanish movement have been summarily examined, people should ask themselves what form of government will be established in Spain once the war is over.

In the opinion of some, our nation will necessarily organize itself along Fascist or National Socialist lines, like Italy or Germany. Others believe that Spain will return to a parliamentary constitutional system, slightly different from that established in 1931.

In dispassionately examining this most delicate question, I ought not to proceed either like one initiated into the problems of Spain who is lifting, as far as is humanly possible, the veil of the future, nor like the leader of a political party expounding the synthesis of his desires. I should limit myself to stating the most likely hypotheses, in an impartial review of the integrating factors in the Nationalist movement.

Basically, the forces which support the action of the Spanish army are four. Enumerated in order of their antiquity in public life, these forces are: Tradicionalistas (Requetés), Acción Popular, Renovación Española, and Falange Española.

The Tradicionalistas (Traditionalists) are a legitimist monarchial organization which opposes organic democracy and upholds the historical characteristics of the various regions.

Acción Popular (Popular Action) is a party which was organized to contend in the field of democracy. It professes the doctrine that forms of Government are accidental, aims at giving an organic

structure to Spanish society, and upholds a broad program of social justice.

Renovación Española (Spanish Renovation) is a separated sector of Popular Action, with scant numerical strength, with special appeal to the upper classes, and in full progress toward organic and authoritative principles, upholds the Monarchy in the person of Alfonso XIII.

Lastly, Falange Española (Spanish Phalanx) is a group whose principles and methods of action are inspired by the modern totalitarian schools. Its social program is extraordinarily advanced, but it proposes no definite solution to the problem of the form of government to be established.

Initiator of the movement and hub of its future development is the army, which is really independent of any of the political parties that support it.

From this group of factors, representing almost all shades of public opinion in Nationalist Spain, may be deduced what is reasonably likely to be its type of government, in the immediate and distant future.

It is logical to expect that when the war comes to an end, with the indisputable victory of the army, there will be a provisional period of military dictatorship.

The demobilizing of the fighting forces, the disarming of the last Marxist groups, the applying of sanctions for public crimes committed by the Reds, the urgent repairing of the more serious elements in the immense material damage caused by international Communism in our country, the unifying of all efforts in a work of collective sacrifice to initiate the task of national reconstruction—all this will require, at first, the formation of a government entirely or preponderantly military. During its rule, the various sectors of Nationalist political opinion will be able to unite and to lay the foundations of the State's future structure.

This provisional military period should not last too long, since the task of government does not normally belong to the army, and the prolongation of a government of this sort beyond the limits of necessity would blight the blossoming of civic virtues indispensable to the stability of a nation's political institutions.

Granted the limited duration of a military government, what will be the final organization of Spanish public life?

Many superficial individuals, judging merely by appearances, assert that Spain will be organized purely and simply as a Fascist government. The propaganda of Moscow has possessed itself of this idea. Holding Fascism before the eyes of the people as a system of tyrannical government, it tries to consolidate the mass of opinion in democratic countries against any tendency that may be suspected of sympathy with Fascism.

Yet, without even remotely admitting the unjust and derogatory meaning that Communist propaganda attaches to the term Fascism, no one in good faith can possibly maintain the theory that Spain will set up a government of this type. For the present, one must not forget that Mussolini himself has declared on many occasions that Fascism is a typically Italian product suited to the needs and characteristics of Italy and impossible of application in other countries. In agreement with this fundamental statement is that of General Franco, the Chief of the Spanish State, who affirms, on his part, that the present movement in Spain is not of the Fascist order.

If we succeed in maintaining a middle course among doctrinal tenets favored by the political groups which support the Nationalist movement in Spain and the aspirations most commonly felt by the great mass of Rightist opinion, we shall easily suc-

ceed in establishing the following basic assertions concerning a possible political regime in Spain.

1. *Strengthening of authority*: In Latin countries, Parliamentaryism—we are forced to recognize the fact—has not been able to harmonize human liberty with the principle of authority (not despotism) indispensable to the preservation and progress of society.

