

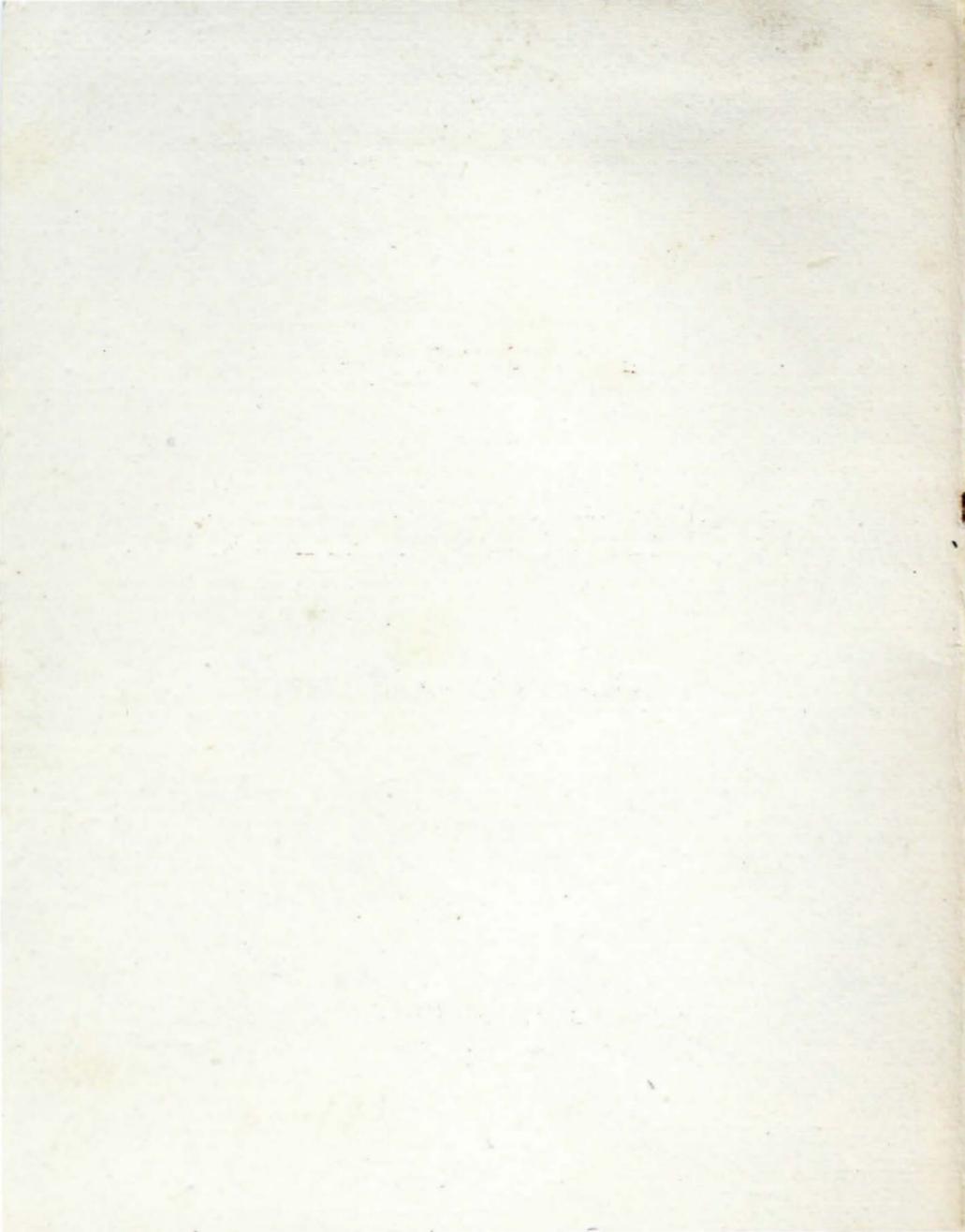
Remembrances and perspectives

A SPEECH
BY
INDALECIO PRIETO

(Barcelona 28th August 1938)

SPANISH EDITIONS

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I must begin by confessing the difficulty I feel in addressing you at the present moment. On the one hand excessive emotion embarrassing me, may prevent me from speaking. On the other hand I fear that my speech, through lack of use, may flow sluggishly. I have not refrained from public speaking for two years in vain. And why this silence? The last two occasions on which I spoke were in Madrid, by radio, in response to the invitation of the Government, in the months of July and August 1936, addressing the whole of Spain, insurgent territory and that being defended.

Not long afterwards I was incorporated in the Government and from that very moment, I ceased to occupy any kind of platform, left my pen and devoted myself to work. Then, about five months ago. I ceased to belong to the Government, but I have continued to remain si-

lent. Why? Because I considered my silence a duty. I feel that, under the present circumstances, there should be no voice for the multitudes than that of the Government. On public platforms, whether he will or no, the orator cannot turn his gaze from the tragedy through which we are living, and as regards the war and its bearings, only the Government should speak of it. Themes other than these, so tinged with drama, cannot now interest the Spanish people. For these reasons I have maintained silence.

I declare to you that on giving my consent to the invitation made to me regarding this celebration, I did not greatly wish to attend it, but a will greater than my own forced me to speak. For this reason, and in the circumstances which I am about to explain to you, I am here before you.

The fact that I am not chained to the responsibilities of the Government gives me great freedom of speech. But here is another of the difficulties of my discourse: the utilisation of that liberty. Under normal conditions, the work of the orator beforehand consists simply in accumulating ideas, that is to say in collecting up what he wishes to say. Under the present exceptional circumstances the orator has a more

difficult task, that of separating from the theme of his discourse those things of which he should refrain from speaking.

