

1.6.39.

The following statement was issued to-day by the Basque Delegation in London:

Germany has now not only admitted, but is boasting of, the part she played in the Spanish War. It is of small consequence at this stage that such intervention was strenuously and officially denied by Germany and by General Franco, and that the denials were accepted in good faith by many countries; what is of crucial importance are Germany's present activities in the Peninsula, which are still being denied, and which represent a direct danger to the democratic countries, particularly to Great Britain and France.

For over a year, the Basque Government, at the risk of being misunderstood, have provided detailed information of the air and submarine bases, and the fortifications, which have been established in the Basque Country, Galicia and Spanish Morocco under German supervision; of the vast stores of German armaments which are being accumulated there; of the use of Basque works as German-super-

vised munition factories; and of the complete control the Reich now exerts over Basque economic and industrial activity.

These carefully-confirmed facts are also being denied, and every means possible is being employed to discount them and to suggest that they have been deliberately invented by the Basques to increase tension.

The Basque Government reaffirms every statement and message issued by them on this subject.

They would also urge the peace-loving peoples of the world to remember that, while certain German troops are being repatriated from the Peninsula, German war technicians and arms are not being removed; and industrial and commercial activity, as well as dealings in foreign currency, are controlled by the semi-official German H.I.S.M.A. and its affiliate organisation.

The Basque Government are confident that these charges will be denied, but would add that German admission of the facts cannot be expected until their purpose has been fully achieve .

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7th July, 1939.

The following reports of activities in Spain have been received by the Basque Government from reliable sources:-

#### FRONTIER ACTIVITIES

A fortress system on the PENAS de AYA range, near OYARZUN, is being constructed for the establishment of modern batteries to cover the whole of this frontier zone.

Concrete-walled trenches are being constructed in the frontier zones of GIPUZKOA and NAVARRE - concrete roads being built behind to give easy access to the trenches.

Council schools at RENTERIA, about 10 miles from the French frontier, have been evacuated to quarter newly-arrived engineer and sapper units and workers' battalions now engaged in frontier fortifications.

Heavy artillery is being concentrated at PASAJES, SAN SEBASTIAN and other Basque towns in the frontier zone.

New consignments of aerial bombs are being stored at TAFALLA, in close proximity to the aerodromes established in NAVARRE.

Materials for fortifications are being transported to the Pyrenean area of CATALONIA.

New consignments of barbed wire and iron bars for trench lines have been unloaded at PASAJES and transported to the frontier zone, where they are closely guarded.

#### NAVAL ACTIVITIES

Two small, new Spanish warships, named EOLO and PLUTON, have been launched at EL FERROL.

The Spanish warship, MENDEZ NUNEZ, is being reconditioned and modernised at the naval dockyards at EL FERROL, where, it is reported, orders have been placed for a new battleship.

New consignments of sea-mines are being stored at the port of CADIZ, where a number of mine-laying and mine-sweeping trawlers are harboured.

### MILITARY MOVEMENTS

Contrary to official reports from Italy and Spain, there are still large numbers of Italian "volunteers", particularly in Castillian provincial towns, where lorry services are run for them by the C.T.V. (Comando Trupe Volontari).

Regular Army officers who served with General Franco have been recalled to the colours. The following order was recently issued by the Mobilisation Headquarters of the Spanish Army:-

"All Army Officers of the 1926 to 1931 classes who have been licensed shall again be incorporated to their former posts, until the completion of the reorganisation of the Army".

It is reported that the Canary Islands are being visited by large numbers of Germans in civilian clothes who claim to be commercial agents, but who are believed to be military experts.

It is reported that GENERAL GAMBARA, who commanded the Italian troops in Spain during the Civil War, is to be appointed Military Attache to the Italian Embassy at Madrid.

Large numbers of Italian Army Officers are still being seen at San Sebastian.

It is now confirmed that the 62nd Division of the Spanish Army, numbering 10,000 troops, is quartered at SAN SEBASTIAN and nearby villages.

During the past few weeks there has been a marked increase in the number of troops concentrated in Northern Navarre. Between ERRAZU and ARIZCUN there are 600 troops; while in villages in the Valley of BAZTAN (Navarre) there are a further 3,000 troops, together with some 300 horses and mules for mountain transport.

INDUSTRIAL AND GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Recent statistical estimates show that 80 per cent. of Spain's mineral production is now being exported to Germany.

A third German furnace has been installed at ALTOS HORNOS DE VIZCAYA, and a fourth is on order.

Special postal facilities, free from censorship, have been granted to the German semi-official trading organisation, H.I.S.M.A.

A further consignment of 1,700 tons of cement has been shipped from Bilbao to Germany.

The Catalan cloth industry is at a complete standstill; while some 40-50,000 workers in the Catalan cork industry are unemployed.

All the personnel of the Barcelona - Vitoria Air Line is German.