The strict dependence which governments are obliged to maintain with regard to Parliament and the subordination in which Parliament, in its turn, must hold with regard to a public opinion at once fickle, vehement, and without solid civic formation, has given rise to the growing instability of governments and the relaxing of the basic means of authority. While public opinion was polarized around two great alternative parties—using England for its model—governments enjoyed at least relative stability, and the executive power, somewhat more detached from the legislative, could accomplish its mission with relative efficacy. Still more when the increasing break-up of parties and the dependence of governments upon Parliament (firmly established by the post-war democratic constitutions) reduced the executive power to a docile instrument in the hands of the people's representatives, the State lost the principal means of command at the precise moment when the violent clash of social classes was creating a situation of latent civil war, always ready to manifest itself in anarchic riots and bloody outbursts.

Thence came the unanimous desire of Latin peoples for a strong central power, withdrawn as far as possible from the flux of fickle public opinion, and capable of imposing itself upon selfish class or regional party-interests, in order to unite them in seeking the supreme collective good.

Spain, which has so keenly experienced of late

the effects of the weakness in which the central power was left by a vicious Parliament incompatible with her psychology and her history, feels more than any other country the need of a strong authority. Upon this first characteristic of her future government all sectors of Nationalist Spain are agreed.

2. *Organic concept of democracy*: In my opinion, those who propose the great juridical problem of the modern world in terms of a simplified dilemma — democracy or anti-democracy — are fundamentally mistaken.

In the foreword of the Spanish translation of a book by Tardieu, I wrote two years ago that the problem of the present day was not one of achieving but of organizing democracy.

Democracy is a very broad concept, which supposes simply participation by the people in the problems of State government. From this point of view, democracy is a definite achievement of modern peoples. This democracy, so broadly conceived, can suffer partial eclipse; but in point of fact it represents a common basis for contemporary nations.

As against this broad and comprehensive concept which germinates from the principles of true political science, what actually happens is that the idea of democracy tends to convert itself into a monopoly of those who can conceive of no democracy other than inorganic, based upon the individual as the only fundamental political reality, and expressed through universal suffrage. Those who aspire to retain this monopoly feel that whatever is not inorganic universal suffrage is not democracy.

Many thinkers and writers, from the Catholic school of civil law to the modern integral corporativists, such as Bottai, Manoïlesco or Spann, passing for positivists of the type of Léon Duguit, have maintained that political society is integrated not merely by individuals but by societies or inferior per-

sonalities, some perfect and others imperfect, some complete and others incomplete (family, city, region, profession), through which the individual develops the entirety of his spiritual and material activities.

To incorporate the individual in the State by means of these units, to give organic structure to the will of the people, is the most effective means of guaranteeing true democracy, which is not just a blind rule by the mathematical reckoning (*de la mitad mas una*) of atomized wills.

Nationalist Spain desires just this organic structure, through which Spaniards themselves shall be the masters of their country's destinies.

3. *Disappearance of class struggle*: The great solvent principle of modern societies is the materialist interpretation of history, whence is derived the postulate of class struggle, which rends nations in a continuous civil strife. To eliminate this corrosive principle is the most urgent need of the epoch in which we live.

The process begun in Spain in the year 1931 is not, as one might at first glance suppose, a political overthrow; but, rather, a true social evolution. Of all the solvent forces favored by the Republic, only the Marxist organizations knew where they were going. For the Leftist burghers, the laic and democratic Republic was an end. For the Socialists and Communists it was only a means. The Republic laid bare the fierce class struggle which for years had been silently palpitating. With the new political order, the shock assumed the tragic features of the present war. It would not be strange, therefore, if, when the war is over, the destruction of the deadly germs of materialistic and inhuman Marxism were to be the common ambition of Nationalist Spain.

The sorrowful experience of these years has convinced the Spanish Rightists that class struggle will not disappear solely through the energetic interven-

tion of a strong political power. If the evil be not attacked at its root, during a period of apparent peace, it will bud forth with a degree of strength proportionate to the degree of energy which has been expended in the attempt to destroy it by material compulsion.

This does not mean that the action of authority is not effective, but that compulsion alone is not sufficient. Class struggle will not diminish so long as minds are not pacified, and this supreme task of pacification can only be accomplished by a drawing together of classes through the realization of a broad and rational plan of social justice which, without attempting impracticable levelings in conflict with the original inequalities of men and incompatible with the structure of society itself, shall bind all men in a supreme collective interest.

For this reason the idea of combating class struggle through the joint action of a strong central power and of a social justice imbued with the Christian spirit is firmly fixed in the minds of the immense majority of those who support the Spanish Nationalist movement.