This celebration, as you know, is to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Socialist Party. Everything which could be said regarding this has been said already, and said magnificently, in the special numbers dedicated by the Press to the commemoration of this historic date. The history of the Party : its heroic beginnings, its arduous struggles, its influence in Spanish politics, the era of persecutions which it has undergone, the wake of sacrifice left by the founders of our community, all this has been said, and said not only with exactitude but with eloquence.

Naturally, I find myself in the situation I mentioned before, and which is faced by all public men to a greater or lesser degree. How is it possible, at the present time, to occupy a platform and turn one's back on the immense tragedy which Spain is experiencing? For my part, it would be impossible for me to do this. I could not at the moment hold your attention by evoking the great and austere figures of the founders of the Party and by summing up its history, which has left such a profound impres-

sion on Spanish life throughout half a century. I would not know how to do it. Such a task would be beyond my power. My mind, like yours I am sure, departs from such themes in spite of their moral grandeur, to focus attention on the great tragedy of the war. But I have just told you that regarding the war, its present phases and immediate prospects, only the Government has the right to speak, and the rest have but one obligation : to serve it. For this reason, I am refraining from any comment on the present, although at times, in the course of my speech, sentiments, all of them in admiration, may be expressed regarding the people who are fighting for the liberty and independence of Spain.

On informing the beloved comrades who forced me to attend this celebration with them of the theme, I decided to entitle it «Remembrances and Perspectives», that is to say, the past and the future, eliminating the present.

Do not be surprised that my discourse should have frequent sad tones, for it will not be that of a boaster, with a courage as vainglorious as grotesque, having this modest stage as its only battlefield. It will be the discourse of a sorrowing Spaniard, whose deep sadness lessens hope.

I cannot offer you anything else. I invite you to reflect, with me, on the future of Spain, linking with the remembrance of a recent past the prospect of a future far removed from the war.

The kindness of various comrades, who have decided to collect speeches and articles pronounced and written by me at the beginning of this struggle in a pamphlet to be entitled «Anticipations», has offered me the chance of rereading now what I said two years ago, at the beginning of the war which is devastating Spain. And to link them with prospects beyond the war, I am going to read you words which I pronounced then.

On the 25th of July, 1936, on speaking by radio from the microphone of the Ministry of War, I commenced thus :

«Those who have read my latest articles in the paper for which I habitually write, part of which were reproduced in the Madrid Press, will understand that what is at present taking place in Spain cannot hold any surprise for me, because in these articles I almost reached monotonous reiteration in stating the existence of the danger and outlining its dimensions. One of my warnings was that of telling those who believed

that the subversive movement would not attain larger proportions than those reached on August 10th, 1932 that they were fundamentally wrong. But at the same time, they also were wrong who, preparing the rising, cherished hopes of a triumph as easy as that which was obtained on the 13th September, 1923.

»I said in the articles mentioned that the rising, which for me was certain and whose intensity I took care to announce publicly, would meet with great resistance, and that the struggle would be a bloody one. Some considered such reiterated advice as mine as an expression of reiterated pessimism, which I do not deny. Still less would I deny it now because the recognition of this defect of mine may possibly give more value to my words ; and others supposed that it obeyed something which figures among my intentions, but whose end I was unable to attain and which no one who had a feeling of reality could divine. Well then : we are now in the middle of the rising, of the deepest, cruellest and most perturbing rebellion of the many which the history of Spain has registered up to the present.»

Examining the error of the promoters of the rebellion, I declared immediately afterwards : «I am going to establish the supposition that

they believe that the Republican régime followed imperfect paths, that it caused harm. We accept it as the effects of this digression. But have they thought that a far greater wrong—the terrible breach which they are opening in the body of our bleeding Republic—can be justified by those harms which, if they exist and even to the extent imagined by them, are infinitely less than this large rent which lays our entrails bare before the world?»

And I closed my words that night with these, directed to the enemy: «Look into yourself. Look and see if you find within you some internal passage which invites you to continue the fight, because surrender you cannot hope for. You will find corpses, but you will not take prisoners».

Some days later, on the 10th August, 1936, I gave my last speech. And, alluding to the duration and consequences of the war, I expressed myself thus :

«I refer to the responsibilities of those, who for the sake of pride and without probability of success, carry on a fratricidal fight, whose prolongation may be the ruin of Spain, because the dangers to her integrity are visible and so are the menaces against her independence. I say to

the rulers that they should make preparations and previsions for a long struggle, as for a war, for we are in the midst of a war. This has not been our will, but we have had to succumb to another's will, which has provoked the war.» And, referring later to the slaughter realised by the fascists, which found echoes of reprisal in our camp, I said :

«On judging deeds on which I do not wish to comment, the authoritarian regimes which have with justice incited the hostility of all democracies will be placid and paternal systems of Government before that which would be implanted in Spain and whose characteristic would be ferocity. Hear the terrifying word : ferocity ! ferocity !

«I do not wish to persist in the theme. My heart aches when I think of it, because I know that here, within the boundaries of our country, we can accuse each other with justice or injustice, now that political passions may prove to be the shroud in which the corpse of what is just is often wrapped ; but away from here, before the world, we are all Spaniards, and what is taking place here, what is still happening here, may fill us with shame and constitute—listen well—an affront before the world. Do not

imitate them» I exclaimed at this point, alluding to the task of extermination undertaken by the fascists «overcome them with your generosity. I do not ask you to lose vigour in the struggle. I ask hard hearts for the combat, hearts of iron, but sensible hearts, capable of trembling before human suffering and of being asylums of charity, that tender sentiment without which the most essential in human grandeur seems to lose itself.»

These were my last words in public for more than two years. They served as a link with what I am about to say. I spoke of the duration of the war, of the resistance with which we are opposing it, of the ruin which will come over Spain and the ferocity which could be a dishonourable sign of the fight.

