

FRANCO: SHAKE-UP AND SHAKE-DOWN

Alvarez del Vayo, former Foreign Minister of the Spanish republic, lifts the curtain on the recent Cabinet shifts. Berlin's not-so-secret operations in Madrid. The futile policy of appeasement.

Alvarez del Vayo was Foreign Minister of the Spanish republic, and is now in this country, associated with the "Nation," and the Free World Association. The following address was released to the press after having been broadcast on WQXR in New York under the auspices of the World Peaceways Forum, Sept. 13, 1942.

I AM happy to have this opportunity of presenting the Spanish issue before you. The recent political crisis has succeeded in obscuring the real facts about the situation in Spain. On the one hand, there are people who honestly believe that Franco has swung to the side of the Allies. They feel that the statement made by President Roosevelt a few days earlier announcing a joint effort by all the American nations to help restore Spain's cultural monuments played a role in precipitating the shake-up. On the other hand, there are those who suspect that the Cabinet changes are just another Axis maneuver designed to make the Allies believe that a shift which involves Franco's own brother-in-law must mean a Spanish-Allied rapprochement.

If we accept the thesis that Spain's foreign policy is involved in the crisis, the second interpretation approaches the truth more nearly than the first. But to be perfectly honest, I don't believe that Berlin had much to do with Franco's recent moves. The explanation, it seems to me, is much simpler than that. Perhaps Freda Kirchwey has given the most accurate and lucid explanation of what happened, in an article which appeared in the *Nation*. She says: "Franco moved with decision; he took the most striking step possible, tossing his own brother-in-law, the Foreign Minister and head of the Falanx, to the army. And then in a dramatic counter-move he threw Varela himself to the Falanx [Falange]."

The fact is, the new Spanish Cabinet members represent exactly the same foreign policy as did their predecessors. It is true that Senor Serrano Suner, Franco's brother-in-law, was one of the most outspoken and enthusiastic Naziphiles in the whole Franquist party. But we mustn't forget that his successor, General Jordana, was Franco's Foreign Minister during the entire Spanish war and helped to install the Germans and Italians in Spain. The only difference between the two is that Serrano Suner typifies the modern fascist and has a more adroit mind than the general, who is an ardent monarchist and cannot be considered a member of the Falanx. But the new Minister of the Interior, Blas Gomez Perez, and the new Minister without Portfolio, Manuel Mora Figueroa, are both 100 percent Falangists whose membership in the party long antedates that of Serrano Suner himself.

Remember Pearl Harbor!

WE ARE grateful for this opportunity to publish Senor Alvarez del Vayo's analysis of the recent Cabinet shifts in Madrid. What he says should scotch those rosy estimates—evidently inspired by certain gentlemen in our State Department—that the shifts represented a gesture on behalf of the United Nations, a triumph for their appeasement policies. The truth, evidently, is at the opposite pole. The whole business recalls the maneuvers Nomura and Kuruu pulled those tragic days before Pearl Harbor, when diplomacy screened impending military actions.

Consider the background to the Cabinet changes. They occur at a moment when the whole Axis world speculates upon the imminence of a land invasion of the Continent. The shifts are made when the widespread dissatisfaction of certain leading categories within Spain—and popular resentment goaded by a regime of hunger—reaches the point of explosion. They come, too, at a time when Mexico's and Brazil's entry into the war alter the relationship of forces within Hispano-America to the detriment of the Axis. The Falange, Hitler's agency south of the Rio Grande, finds its base for operations narrowing rapidly.

Understanding these things, and understanding too that Franco Spain is an integral part of the Axis setup, as Senor del Vayo indicates, now is the time to take the offensive against Franco on this continent. Instead, we find that the State Department helps strengthen the caudillo's hand. It does not proclaim the truth to our neighbors and allies of the south but bursts forth with a "cultural rehabilitation" scheme. United States Ambassador Hayes, a Franco sympathizer, states sympathetically that he understands Spain's position in this war; Sir Samuel Hoare, a notorious Munichman and Britain's ambassador to Madrid, returns to London with suspicious plans. All this while popular anger and popular action increase within Spain.

Undoubtedly the policy of the State Department confuses our friends within the oppressed nations, and confounds our allies whom we urge to expend maximum effort against Hitler. This dangerous—and stupid—policy provides time for Franco, precious time to prepare his attack in consonance with the plans of his Berlin masters.