4. *National unity and regional variety*: the Constitution of 1931, inspired by the disruptive principles which led to the present tragedy, made possible in Spain a system of regional autonomies which in actual fact exceeded the limits of federalism, and went to the criminal extremes of a practical disruption of national unity.

The present movement initiated by the army is characterized, as is logical, by a vigorous reaction against this anti-national tendency and the expression of the contrary—namely, the sacred and intangible unity of the country. On this point there will be not the slightest possibility of concessions to the dissembled separatism of Catalonians and Basques.

But unity does not mean uniformity. The Spanish

districts have extremely varied physiognomies, which, without prejudice to supreme national unity, form regional personalities recognized by all the Rightist forces. The spontaneity with which military leaders of the movement have realized from the first this indisputable reality of Spanish life, is the best guarantee that the principle of a fruitful diversity in the bosom of supreme national unity shall be one of the most solid foundations of the Spanish State's future organization. The outlines of this organization have already begun to be traced, even in the midst of the passionate tension produced by the acute present phase of the war.

Such, in my opinion, are the central points of agreement in the various currents which nourish the wholesome stream of Nationalist opinion in my country. They are the property of no party, and they are the property of all. I feel certain that, through inevitable experiments and corrections, Spain will find the fertile channel through which shall flow the waters, today impetuous, tomorrow tranquil, of her longing for stability and work. To find it, Spain will not need to resort to foreign models, so difficult of adaptation to her acknowledged personality. In her tradition, in her history, in the immortal teaching of her writers she will find the necessary material for the building up of her new State, which of necessity shall possess the characteristics of being genuinely Christian and profoundly human.

As upon Spain has devolved the honor of being the soldier and martyr of Christian civilization, so likewise upon her shall devolve the task of demonstrating to the world how it is possible to merge the intangible efforts of human personality with the authoritative requirements of a modern State, which must direct all national energies through the conquest of common ideals.

THE SPANISH REPUBLIC AND BASQUE INDEPENDENCE

THE fact that a nucleus of Catholics (the Basques are not indivisibly Catholic) should have resolutely placed itself, armed, at the service of the Marxist Government, has caused confusion in many minds and provided international Communism with one of its great weapons of propaganda against the national Spanish movement.

To a superficial observer the phenomenon is disconcerting. However, one no sooner penetrates into the heart of the problem than the explanation becomes clear.

With the Spanish nation taken as a whole, the four northerly provinces of Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa, Alava, and Navarre are characterized by sharply defined divergences, indisputably racial in origin. The greater part of its population possesses unity of race, with a language and special customs of its own. In the course of history, this racial diversity has not proved an obstacle to the formation of Spanish unity, although this portion of the mother country preserved certain special privileges in the administrative order which, in the course of the nineteenth century, almost completely destroyed the liberal centralist policy derived from France. During the whole of the modern era, the Basques, unprejudiced by their racial characteristics, collaborated, like all Spaniards, in every national enterprise. From the first struggles with the Moors in Castile, in the year 874, to the battle waged with the Invincible Armada against England, the Basques contributed to the forging of Spanish nationality. One only is the religion, one only the history, one

only the spiritual outlook which fashioned the collective soul of Spain.

The centralist excesses of nineteenth-century liberalism attempted to impose conformity upon the fertile variety found within the confines of the one great nation. As a result these excesses produced a reaction in the Basques. A false direction given to this reaction inspired the contrary excesses of a separatist nationalism, which was founded by Arana Goiri, and supported by youthful elements, many of whom were not even Basques.

The doctrine of Basque nationalism could be summarized as follows: the Basques constitute a race different from that of other Spaniards; according to the principle of nationality, national unity should correspond with racial unity; that is to say, the nation is the supreme political reality which is represented by the State; in its turn, a State cannot be conceived without sovereign, independent and absolute power; thus, the concepts of race, nation, state and independence were bound together in logical correlation according to the doctrine of the founders of Basque nationalism.

This principle having been established, the consequences were difficult to apply. According to Basque nationalists, the four provinces whose population was predominantly Basque would form a "country" to which a name was given: *Euzkadi*, that is to say, the country of the Basques. This country, constituting a real nation, would organize as a State, with its own Parliament, its own executive power, its own judicial organs and diplomatic representation abroad.