Of the duration, what is there to say? We have been through two long years of war. Of resistance—and there those who did not think we would present any—what remains to be said? Nothing, save to ask from all of you a cheer for the men who on the sea, the land and in the air are defending our life and honour.

The Spanish Army! Yes, that is the denomination. The Army of Spain, of the whole peo-

ple. Let no one try to handle it, to bring it into use for party services.

They did not believe in our resistance, the promoters of the rebellion, whom, if they be conceded one whit of Spanish blood, I suppose to be profoundly repenting the great crime they have committed in Spain. The world, the entire world, did not expect it. The world, in its official representation, no matter what may be the will of the peoples, tried to strangle us. And I am certain that only two countries, Russia and Mexico, for whom I ask your applause, can be safe from this just and angry accusation. Nobody suspected it, and it is logical that at the present time, whether proclaimed or not, hidden or in the light of day, dissimulated or patent, a sentiment of admiration is expanding even to the rebel lines for the Spanish people. With a capacity for sacrifice unequalled in history, Spain continues to withstand not only the sudden attack of the rebel Spaniards who have forgotten the most elementary duties to their country, but the invasion of two despotic and tyrannous totalitarian powers, an invasion which it can be understood is on account of the cowardice of the remaining European nations.

We have mentioned the duration of the struggle, shown on the calendar today as twenty-five months. We have spoken of the resistance and we have all spoken, you more than I, with your cheers, hails and applause, of the People's Army. If I may continue linking the themes taken from my last public manifestations in the month of August 1936, I wish to touch the border of two of them: the ferocity of the struggle and the possible ruin of Spain.

I do not wish to deny nor cover by silence the fact that within our lines excesses have taken place, crimes have been committed. What I affirm is that these excesses and these crimes were produced as a result of the spasm provoked in the multitudes by the treacherous and ignoble aggression, and what I wish to show is that the crimes of the other side were organised beforehand, prepared in anticipation. I wish to give a documentary example of this. Here before my eyes is a book. It is called «Seven Months and Seven Days under Franco». The author of the book is not someone who, for some circumstance or other, had served the frankist cause and now, in our lines has hoped to be able to relate to the public what he saw in the other camp. The book is by a Basque clergy-

man, Don Ignacio de Aberrigoyen. And now permit me to render personal homage.

If anyone can preserve indelibly in his spirit the traces of the irreconcilable in the Basque clergy, it is I. I, who lived there in a fully civil manner and who met the clergy for my wedding, for the birth of my children, for the burial of the dead. I know the irreconcilability of the Basque clergy. But opposite this intransigence, which is a defect, I proclaim before you the virtues of these clergy, who by their austerity, by the way in which they carried out their mission, were an example to the whole Spanish clergy. Among the Basque clergy there were no cases found of vicious canons, clothed in secular suits, taking their turn at gaming tables, nor of flamenco curates who played the guitar, without respect for their vestments.

The Basque clergy, who are today receiving homage from an enemy, have known how to do their duty in this struggle. Before the monstrosity signified by the adhesion of the high hierarchies of the Spanish Catholic Church to the seditious movement, with the covering up of the crimes committed and the incitement to crime of the perverted Fatherland, all solemnised in a document which will commemorate their

dishonour, signed collectively by the Spanish Episcopate in denial of the most elementary principles of the Christian doctrine. Before the cardinals, the archbishops and the Bishops who have humbled themselves to Franco and who have changed the sign of benediction to raise the arm in the sign of vassalage before the insurgents, I exalt the conduct of these humble clergy in the valleys and mountains of Guipuzcoa, Alava and Vizcaya, who knew how to give their lives to defend not only liberty, but the Christian tradition of the Catholic Church, a tradition outraged by the Spanish Episcopate.

Well then, friends—accompany me, although I know how tiring readings included in speeches are—, accompany me in rereading some paragraphs in which the priest of Azpeitia, Don Ignacio de Aberrigoyen, recounts what he saw and refers to the things related to him by witnesses, also priests, who for him could not have the failing of lacking truth.

Señor Aberrigoyen who, without political affiliation, has been considered a Basque nationalist, when the fascist troops arrived at Azpeitia, believed himself safe from danger. He had done nothing other than to consecrate himself

to God and direct his faithful in Catholic ways. See, first, how he refers to the entry of the fascist troops into Azpeitia. (Translation, perhaps rather freely, from French text.)

«More than two thousand soldiers «requetes» and «phalangists» perfectly equipped, wearing insignias on their breasts, epaulettes, with images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus inlaid on their rifles, advanced triumphantly, preceded by their chiefs, with their heads held high, and by their chaplains, with pistols at their waists. They sang war songs and among the songs were mixed cries of «Long Live Christ the King», and horrible blasphemies against the Virgin and Holy Ghost. I saw among them one of my friends, a theological student. I approached him and said «How are your people?» «What!» he replied, «but, are you here too?» «Why? Cannot a democrat who has followed the social doctrines of the Church live with them?» «You will see. The rear of these people is a cemetery.» he replied. «From that moment», ironically comments Señor Aberrigoyen, «there was inaugurated among us the new era of Franco Spain. United, great and free.»

