

A preview of the Spain that would follow Franco's victory; and an interview with his 'volunteer' flyers.

Spanish Tragedy: Act III

I. IF FRANCO WINS

By S.

From the *Times*, London Independent Conservative Daily

NATIONALIST Spain has not yet received a written Constitution; but the main organs of government have been functioning long enough to give a fairly clear idea of the system under which—given a victory for General Franco's arms—the new Spain will be ruled. In a comparatively short time a totalitarian structure of surprising completeness has been evolved. The distinctions between Legislature and Executive, between Government and Party, and between military and civilian have been blurred. The stress of war demanded this unity; the Falange leaders, the masses behind them, strove for it; political advisers from abroad aided and abetted; and the people, without losing their personal dignity or their lively humor, have submitted to the exigencies of the situation.

Nationalist Spain is a dictatorship. General Franco, the dictator, is head of the State, head of the Government, head of the only political party and

Commander-in-Chief of the land, air and sea forces. He is responsible for the conduct of policy, administration and war. This accumulation of powers in his hands insures that the relations between Government, Party and armed forces shall be harmonious and that no troublesome problems shall be allowed to arise until the war has been won. The Generalissimo is the cornerstone of the new State.

Since February, General Franco has presided over a Cabinet on the European pattern, consisting of eleven Ministers, each of whom is responsible for a State Department. The Junta Tecnica, the pioneer body of law-givers that laid the foundations of the State, has gone forever. The vast sum of its empirical legislation is at the disposal of the new Ministry; and it is to be expected that any further changes will take place without affecting the basic structure of government as it exists today. The new Cabinet was formed after careful consideration of

the varied elements that have given their support to the Nationalist movement. It contains men whose past activities have been Monarchist, Traditionalist, Fascist or even non-political. The association of the three leading politicians in the present Cabinet—Señors Cuesta and Suñer, and Count Rodezno—would have been unthinkable two years ago. Had it existed then, the civil war might have been averted.

The Cabinet follows its course without any direct consultation of the people. There is only one channel for the expression of public opinion, and that lies through the *Falanga Española Tradicionalista*. The *F.E.T.* was formed nearly a year ago by the fusion of the Falange and the Requetés, the Fascists and Traditionalists of pre-war days. On its foundation it was described as 'the sole political entity in the State' and as intermediary between the State and Society. When the Statutes were published it was seen that all the armed forces of the nation had been enrolled in the Party *en bloc*.

Any body of opinion which lies outside the *F.E.T.* has no means of public expression. There is little possibility of disagreement between the Government and the *F.E.T.*, since the same men are at the head of both. The supreme authority in the Party is the National Council. General Franco is its President, Señor Cuesta its General Secretary. The Council meets to pronounce on the fundamental bases of the movement and on any question submitted to it by the head of the State. It has no power for effective opposition, because the fifty Councillors are appointed by General Franco and can be removed by him at will. Many

measures, particularly those dealing with social questions, such as the Charter of Labor, were exhaustively examined by the National Council before being published in their final form.

II

While the people have little to say to the Government, the Government has plenty to say to the people. A steady volume of propaganda—by press, radio, poster and symbol—keeps fresh in Spanish minds the reality of a long battle-front that might otherwise wither into an endless bad dream. A flood of words pours from the presses every day. War news is given first place, though owing to the censorship it is far from informative.

Little foreign news reaches the Spaniards and it is of uneven value. The usual channels whereby it reaches Spain are the official German and Italian agencies. These purvey regular and alarming intelligence of the internal problems of France and Russia, which is quoted without comment and with little discrimination. The treatment of England is seldom unfriendly, though difficulties of the British Government in Egypt and in Palestine are followed with exaggerated concern. A few papers are published under sectional auspices. The Falange produces a sumptuous periodical called *Hierarcbia*, intended for the serious reading public. Some of the matter is of value, and some, even after the twentieth reading, still sounds suspiciously like nonsense.

Radio, ever since its introduction, has been a formidable addition to the lively cacophony of the Spanish scene; now it maintains a steady volume of noise in the service of the State. *Radio*

Salamanca produces a religious hush for news of special interest by prefacing it with two signature tunes. One is the Laurel and Hardy march. The other is the *Big Bad Wolf*.

Every day the Spanish radio addresses itself to the outside world and to Republican Spain. News is broadcast in English, French, German and Italian, while Moorish speakers harangue listeners in Morocco from Seville. The broadcasts addressed to the enemy contain a nightly recital of menus from the hotels of Nationalist Spain, in the hopes that the Madrileño, sitting down to his supper of chick-peas and rice, will torment himself with the knowledge that soup, eggs, fish and veal are being eaten within an hour's drive from his front door.

The number of patriotic posters is increasing. Bread and justice are favorite themes with Falange artists. The Requetés continue to emphasize religious issues. In most of the poorer cafés notices are hung up forbidding political discussions, while in the Basque Provinces the use of any language but 'the language of Cervantes' comes under a similar ban. Women are urged to conceal their arms and help 'in purifying the atmosphere.'

At one time it appeared that the campaign for decorum in public life was being carried to extremes. The San Sebastian authorities did their best to ruin bathing by decreeing the use of a regulation costume which covered neck, knees and elbows. The story goes that one public-spirited gentleman was arrested for 'insulting the police' when he emerged from a bath dressed in super-regulation style, top-hat, spats and gloves. A more liberal attitude is now prevailing.

The Nationalist authorities have applied the same standards to the schools. A recent circular issued by the Ministry of Education declares that neither the compulsory teaching of religion nor the reintroduction of crucifixes into schools is enough. 'The whole school atmosphere must be influenced and directed by the doctrine of Christ.' The teaching of patriotism must consist in the exaltation of the past and present glories of Spain. The child must learn that life is '*milicia*,' meaning sacrifice, struggle, discipline and austerity.