To attain its goal, Basque nationalism would have to go through various stages. Above all, it was essential to prepare the spirit of the Basques by intense propaganda, aimed at exalting national values. The conviction that the Basque race was not only

distinct from the others inhabiting Spanish territory, but superior to them all, in the physical as well as in the intellectual and moral order, would have to be implanted in the minds of the simple peasants of the four provinces. The Basque had to be made to believe that he was infinitely superior to all Spaniards, and that the blame for the fact that his material life did not correspond with that superiority rested entirely with the Spanish State, which smothered the desire of the Basque race for perfection.

Capitalizing the peasant's individualism and attachment to his native soil, the Basque Nationalists told him that he should refuse to do military service beyond the boundaries of the Basque country. Stimulating his egoism, they persuaded the modest farmer that the soil which he tilled was not his because the Spanish State did not allow him to own it. Taking advantage of the scant culture of the people, they assured them that their case was similar to that of Cuba or Ireland, which, through a heroic effort, began by affirming their personality in order later to achieve their independence.

During the years of the Monarchy, Basque separatist nationalism refrained from adopting too aggressive an attitude. A class of great industrialists, who had gained large profits from the special tributary regime which the Basque provinces enjoyed, financed the movement, without allowing it to exceed the bounds of their personal convenience. It sufficed them to have behind them a restless and discontented populace—a fact which they could proclaim in Madrid in order to secure economic advantages.

This state of affairs was radically changed in 1931. When the Republic was proclaimed and authority generally relaxed, the leaders of Basque nationalism, discarding the tutelage of the great

financiers, believed that the moment for attaining the goal of their desires had arrived.

The new Government placed at their disposal a new and most powerful means of propaganda—the religious factor. The Republic from the first adopted an anti-religious policy. A few weeks after it had been proclaimed, many dozens of churches and convents were burning throughout Spain. The leading figures of the new political regime were at no pains to conceal their hatred of religion.

The immense majority of the Basque people is profoundly and sincerely religious. The Republic's policy of persecution made a most painful impression on their simple souls. The leaders of separatist nationalism took advantage of this to make the people believe that, in the midst of the general dechristianizing of Spain, the Basque country, bound to the Government and an adherent of Madrid, would be the refuge of persecuted Catholicism. That which in the simple and believing public was a sincere religious sentiment, in the leaders of the movement was simply a political factor of tremendous force. Following the doctrinal instructions of the founder of the party, the leading Basque Nationalists openly uphold (I myself have heard them say it many times) that they are born Basques, and later through Baptism become Christians. Therefore, they are Basques before they are Christians. Religion is simply a factor of their nationality. The real, the primary, the intangible thing is the Basque race. From it is derived their national essence, and as a result, their right to sovereignty and to political independence.

Manifestly, for tactical reasons, Basque Nationalism did not wish to draw all the conclusions from its doctrinal premises. It would have alarmed people too much at a time when it was necessary to proceed with caution.

To gain the sympathy of the Rightist forces at the start, they restricted their pretensions to the concession of a mere autonomy and to the consequent rectifying of the centralism of the nineteenth century. The moderation of their claims invited an alliance with the Traditionalists (Requetés) in the four provinces. Together, Basque Nationalists and Traditionalists battled in the elections to the Constituent Cortes for the four Basque provinces. Aguirre, the present head of the Red Government of Bilbao, was elected by Navarre with the Traditionalists.

In the Constituent Cortes the Nationalist deputies acted in agreement with the other Rightist forces. I remember that, in the Parliamentary Commission (of which I formed part) which drew up the project of the Constitution, the only deputy with whom I was in agreement was Mr. Leizaola, now Minister of the Government of Bilbao. Our only difference of opinion arose in studying the powers which might eventually be granted to the various regions. Leizaola, faithful to his Nationalist principles, asked for functions of sovereignty. I limited myself to agreeing to a decentralization of non-sovereign functions, in accordance with the basic principles of Catholic regionalist doctrine.

The alliance of Traditionalists and Nationalists did not last long. The latter adopted the separatist policy, and little by little withdrew completely from all the other Rightist groups. Protected by constitutional authorization, they voted by plebiscite a Statute of Autonomy, which was their rallying-flag in the elections of November, 1933.