This priest went through the streets of the town. He returned to his church and met a

clergyman who had recently come from Beasain, who read the pastoral instruction which he attributed to the Bishop of Vitoria. And Señor Aberrigoyen refers to the scene thus :

«While I read it—the pastoral instruction—a priest, one of my dearest friends, approached and embraced me effusively. This clergyman was a fervent Spanish nationalist, an integrist for some time, and enthusiastically for the military movement. He had fled to Navarre and had just arrived with the troops of General Mola. He took me by the arm very amiably, conducted me to a corner of the sacristy and said in a low voice «They are going to detain you». «Detain me?» «I have seen in the Carlist Circular of Pamplona a list of priests of Guipuzcoa and you figure on it in the third place with this note : «Detained. To be shot» On that list, made before the 16th February, 1936, several others of our brothers in the priesthood figure and among them the Reverend Pather Jose Antonio Lasquibar, Jesuit». «But do you really believe», I asked him, «That my life is in danger?» «You do not know the military». And he added «I myself have been witness of the following case. I lived in X (X to hide the name) a tiny town of Navarre. On a certain night I awoke alarmed

by cries which came from the street. I opened the window and saw a horrible spectacle. Five Basque nationalists were being conducted to a wall to be shot. They cried out for a confessor. The Commandant of the Civil Guard who was on duty approached them and after letting fall a blasphemy said to them : «The devil will confess you.» They were immediately shot, all five of them. This deed I denounced to Monseñor the Bishop of Pamplona, the parson of the place.

»I abandoned my friend, terrified. On returning to my house, my spirit was troubled by sad thoughts. A war blessed by the Catholic hierarchy. A war during which they will persecute many priests by virtue of decisions taken before the commencement of the struggle.»

In this book, which unfortunately has not been translated into Spanish, Señor Aberrigoyen later tells of the crimes committed in provinces such as Navarre and Alava, where there was not, could not be, any sign of a struggle. And he writes :

«The revolution was installed in Navarre one Sunday in July. At once streets and squares became full of red berets. Groups of carlists, to the cry of «Long Live Christ the King» and of

«Let the traitors die» shouted in the Castle square. Among them, and at their head, were many priests with red berets and armed with stakes and pistols. Immediately the Basque Nationalist centres were assaulted, including «Euzko-Etxea». Chairs and tables flew from windows. At the same time, other carlist groups went through bars and taverns, detaining hundreds of people. The prison and the fort of San Cristobal overflowed with persons. On the following day, at dawn, the dry crackle of rifles commenced to sound sadly in the ears of the antifascists. It was the beginning of an unpublished work of atrocious extermination. Every day, for more than four months, nationalists and leftists of Pamplona fell pierced with bullets. This spectacle, capable of horrifying savages, was awaited with joy by the women and young ladies of the aristocracy of Pamplona. The evening before, the notice ran from mouth to mouth : «Tomorrow at six, they are killing in the Ciudadela. Are you coming?» And these people, who even on Sundays did not attend Mass until midday, rose very early, urged on by the cruel desire to watch murder.»

A soldier said to me : «Nearly every morning

they kill twenty to thirty people. As a considerable number of spectators attend the executions we, the soldiers, go to keep order. It is terrible, They shout, they insult the victims, hardly anyone cries. When the execution is over, the people comment «that fair one—one of those shot—was brave». or «That other seemed to be a villain. How furiously he looked at us». Just as if they had witnessed a bullfight.

In a working class quarter, called Lartza-pea, near the station of Pamplona, there is not a family which does not mourn the death of one or another of their family. On the 15th of August, after a great procession, the requetes took the prison by assault. They made fifty nine prisoners come out. They put them in a truck and took them to a place named Bardenas, where they assassinated them. Among the victims was Señor Cayuela, a lawyer. On one day only, fifty-three people were assassinated in Tafalla. According to the statistics established by the person who gave me the information of the deed, a hundred and one children remained without their fathers.

«In Milagros 183 people were assassinated. In Peralta, 97. In Caparroso, 80. According to the parson of Caparroso, a Franco enthusiast,

who boasted of having been in the current of the preparations for the fascist revolution, there are 621 corpses in the mountains of Arciprestazgo.

In Larraga, a widower was detained and taken to the place named Berminanza, where he was executed. His only daughter, of fifteen, who witnessed the execution at a distance of some forty metres, began to cry out. The requetes ran over to her, overpowered her, violated her and then killed her.

«In the surrounding of Vera there exists a quarry named Aragaiztakoarabia. Every day, during the first months of the revolution, 30 or 40 unfortunates could be seen sitting on the stones, their hands and feet tied. Before them the requetes and phalangists who mounted guard made those who passed by on the road stop to witness the spectacle. Some showed their terror. Others, more cruel, insulted the unhappy ones, who when night fell were shot and on the following day buried in the cemetery or in the place named Bartzalekua, whether they had been confessed or not.

From the window of a house, where I was staying, the mountain on which the fort of San Cristobal rises could be seen. It was ten at

night. I saw the glow of two powerful beacons descending, ghostlike. «What is that?» I asked. «That is the phantom car,» they replied to me. «Every night it takes five or six prisoners to the place of execution.»

«One night I went by car to the heights of Perdon», a friend told me, «and the chauffeur, stretching out his arm, said to me 'More than a hundred corpses are buried here, among them that of Señor Bengaray.»

As regards Alava, one sole witness, also from these pages, deserves to be mentioned for its terrifying cruelty.

«Of all the crimes committed in Alava» says Señor Aberrigoyen, «that which has affected me most is that related by a priest of Vitoria.»

«In a village of Rioja (undoubtedly the Rioja of the Alava) in a house which they had managed to build with their savings, lived a young couple. One day the requetes arrived and asked to see the husband. He came out. They arrested him. They made him stand up before the wall of little garden. They obliged him to stretch out his arms in a cross. He obeyed. The requetes said to him «Cry 'Long live Christ the King'». The man acceded. Then one of the requetes, provided with a large bayonet, amputa-

ted his arm. Once more they ordered him «Cry 'Long live Christ the King'». The unhappy man cried out a second time and the same re-quete, with the same bloody bayonet, amputated the other arm. They wished to return to the beginning. The man, his energies wasted, fervently and in a dying voice, repeated «Long live Christs the King». At the end he fell in a faint. The requetes killed him by covering him with bullet wounds. He was Pedro Rodriguez. His wife witnessed this horrible spectacle. She herself related it to me. The unfortunate woman, some time later, victim of terrible nervous attacks, went mad.»