If Hitler fears the imminence of a second front, one of his preparations would be to attack Gibraltar, bottle up the western Mediterranean while he continues his program in the eastern part of that sea. And for that he needs a strengthened Franco. And, tragically, we too are building him up.

Yes, "Remember Pearl Harbor" is a slogan that the American people have adopted. It is tragic that our State Department is not operating under that battle-cry.

The day before the shake-up occurred, on the very day of the shake-up, and on the following day, the German broadcasts to Latin America quoted the Spanish official press which outdid itself in eulogizing the exploits of the German army on the Russian front, and in attacking the United States. Two days later the papers devoted two lines to the latest speech of President Roosevelt and a column and a half to a vicious attack on that speech wired from Berlin.

THE most extraordinary feature of the whole affair, it seems to me, is the apparent difficulty of officials in the Allied capitals in understanding what is happening in Spain. Certainly official Spain has made no secret of the attitude of the Franco government and the Falanx toward the United Nations. We need no Secret Service to find out that there are approximately 100,000 Nazis in Spain today. It is an open secret that these Nazis command and control the police, the radio, and the propaganda machinery of Spain. And it is equally well known that Hitler's ambassador to Spain, Baron von Stohrer, is one of the most influential men in Madrid. Most people have probably forgotten by this time the role that Baron von Stohrer played in the last world war when he was a member of the German Embassy staff in Madrid. It was he who organized the gangs of terrorists in Barcelona whose job it was to assassinate Catalonian industrialists then producing war material for the Allies. Von Papen was in charge of the same kind of "activity" in the United States at that time. It is natural to have forgotten events which took place twenty-five years ago. But who can overlook Baron von Stohrer's interference in the present foreign policy of Spain?

Less known is the fact that the Spanish army is also largely under the direct command of the Nazis. Certainly the Allied governments must know it, for just a month ago the Spanish General Beigbeder made a dramatic flight from Spain to England *a la* Rudolph Hess. General Beigbeder is an important figure—he was at one time the High Commissioner for Morocco, and after the Spanish war succeeded Jordana as Foreign Minister. Upon his arrival in London he stated that he had left Spain because he was not disposed to serve in an army that was subject to foreign command. Surely no one is naive enough to believe that he was referring to British or American officers in the Spanish army! Moreover, it is common knowledge today that several Nazi divisions are now stationed on the French-Spanish border. At any given moment they are prepared to march into Spain, either with the open consent of the Franco government or with the secret acquiescence of Ma-

drid in spite of any formal protests that might be made "for the record." If the opening of a Western Front in Europe is delayed, if Russia should suffer a decisive military setback, the number of these divisions could be sharply increased in order for Hitler to intensify his "ideological" pressure on Spain.

Therefore, all interpretations predicated on the assumption that Franco can be split away from Hitler and won over to the democracies are pure wishful thinking. First: Unless the Allied secret service is in possession of confidential information that General Franco has undergone some miraculous conversion to the democratic cause, one thing is certain: Franco does not want the democracies to win the war. Second: Franco is not the master of Spain. In the three years of terror and hunger that he has forced on the people of Spain in order to stay in power, he has had to seek the cooperation of the Gestapo. And all of us

know that when the Gestapo is invited into a country—and sometimes even when it has not been invited—it quickly takes over the reins.

Under Franco, Spain will remain neutral as long as neutrality suits Hitler's purposes. It is Hitler who decides—not Franco. And right now it suits Hitler's purposes to have a so-called "neutral" Spain which can provide bases for German submarines, send out Falangist agents and Nazi propaganda in Spanish ships calling at Latin American ports—in a word, a Spain that can render all the services that a well trained Quisling such as Franco can offer without even going to war at the side of the Axis.

This much is certain: the democracies haven't the slightest chance of winning Franco to their side. Not a chance to neutralize him against the pressure of Berlin. Sometimes I almost wish they could. After all, I am convinced that Franco cannot survive a Hitler

defeat. After the war no policies of appeasement, no Allied gestures of gratitude to Franco, no Allied loans from Washington and London can keep Franco in power. For if there is any truth in the statement that this is a people's war, then the people of Europe will at last be free to express their will. And the people of Spain free to express theirs.

If I am, then, opposed to the policy of appeasement toward Spain, it is not only because I am opposed in principle to any policy aimed at appeasing the fascist dictators, but because, in the specific case of Franco, I am convinced that those efforts will prove as futile and useless as they did in 1940 when the Allies attempted to woo Mussolini.