III

An economic organization based on Fascist models is being evolved by the Nationalists. The Fascists were the only political group in the country which entered the war on the Nationalist side with an economic program. They have clung to their ideas and their efforts have been seconded by close coöperation with the 'Friendly Powers.' Association encourages emulation.

The Fascist program, as laid down in the twenty-seven points of the Falange, was conceived in very general terms. It looked forward to a future in which Spain would be a 'gigantic syndicate of producers.' It repudiated both Marxism and capitalism, both the class war and the domination of one class by another. It approved of all private initiative that was compatible with the interests of the whole people; and of the tendency toward nationalization of the banks and, by means of Corporations, of the public services. Every Spaniard was declared to have the right and duty to work. Agriculture was promised encouragement.

Landowners and industrialists may be nervous of its more radical clauses; peasants and workers may remain sceptical. But the activity of the Falange in all fields of social policy has been conspicuous, particularly in the organization of relief. Last March the principles underlying the Falange program were deliberately restated in the Charter of Labor.

The greater part of economic reconstruction must wait until the end of the war. Great difficulties stand in the way. The shadow of war has fallen on the entire industrial equipment of the country. Every enterprise that can be adapted to military ends has been so adapted. The others are urged to produce for export, and thus furnish the State with the foreign exchange that is necessary for the purchase of 'essential' imports. Such imports are still coming into the country, though not all of them will be found in port registers when the war ends. At present, most of this abnormal trade is unproductive and justifiable only by the exceptional circumstances of war; though intensification of trade relations with the 'Friendly Countries' will no doubt become more profitable in the long run. There are many foreigners in Spain who expect to stay considerably longer than the 'duration.'

The process of economic reorganization must necessarily be slow and provisional. Last year the Wheat Service Corporation was set up to regulate the production and distribution of wheat on a national scale. The Corporation can dictate to farmers the area to be sown and, with certain small reservations regarding seed, the manner in which the product is to be distributed. There is no longer direct contact between the producer and the

manufacturer. The farmer sells his product to the local branch of the Corporation at a price fixed by it. The Corporation has not yet been functioning for a full agricultural year, and the degree of success which it has achieved cannot yet be properly estimated.

IV

War-time conditions have led to a strange mixture of wealth and poverty in Nationalist Spain. The provision of food is highly satisfactory. Almost from the beginning of the war General Franco has held the cattle regions of Galicia and Estremadura and the wheat fields of Old Castile. The urban centers of Central and Eastern Spain no longer provide a market for the meat and grain of the West, all of which is available for consumption in Nationalist territory. The fishermen of the Atlantic coast search the seas without fear of molestation. Every day a convoy of lorries leaves the shores of Galicia laden with fish and shell-fish, which are packed in ice, and conveyed to the inland centers. The wine regions of Jerez and Logroño now find their export surplus increased, since half of Spain no longer consumes their products.

Apart from food there is a scarcity amounting at times to complete dearth. Silk goods are almost unobtainable. Most of the finer textile materials are scarce. All cars have been requisitioned by the State, and the few private owners who remain must have a special license from the military authorities stating that their cars have been returned to them for a specific purpose. Petrol is available in sufficient quantity, though spare parts, and indeed all manufactured goods,

are not. Books are scarce, since most of the Spanish publishing firms were established in Madrid and Barcelona.

Economic policy has been directed to keeping the cost of living down to its pre-war level as much as possible. Prices are rigorously controlled by the local authorities and may not be raised without official permission. The heavy fines that have been inflicted for breach of regulations in this respect are a proof that the control is real.

Victory in the field, comparative economic prosperity and propaganda have done wonders in Insurgent Spain. A country torn and divided by political and economic strife has suppressed most of its former quarrels, but differences of opinion still persist. Despite the official amalgamation of Falange and Requetés a year ago, the movements still represent different attitudes. The Requetés, heirs of the monarchical and clerical traditions of Spain, look back on a century of struggle with the liberal State.

The Falange, on the other hand, like the kindred Fascist movements in Germany and Italy, grew up recently as a challenge to Communism. It is young and proud of its modernity. Different in origin, the two movements are different in their approach to modern problems.

It would be idle to deny that there are many landowners and industrial-

ists who would find their privileges curtailed by a rigorous application of the Falange program. But so far neither the partition of the large estates nor the nationalization of finance and industry has been made the subject of thorough discussion. But both these groups prefer the 'revolutionary' policy of the Falange to expropriation without compensation.

The Falange, on the other hand, has made concessions to the point of view of its partners. Each successive Party declaration lays greater stress on the importance of the Catholic Church in the life of the nation. It has frequently been stated, on high authority, that the Falange would no longer oppose a return to Monarchy. Thus there is a possibility that the military alliance between Falange and Requeté will result in a lasting compromise. General Franco is clearly determined to secure it; on this issue he will stand or fall.

The Nationalists have little to fear from the Spanish workers and peasants. Deprived of their leaders, the laborers who fought desperately for the Left two years ago are now cheering the achievements of the Right. Much of their passion for politics in recent years has been superficial, though violent. There seems to be little doubt that the Spanish laborer will assimilate Fascism, while remaining stubbornly faithful to himself.

II. VOLUNTEERS FOR MURDER

By ILYA EHRENBURG

Translated from *Izvestia*, Moscow Organ of the Central Executive Committee

IN THE heart of Barcelona stand dozens of shattered houses. Staircases hang in space like unfinished spirals. The passerby can look into a room through a no longer existent wall and see a crushed bedstead, a