Here we have organised ferocity, prepared beforehand. Lists of men who had to be assassinated were made months before, and in these lists the men who fight according to them in the name of God, include the priests of God. Well then, in front of this organised ferocity for which fascist power is responsible, which boasts of having in its hands all elements at its service subject to an iron discipline, I tell you, without exculpating them, that having had crimes produced on this side by popular feeling, when the Government of the Republic was left

without any of its coercive organs, it is very difficult, I sincerely believe even impossible, to find cases such as those related by Señor Aberrigoyen and in contrast the generosity of the Government of the Republic can be shown. I am going to make a declaration which will surprise many, a declaration which is unaccompanied by any gesture of repentance. I say before you, I say before Spain which listens to me, that Spain here, and over there, that three of the present ministers of the Franco Government have been in our hands, two of them in prison. They are Señor Peña, Minister of Public Works who fifteen days before the constitution of the Government of Burgos, passed tranquilly through the streets of Valencia, and señores Fernández Cuesta and Serrano Suñer, ministers of Agriculture and Interior, whom we had in prison. What a contrast between the organised ferocity of the other side and the generosity which perhaps some of you consider punishable. But here we have this truth. In the Franco Government three men figure as Ministers who were in our hands and whose lives we have respected.

I continue to be watchful that my words do not contain judgments concerning the present

course of the war nor concerning the bearing of it. I repeat, forgive the monotony, that that right belongs exclusively to the Government, which we should respect. But it is lawful for me, now that I can speak freely, lacking the connection which figuring in the Government imposes—I do not think I shall commit any excess, but if there were any, I should be the only one responsible—to examine the internacional aspect of our struggle in order to drown in this examination my sorrow as a Spaniard and my sorrow as a Socialist.

I have said incidentally, pointing out just exceptions, that the whole world in its official representations, has attempted to strangle us. If we were to believe in miracles, we would consider it a miracle that we can still continue to defend ourselves with vigour, when the whole world has abandoned us, not to say betrayed us. Some discovered the unwieldy machine of «Non-Intervention» which was at the beginning—my honest judgment cannot take me farther than that—a great error and which has been converted into a great villainy. My pain as a socialist, which I confess here publicly, comes from not having seen in the action of the socialist rulers abroad that support which we

had a right to expect, not for the sake of political solidarity, but for state duty reasons. Ah, I do not understand (if through what I say arms and munitions go to enemies of our Party, let them go, but we will surrender to truth) I do not understand how the socialist parties, responding to their true and intimate feeling, vote enthusiastic messages of adhesion to our cause, yet those who rule in the name of these same parties, from the heights of power grasp our throats to strangle us.

We are now weaving a very dramatic history, whose chapters we know first because we have lived and suffered them. But no one, no matter how great their imagination, can fix beforehand the unravelling of this situation, if the war in Spain should be the prologue of a European hecatomb or, on the other hand, should be limited to a localised struggle which will end by exhausting Spanish energies. I shall not enter into predictions to which my fancy may lead me. The evident thing is that we are living, as Spaniards and Europeans, through an intensely dramatic era, and in face of the immense drama, every one should place his own responsibility. Before now I have said that the most eloquent orators of the world.

might join in defence of such contradictory conduct as that which I have just pointed out, between the socialist parties and their representatives in the governments, and all together would be incapable of justifying the contradiction to the masses. How can the popular parties, socialists, workers, adhere to our attitude, desire our victory in their hearts, and yet the representatives of those same parties in power deny us indispensable aid? I am certain, speaking of my epoch in the Government, and I do not think things have changed, that we have not asked for any gift from anyone. And I am certain also, in order to elucidate the truth, that no one has made us a gift of anything. We were a legitimate Government, whose legitimacy, from the point of view of those nations to which I refer, is made evident by its diplomatic representations, which credit the fact that there is no other legitimate Government than that of the Republic, that there is not in Spain any more legal foundation than that of the Republican institutions, which were freely given to the people and which freely, when the war ends, if the people wish it, can be maintained or modified. When the war ends—for until the war ends nothing else can arise but the fusion

of all in one block, in one flint to defend the Fatherland. I shall return to the theme, from which passion had made me depart for a moment.

It is alleged that the fact that appointed representations figure in the Government, with one or another signification (I wish to see them all fused in common aspirations) that that fact of the existence of appointed representations of communities which, politically or syndically, can be considered extreme, were the cause of this attitude of the European powers. But when they formed the «Non-Intervention» pact, neither anarchists, communists nor even socialists were in the Government! It was a Republican Government in its entirety, without extremist tendencies, and it was that government to which the necessary arms and munitions were denied.

Many shams on international soil must be cleared up. It will be impossible to liquidate all of them for they are infinite. What I have just said is undeniable. Ah, was it that the countries mentioned feared that the Spanish people, in the commotion produced by the military rising, would with their impetus take the social and political regime of Spain further

from that which concerns them? That is probable. I say more. It is certain. I have spoken with great anticipation—a pamphlet being distributed today at the door of this theatre records it—of the brake which the nations of Westren Europe have put on the revolutionary possibilities of Spain.

At whose iniciative was Non-Intervention established? Officially, on that of France, but we have heard it whispered that it was at the suggestion of England. That would not surprise me. Englan has been converted, by its power and situation, into the principal element of the Europe not subject to totalitarian regimes. Great, enormous and immense is her responsibility in this rôle which history appears to have given her. But England, at the present time, only serves to make the defensive power of the European democracies weaker. The case of Spain and the case of Czechoslovakia are twins. What has become of English pride, traditional English pride? It appears to have been dissipated, when Italians and Germans sink British ships and assassinate English seamen. Who would have said this to us, who in our lessons on international politics met constantly with the theme of the pride, the arrogance of

England, which would not permit the slightest injury to her material interests nor the slightest attempt against the life of her subjects! There they lie, sunk in the waters of our ports, those ships on whose sterns waved the British flag, and there they lie, in our cemeteries, the bodies of English seamen, who have paid with their lives for the confident credulity that the Empire would protect them.