It is from the Spanish people, and from them alone, that the Allies must seek genuine support for the cause of the United Nations.

ALVAREZ DEL VAYO.



One of Franco's recent projects to restore Spanish culture. Only a pile of rubble remained after fascist aviators bombed this public building in Madrid.



WATCH on the POTOMAC by BRUCE MINTON

DEATH OF THE POLL TAX?

First licking for the bourbon congressmen and what they are up to now. The unprecedented opportunity to return voting rights to 10,000,000 citizens.

Washington.

THE poll tax can be abolished in the next few weeks. Ten million citizens—6,000,000 whites and 4,000,000 Negroes—can be enfranchised to exercise their democratic privileges in the November election. The immediate need is to muster a mass movement immediately of such proportions and such power that no flashy footwork on the part of the southern bourbons can prevent the knockout.

Of the 218 signatures necessary to bring the Geyer anti-poll tax bill out of the House Judiciary Committee where it has been deliberately buried, 208 have been obtained at this writing. A sufficient public clamor can easily push ten congressmen over the line to complete the petition. The bill will then come to the House floor. Once it is brought into the open, the chances are better than even that Congress will act favorably.

The recent passage of legislation granting the vote to the armed forces, amended to include those who have not paid their poll taxes, jolted congressional opposition back on its heels. The victory represented a good deal more than a grant of equality to service men from the South; as a precedent, it knocked the wind out of poll tax advocates who sought protection in elaborate sophistries of constitutionality and states'



Ro Brown—Office of War Information
"You get five demerits for plinking your teacher, and you are expelled from school for wasting rubber."

rights. If freeing men in the armed forces of the poll tax burden is constitutional and does not invade state sovereignty, then obviously these same legalisms do not carry any more weight when it comes to the voting rights of millions of citizens out of uniform.

The bourbons were quite aware of the danger when the Soldiers Vote Bill came before Congress. They struggled loud and angrily—Senators George and Connally, Representatives Hobbs, Whittington, Rich, and the anti-Semitic, anti-Negro Rankin, shrill-voiced and wizened, his white hair standing on end as he invoked the magic formula of "white supremacy." The spokesmen of feudal gentility raised hell individually and collectively; they threatened and blustered, and pictured democracy violated and dying because democratic prerogatives would be shared with the common people. They lost their fight. The poll tax will never be the same.

They lost, but they still can't be counted out. Forced to give ground on the Soldiers Vote Bill, they are determined to head off any further democratic invasion of their fiefs. Senator Byrd has been scurrying around the Hill organizing a new line of defense. Deals are in the air. The attorney generals of the poll tax states are on their way to Washington to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee with technical, hair-splitting arguments to prove that passing the Pepper bill and granting the ballot to the majority of people in the South would defame the memory of the Founding Fathers.

TODAY the poll tax is a more important issue than at any previous time. For national unity demands that the ends of this people's war—outlined in the Atlantic Charter—must be translated into the means of winning the war. Still incomplete, for example, is the mobilization of the Negro people. To bring the Negro people fully into the war effort requires some significant act. A minimum program would include the elimination of job discrimination; the prevention, and stoppage by force if necessary, of lynch and violence against the Negro people; and the extension to them of the right to vote.

Action against the poll tax, therefore, can no longer be viewed—as has too often been the attitude in the past—as a charitable gesture of good will or reformist condescension. The National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax points out that among the Negro people the struggle for the franchise has become a rallying point of all win-the-war elements. As yet, unfortunately, there exists no unified pro-war Negro movement. A clear-cut victory on the poll tax issue can serve as a catalyst.

Still, it will be no walkover even if public pressure is sufficient to obtain the ten additional signatures that will bring the Geyer bill before Congress. Congressman Geyer of California died last year; there are rumors that an attempt will be made to use his death as an excuse to invalidate the bill even if it is wrenched out of committee. Certainly the southern bloc will filibuster and delay and move to reconsider and take recourse in the thousand and one parliamentary maneuvers open to clever tacticians. And yet they lost their fight on the Soldiers Vote Bill. Public pressure overwhelmed them. Public pressure can defeat them a second time.

The unions are united behind the Geyer bill (and the Pepper bill in the Senate). The administration would welcome repeal. But its leadership in Congress suffered from confusion during the Soldiers Vote Debate. Some administration supporters who opposed the poll tax in theory so feared the consequences of raising the issue that they turned tail at the last moment. "I am fundamentally in sympathy with this amendment," Senator Barkley