As soon as that Cortes, in which Popular Action had a considerable influence, had been constituted, I held, at its request, a long conference with Aguirre. During this interview, the President of the Basque Government (who in former years had

so often taken part with me in the spread of Catholic principles) told me that the Basques wanted, above all, the Statute of Autonomy; that the Leftists had promised it to them, but that they would prefer to be indebted for it to the Rightists.

I tried to examine the problem dispassionately, pointing out to Aguirre that the racial characteristics of the Basques did not entitle them to aspire to an autonomy bordering on independence; that, above racial differences (much less important than they seemed), should be placed community of religion and of history, the spiritual links which, in the course of centuries, have formed national unity; that the privileges which the Basques had enjoyed for centuries had, for their foundation and justification, not only the special characteristics of the region, but the great services they had rendered to the cause of Spanish nationality; that the Rightists were willing to concede to the so-called Basque country an ample administrative autonomy but never political autonomy, which would imply the granting of sovereign powers belonging only to the State; that the aspirations of the Basque Nationalists which, in point of fact, ran counter to the unity of Spain, were inadmissible, as was proved by the fact that Navarre herself, the purity of whose Basque blood no one could doubt, had become alienated from the other three provinces; nor did the province of Alava subscribe to the separatist position.

It was not possible to come to an agreement. Negotiations were broken off. Several days later, Mr. Monzón, now Minister of the Red Government of Bilbao, told me that, since the Rightists had not acceded to their desires, the Basque Nationalists were willing to ally themselves with the Leftists. For them, the essential was to succeed in obtaining an autonomy bordering on independence. To achieve this end, they were willing to form any

kind of alliance. If the Rightists did not support them, they would throw themselves into the arms of the Communists.

A parliamentary occurrence showed how strong was the Basques' separatist tendency. A question of procedure relative to the Statute project was being discussed, and, in the course of a speech he was making, Aguirre spoke of his love for his country. "Which is your Lordship's country," asked a Rightist deputy, "Spain or the Basque Country?"

"The Basque Country," replied the Nationalist leader.

There followed a tumultuous outburst. The Rightist deputies accused the Basques of being enemies of Spain. To prove the opposite, they asked them to give a cheer for Spain then and there. All the Basque deputies remained silent.

During the summer of 1934, the Basque Nationalists collaborated with the Leftists in preparing for the revolutionary rising in October. In the month of August, the Basques promoted a feeling of rebellion in the *Ayuntamientos* of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya; they organized a protest which began with a secret reunion in Zumarraga, in which Indalecio Prieto spoke; and, seized by the spirit of revolution, they joined forces in Bilbao with the Socialists when the rising of Asturias and Catalonia broke out. The alliance of the Basques and the Leftists had been sealed.

In the elections of February, 1936, the Basque Nationalists aligned themselves with the Socialists and Communists, opposing the other Rightist parties and committing the greatest outrages.

Later, when the Leftist mobs began to carry out their subversive scheme and were daily assassinating in the streets and setting fire to churches, not even one of the Basque deputies stood up in Parliament to protest. Moreover, when Mr. Calvo Sotelo

and I appealed to the Government, the Basque deputies aligned themselves with the assassins and church incendiarists, and gave a vote of confidence to the Government of the Popular Front. This Government, faithful to Moscow's order to destroy Spanish unity, promised them autonomy and independence. So as not to make foes of their allies, they disregarded the dictates of their Catholic consciences. For them, the Basque Country was the fundamental thing. If, in order to obtain it, it was necessary to extend the hand of friendship to the declared enemies of their religion, they would do so.

The military rising broke out, supported by all the Rightist forces. The Basques allied themselves with the Communists. In an effort to justify their attitude, they have spoken of the lack of understanding shown by the Rightists, who denied all individuality to the Basque region. Nothing is more inaccurate. Popular Action, which has always been a sincerely regionalist party, favors the movement. The Requetés, who have constantly defended the historic privileges of the Basque region, support it. The leaders of the movement, particularly General Franco, have promised to respect regional characteristics. There is, therefore, no lack of comprehension on the part of the Rightists.

The result is that these leaders are not willing to grant political independence to the Basques. The result is that the forces supporting the army are not willing to allow the sacred unity of the nation to be broken. For this reason, the Basque Separatists have allied themselves with the Communists in exchange for the realization of their chimeric dreams of independence.

To them, Catholicism was a mere political factor. That is why they have not been loath to sell their beliefs for the purchase of an illusory independence.

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