Spain, which has asked gifts of no one, who only claimed her right, found herself hindered by the pact of «Non-Intervention» which, as I have said before, commenced as a great error and has been converted into a tremendous villainy. It is the noose which has been placed round our neck. The international aspect of our struggle deserves that we should take the trouble to devote some more words to it.

Internationally we have been victims of all possible outrages. History will have to glean examples of similar outrages from the remotest of its pages, and it will certainly find them in colonial enterprises against savage tribes. Outrages such as have been inflicted on Spain will not have been found to have been commit-

ted against civilised nations. This does not only mean the negation of the legitimate right of Spain to acquire arms and all the other elements of war indispensable for the maintenance of her sovereignty and independence. There is, as well, the unusual fact that certain nations have recognised a rebel committee as a legitimate government, a recognition without precedent, because it was made when the rebellion was scarcely initiated and without the appearance of triumph. Without protest from anyone, with the more or less explicit assent of the rest of the nations, certain countries conceded to Franco and his lieutenants the rank of a legal Government, when it was no more than a committee of rebels.

Is it necessary to record the constant aggressions to which our ships and our ports have been subjected by the foreign aeroplanes and warships? Why, if it is sufficient to mention them, extend the commentary regarding the bombardment against Almeria by the German squadron, with the silent complicity of the other European nations? But this is not all. Descending in the scale of outrages, we find ourselves confronted with the spectacle of Foreign Embassies converted into homes for deserters and centres of espionage...

I wish to believe that at the beginning it was a feeling of pity which moved a great part of the diplomatic representatives accredited to the Government of the Republic to give cover in their official residences to people who, really or supposedly, felt themselves menaced and considered their lives in danger. But to what degeneration did this initial sentiment descend?

In the first place, this cover was not given only in the official residences of the Embassies which, by virtue of the right of extraterritoriality, it was not lawful for the Spanish authorities to investigate or register. But they also established asylums outside the official mansions, providing annex buildings or distant ones, nearly whole blocks of houses in Madrid, in order that there within, the traitors might continue working against the legality of the Republic and might at times give great banquets while the people of Madrid split their soul in the trenches and women and children bit their hands to ease their hunger.

But did the foreign governments in whose representative residences and large annexes these things occurred ignore them? The ignorance of facts, including the most patent and

indisputable ones is, on the face of it, one of the greatest games of diplomacy. Some Embassies or Legations became converted into extensions of the Ritz or Palace with very high quotas, and they began to constitute a rich business. And I say also that there were Embassies where they falsified passports, succeeding in taking out of Spain, disguised as foreign subjects, Spanish military who repassed the frontier to unite with the invading army.

We have suffered all outrages. Leave the imagination free to discover others, and you will with difficulty find new ones.

Nor do I wish to speak—why should I?—of that great stage for all farces, the immense palace where cynicism may be seen in a dress coat, which is called the League of Nations.

Europe is in a stage of tension. Although they wish to present the vacations of the great European rulers as passing very placidly, the aggressive spirit of totalitarian nationalism should alarm them. If war breaks out, and even if it does not—I speak of a European war, as you understand—is Spain a pawn to be despised? Those who think thus make a tremendous error. For, even though Spain were not militarily dominated by Italians and Ger-

mans, but simply by their political and economic influence on our territory, this as regards France, so submissive to English suggestions, this represents for France a far greater danger than that which an enemy line from Bayonne to Narbonne could constitute.

I am not going to disclose things which, evidently, those in France who assume the direction of military affairs saw from the first instant. To some more competent of them was attributed in September 1936 the just phrase that it would be cheaper for France to give Spain five hundred aeroplanes than to have to fortify the Pyrenees afterwards. We do not ask this gift. We ask simply, that they will grant us armaments, not on credit but for our gold, cash down with advance payment! And they denied them to us. And they denied them to us with the special detail, as regards France, of the fact that the Treaty of Commerce concluded in 1935 contained a clause by virtue of which we were obliged to buy war material from her with preference. When the Spanish State asks for this material, because she needs it, and when at the very doors of France, Irun, a multitude maddened with courage reached the point of killing themselves

for lack of munitions, France then denies us this war material which she had solemnly agreed to sell us and with which, in a very short time, we could have attained the smashing of the rebellion.

Outrage after outrage, aggression after aggression, damage on damage, thus we have been continuing, alone. Alone! And thanks to the courage of the People's Army, the Army of the People, the Army of Spain, as it has justly been called by some of my interruptors, we still live, and for that reason only. And only to this do we owe the fact that multitudes of workers and democrats are reacting in the nearby countries. But, how lingeringly, how slowly. And how quickly do the battlefields consume the youth and blood of Spain!

Here, on our own flesh, the experiment of the great and possible European war is being tried out. Here cities are destroyed to prove the efficacy of high explosives, and with the rubbish of destroyed buildings fall, scattered, the shapeless remains of the aged, of women and children.

Italy and Germany are giving living experience, through us, to their aircraft, their ar-

tillery, their ships, on our flesh, shedding our blood, all at our cost. Exclusively at our cost (a voice : «Those who consent to it will pay for it !»)

A great sacrifice, an enormous sacrifice is that of the Spanish people. «They will pay for it !», says a commentator. They will pay for it. A lamentable consolation, for we feel the ardour of our liberty and that of the liberty of others. Let them not pay for it. Let them not pay for it ! Let them not pay for it, but let them avert the danger which they are causing themselves, although we are the only ones who will pay.