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The following reports of activities in Northern Spain have been received by the Basque Government from reliable sources:-

### COASTAL DEFENCES

Great activity is being displayed in fortifying, under foreign supervision, the Bay of Biscay and the Atlantic coasts. Near the coast at LA CORUNA and VIGO in Galicia, and in ASTURIAS, new modern aerodromes are reported to be under construction. Great quantities of cement are being shipped at the port of PASAJES (GUIPUZCOA) for the ports of LA CORUNA, VIGO and ASTURIAS.

It has been confirmed that new batteries are being planned for the Port of BILBAO and SANTURCE; in BERMEO near the CAPE of MACHICHACO, and at the port of DEVA. In this connection, German technicians are making topographical surveys for battery emplacements for the defence of BILBAO and other Basque ports.

It is reported that the re-organisation schemes, which Italy and Germany have planned for Spain, include the re-  
armament of the Spanish fleet and coastal fortifications.

### TROOP MOVEMENTS

There are reports of the massing of troops in the northern area of Spain, the official reason given being that they are to attend the anniversary celebrations of the fall of BILBAO on June 19th. Large garrisons are being established in capital cities and other Basque towns. The Fourth Navarrese Division, numbering 14,000 men, has been stationed at BILBAO.

The 1st and 7th "Bandera" of the Falange Espanola Army Corps has been quartered at PAMPLONA (NAVARRE).

It has been decided to station 10,000 troops permanently at SAN SEBASTIAN, and it is reported that the 62nd Division of the Spanish Army is also being concentrated in the Basque Country.

## FRENCH FRONTIER ACTIVITIES

During the last few days, several foreign military officers have taken up quarters at the frontier town of ELIZONDO (NAVARRE). During the war, these officers made frequent visits to the frontier zone, and went up to the borders dressed in plain clothes. Now they wear military uniforms, and are officially established in frontier posts.

Two Italian officers, chiefs of the Vigilance Service, are with the military detachment which is quartered in ARIZCUN, at the junction of the roads to the frontier villages (passes) of AIZPEGUI and DANCHARINCA.

It is further reported that the Pyrenean frontier with France has been divided into three sectors for purposes of fortifications: CATALONIA, ARAGON and NAVARRE.

Engineer material is being delivered to frontier depots. Several units of engineers have been ordered to the frontier zone. One of them is quartered at PAMPLONA (NAVARRE).

Four batteries of guns have arrived at RENTERIA, which is 8 kilometres from the frontier. A battalion of engineers has been quartered in the old jute factory in this town.

The Italian military contingent at VITORIA, which is in charge of the cartographical work, and was to have been repatriated last month, has now received counter-orders.

The "Military Geographic Institute" at VITORIA, run by Italians, is now more active than ever. At present the cartographical activities of this Italian organisation are mainly concerned with the Pyrenees and the French territory contiguous with Spain. A large number of maps of French territory are known to have been produced by this organisation.

Information has been received that German agents at SAN SEBASTIAN have bought land at VILLABONA (GUIPUZCOA) for the erection of a factory for the manufacture of aeroplanes.

## PERSECUTIONS

The Military Tribunal of the 6th Region (BURGOS), which includes EUZKADI (the Basque Country), has laid before the Spanish Government a proposed scheme for the application of "strict justice", which reads as follows:

"It is necessary to institute new proceedings, as well as to look into the old ones. As far as the 6th Region is concerned, there are towns and villages where the purge of citizens has not been carried out. It is necessary, therefore, to take proceedings in every town, village and hamlet, in order to clear and adjudicate political responsibility in accordance with the law of February 9th (Law of Political Responsibilities). It is not the moment for granting amnesties, either large or small, but for reopening former proceedings".

Basque prisoners of war who, after two years of hard labour, have returned to their native villages, are being beaten and incarcerated by the Fascist elements of the civilian population. These "incidents" are unofficially allowed by the authorities, and Basque ex-soldiers are living even in worse conditions than when in the concentration camps.

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Early in May a consignment of two-and-a-half million rounds of rifle ammunition arrived by rail at PAMPLONA.

Large quantities of war material are being stored at VITORIA, including 10,000 machine-guns and 35,000 rifles, which were unloaded at the Artillery Park.

At BIURRUN-CAMPANAS, in Navarra, a large depot has been established, and large quantities of war material of all kinds are being stored there.

One of the most important warehouses at BILBAO has been requisitioned for the same purpose.

In mid-April, two train-loads of material for field guns were discharged at the port of VIGO from a German ship.

#### DEFENCES

Anti-aircraft work, consisting of fortifications or shelters, is to be started at PAMPLONA very shortly under German technicians. Huge central underground shelters at the Plaza del Castillo are to be planned, the estimates for which, amounting to thirteen million pesetas, have been passed by the authorities. Black-outs are already being practised.

A huge base camp is being established in PAMPLONA for the supply of engineering and construction material to defensive works in the frontier zone.