The experiences of all modern elements of war are being acquired on our own flesh, with the death of Spaniards, with the destruction of Spanish wealth. From the Balearics they are experimenting with the possibility of dominating the Western Mediterranean, having a base in that Spanish archipelago. Magnificent results are those achieved by this experiment. Evidently practice has proved the theory that who dominates the Balearics dominates the whole of the Western bowl of the Mediterranean, cutting the routes of England to part of her Empire and of France to her colonies, es-

pecially those of the north of Africa. The experiment is splendid.

But those most interested in the lessons of this experiment are putting on a bandage, that of fear, shutting their eyes and leaving Europe, the whole of Europe, at the mercy of two gamblers, maybe possessed by demons of insanity, who one day may set light to the powder magazine and make of Europe a gigantic ruin without par in the history of the great world hecatombs. Let them not pay! If there must be sacrifices, let us be the only ones!

When the end of our struggle arrives and Spain has to play her part in the European concert, if they dominate us, which will never happen, the totalitarian nations will have here a strong fortress against England and France, that of their power entrenched on our soil: that of the submission of all instruments of Government to their will: that of the ownership of all our industries and of all our deposits of raw materials.

If the defeat should come, slavery would come. The vanquished, vanquished by the asphyxia of the remainder, would we have the courage to raise our heads and proclaim our friendship towards them? Friendship requires reciprocity and is never subordination.

I must necessarily cut short my discourse now. I am watching the clock and I see that it is late. I shall sum up what remained for me to say. The last link with my words of two years ago and those of today is the ruin of Spain.

In the reply which Franco gave in the end to the Government in London with respect to the withdrawal of volunteers, the final paragraph reads thus: «National Spain does not wish, ultimately, to let slip this opportunity of addressing the Non-Intervention Committee, on which nearly the whole of Europe is represented, to let it and the world know, in order to dispel a certain uneasiness created by intensive propaganda carried on by the enemy to complicate the international situation, to solemnly confirm former affirmations that it fights for the grandeur and independence of the Fatherland and does not tolerate and will never tolerate the slightest mortgage of her soil, nor of her economy, and that it will regain possession of every inch of her territory, of the zones of protectorate and of her colonies if anyone intends to make any attempt against them.»

As rhetoric, the paragraph is perfect. But what foundation of reality does such an affirmation have? What is a mortgage? A mortgage

according to the forensic definition, is a lien established on immovable goods (lastly, even as far as movable goods, for there exists a naval mortgage) subjecting them to respond to the fulfilling of an obligation, the payment of a debt.

My experience permits me to say that Franco is waging the war on the base of foreign credit. As the reserves of gold and silver of the Bank of Spain remained intact in the power of the legitimate Government of the Republic, and as at the beginning the three principal banking places of Spain, Madrid, Barcelona and Bilbao remained within our zone, Franco never had at any time sufficient funds to maintain the war. Nor will the plantains, the cork trees, the choice wines, wool, iron ore, pyrites, ingots which he is supplying to Germany and Italy be sufficient to pay. Well weighed, the entire volume of all these exports, by which our wealth goes abroad, would not be sufficient, by a long way, to pay the enormous expenses of the war. He works on a basis of foreign credit. If a foreign credit exists, a mortgage exists.

If my affirmations are not sufficient. I have here the translation of an economic study which was published some few weeks ago in such an authoritative German periodical as the Frank-

furt Gazette. This study commences with a declaration which cannot fail to be of interest. It says : «The economic situation of the country when the war began (speaking of Spain) was not unfavourable. From the foundation of the Republican regime, in Abril 1931, economy remained balanced throughout the great crisis. Export trade was well maintained. Production figures, steady enough, indicated that the country was sufficiently free from the world crisis. The difficulties arising were from the economic social organisation and from a badly regulated financial policy, partly a heritage from the Primo Rivera dictatorship.»

But what interests me in this document is the following, relating to the exports realised by Franco and the increase which this has shown as a result of the occupation of the North. «The increase of exports makes it possible to be able to dispose of reserves in foreign exchange, which it has now been possible to use, IN A SMALL PART to cover the credits for the supply of war material.»

And later, returning to the theme, the Frankfurt Gazette says :

«We cannot express the utilisation of foreign credits in figures. Credits have had to be utili-

sed on a small scale for the supply of ordinary merchandise. ON THE OTHER HAND THE CREDIT IS USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR SUPPLIES OF MERCHANDISE FOR THE DIRECT OR INDIRECT NECESSITIES OF THE WAR. Details are lacking, but it is believed that lately this sphere of action has been governed... SMALL PARTS OF THE PRODUCTS FOR EXPORT should now be put at the disposal of the services dealing with the interest and liquidation of these credits. Once the long war is over those charges proceeding from the epoch of war will be made known in all their fullness.»

Consequently it is declared in an authoritative manner that Franco is waging the war by means of foreign credits. Are they only those of Germany and Italy? Perhaps, but I have no absolute certainty of it. Sometimes I begin to suspect whether certain mysteries in international political order might not be cleared up with the discovery of foreign credits opened with the fascists and which do not come from Germany and Italy.

Through the lessons learned by living the secrets of war intimately, I am certain—I do not wish to leave it to mere suspicion—that

they have been undermining the Spanish countryside on two sides to produce this tremendous clash and weaken, exhaust and ruin Spain.

There is no doubt—it is demonstrated by documents—that in our territory, from the very commencement of the Republic, and even perhaps before, from the time when its coming was divined, the rebellion was planned by Italy and Germany. It could have had no semblance of reality without the support of these two nations. But perhaps there are other people abroad who delight in weakening us.

But let us return to the thesis. Are there foreign credits? There is a mortgage, though Franco says the opposite.

Well then, let us contemplate the perspective after the war. I wished that to be the foundation of my dissertation, but by force I have to sum it up owing to the lateness of the hour.

Spain when the war is over—listen well, because this is the result of a firm conviction—Spain will be ruined. Whatever may be the result of the war, the ruin of Spain is inevitable. Take from this affirmation of mine that volume of pessimism in which, according to some people, I drown things. Spain after the

war, I repeat, will be ruined, and we shall have to raise Spain up. We cannot let her die. This then is the prospect, terrible and august at the very least, which this generation and those which follow it have before them. If victory accompanies us, for which with you, I pray, the economic situation of Spain will be very lightened, because the debts contracted by Franco, by the fascist power, do not place the legitimate Government of the Republic under any obligation. There are those who estimate those debts in Germany alone, at a thousand million dollars. The figure is enormous, but I do not think it is far from the truth.

As walls can hear, I can tell you that recently the German Ambassador at Burgos said : «Nazism in Spain is impossible. All attempts made to achieve it are so much insanity. Spain will not admit Nazism. It is impossible to implant it there. Ah, but Germany will have to collect what she has lent Franco to the last mark».

Here is the mortgage, here is the fruit of betrayal. But, even if there were no debts—on our side there are none—even if we save ourselves from the gigantic ones contracted by the fascists, pass your gaze over the ruins produced by the war. See the condition of the towns where

stains of blood can be seen on the rubbish of destroyed buildings. Contemplate the aisles of factories and workshops destroyed by aviation. Think of the disappearance of the merchant navy, sunk in our ports and on the way to them, not by submarines but by ships of greater size with the Italian flag at the stern, before the indifference if not the applause of the remaining European nations.

Remember our jumbled railways with their rolling stock destroyed, its permanent ways terribly damaged. Observe the sunken brigades, and finally, think of all that Spain must rebuild and rebuild rapidly to assure her life, for her life is in danger while all these elements of which I have spoken remain out of action and out of production.

All this must be reconstructed. And where will Spanish savings go? To the aid of private industry? To needs of the State, which will be immense at the conclusion of the war? Nowhere, for Spanish savings do not exist. We have spent them all on the war.

For our part we have the immense satisfaction of not having contracted responsibilities, other than the very secondary one of having fostered to a certain extent, the atmosphere

for the rising. The responsibility is theirs, the rebels. We, in fighting, are now defending not our honour but our own life. We are exercising the legitimate, the sacred right of defence. The responsibility of those who provoked this immense catastrophe is enormous.

Public and private savings will be extinguished when the war is over. I affirm it roundly, as the fruit of a conviction which words and reasons to the contrary cannot destroy. And then, how to solve the problem of not leaving Spain to perish in ruins?

How shall we resolve the truly frightful problem of deficient harvests of cereals, should this happen, as so often in our country, after the war? Hunger would dominate the people through inability to import wheat. I tell you— I pointed it out some time ago amid protests which I do not now wish to remember— that a foreign loan will be indispensable. Now, I have said many times, as a socialist I am an internationalist. But that does not diminish my Spanish nationalism. Every foreign loan is to a greater or lesser degree, a mortgage.

We or those who follow us, should we have perished, will have to take exquisite care that the foreign loan, absolutely indispensable

through lack of pecuniary reserves of our own, is made in a form which does not imperil our independence. Without independence there is no dignity. Misery is not dignity, in spite of what some scholars say. I assure you of this, who have passed through it. Well then, do you know what kind of a foreign loan I am thinking of? Of one wherein he who lends us the money will have no desire to extend a grip over Spanish soil. I think of America. I fear that any foreign loan, proceeding from European nations, places the independence and life of Spain in immediate danger, whose geographic situation is enviable and whose destinies in the History of Europe and of the world may yet be grand.

Spain, which bled to discover the new world and which, according to the legend, impoverished herself to civilise those lands, should now return to the sight of her daughters and say to them : «Help me. Lift me up from my prostration. You who cannot have any imperialistic designs on my soil : you who by your distance cannot desire my strangulation : you, daughters of Spain and on your borders with her economic power and distance from European discord, the United States of the North, help me, each according to your strength and without prejudice to your interests. Make it possible for

all that has been destroyed to be quickly reconstructed for that is the only way in which Spain will not perish. We desire, we can tell, them not only to recompose the damaged and rebuild the destroyed. We desire more. Rightists and Leftists, monarchists and Republicans, workers and employers, from the times of Costa and before Costa, all Spaniards have agreed unanimously that a splendid economic resurrection of Spain would have a very firm foundation on hydraulic works.

Spain has wished to proceed towards the realisation of these works through State resources. It has not been sufficient in normal times. Works advanced very slowly. From now onwards it will be impossible to continue them, not even with the slow rhythm they had before. But the filial help of America, through a loan with discreet elasticity, could rapidly convert Spain into a flowering garden, assuring her thus security of life.

There are now anxious glances from Europe towards North America, asking help for war. We do not ask even a minimum for this. We have not been heard anywhere in regard to this. But why not ask tomorrow for aid for peace, for the raising up of Spain? That this country of ours, which broke its vitality disco-

vering America and civilising it shall lovingly take the arms of those nations and that they shall say to Spain: «Spain, mother, rise up and walk, supported by the arms of your daughters».

The other side is always exclaiming about Spain, where the fascists have the word ever on their lips. Do we not then feel love for her? We are as much Spaniards as anyone.

The Spaniards may die, but Spain must live. Spain must be immortal. We must raise her up in order that she may become great, with all the golden splendour of her ancient history.

This work will be completed by the generations who follow us, and the Socialist Party which today fulfils its fiftieth anniversary, and which has dedicated its life in self-denial and sacrifice, in heroism and martyrdom, to the service of Spain, will be a guide for these. The Socialist Party I wish to be immortal. For this it struggles now in defence of its liberty and freedom.

