



## International Brigade Association and Friends of Republican Spain

2 PARTON STREET · LONDON · W.C.1 · PHONE HOL 2735

18th May, 1954.

Mr. Hickman,  
The Basque Legation,  
39, Victoria Street,  
S.W.1.

Dear Sir,

Following my recent conversation with you concerning the plight of Manuel Robles-Arangis now awaiting trial at San Sebastian, I have pleasure in enclosing herewith a list of the Members of Parliament who to date have allowed their names to be added to telegrams to the Spanish Minister of Justice urging clemency for Manuel Robles-Arangis.

Also to date the Constructional Engineering Union and the Association of Engineering & Shipbuilding Draughtsmen have protested to the Spanish Embassy, London, on his behalf.

We have made an appeal also to all Labour Parties in Gt. Britain to send protests on this case and I anticipate very many responses in the near future.

I should be very grateful to know whether there is any further information as to the likely date of trial.

You also mentioned that you would have forwarded to me copies of Oficina Prensa Euzkadi for which I should be most grateful.

We hope shortly to publish in pamphlet form the full account of the Vitoria trial brought back by Mr. Peter Benenson for sale and distribution throughout the labour and trade union movement.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

*Alec Digges*  
Secretary.

AD/AD.



## International Brigade Association and Friends of Republican Spain

2 PARTON STREET · LONDON · W.C.1 · PHONE HOL 2735

4th May, 1954.

Mr. J. Hochman,  
The Basque Legation,  
39, Victoria Street,  
S.W.1.

Dear Mr. Hochman,

Following my conversation with you the other day when you were kind enough to give me further details of the case of Manuel Robles-Arangis, I have pleasure in informing you that we have already been able to make some interventions on his behalf.

At the moment of writing, 34 Members of Parliament have added their signatures to telegrams which we have dispatched to the Spanish Minister of Justice at Madrid in the following text: BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION GRAVELY DISTURBED AT IMPENDING TRIAL OF CATHOLIC BASQUE TRADE UNION LEADER MANUEL ROBLES ARANGIS. MOST STRONGLY URGE CLEMENCY.

I enclose specimen of the appeal for signatures which we have forwarded to all Labour Members of Parliament.

We are also circularising all National Executive Committees of Trades Unions in Britain calling for resolutions of protest and we hope should there be time to forward similar appeals for protests to all Divisional Labour Parties in England, Scotland and Wales.

We have received no further information as yet as to the likely date of trial and would be most grateful to know whether there is any indication from your representatives in Paris.

I should be very pleased to receive copies of your information Bulletin, specimens of which you were kind enough to give me.

P.T.O.



PRESIDENT SAM WILD · VICE-PRESIDENT ALAN GILCHRIST · SECRETARY ALEC DIGGES

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-2-

I enclose a list of the M.P.'s who have signed the clemency telegrams to date. We expect many more will add their names during the coming week. I am having further enquiries made through the Foreign Office as to the date of trial.

With the sincere hope that our efforts on behalf of Manuel Robles-Arangis will prove successful, and best wishes to yourself.

Yours sincerely,

Alec Digges

Secretary.

AD/AD.



**International Brigade Association and Friends of Republican Spain**

2 PARTON STREET · LONDON · W.C.1 · PHONE HOL 2735

date as postmark

Dear Sir & Brother,

We should be most grateful if the enclosed appeal for protest action to the Spanish Embassy on behalf of Mammol-Robles-Arangis, Basque trade union leader, could be brought to the attention of your Executive Committee.

Mr. Maurice Orbach, M.P. who visited Madrid on behalf of the above Association in October last was most emphatic on his return as to the positive effect of resolutions of protest from British trades unions in helping to ward off the more savage sentences frequently demanded by military tribunals against Spanish trade unionists and democrats.

Although no definite date of trial has as yet been announced, the indications are at present that the above trial will take place within some weeks time.

We should be most grateful for advice as to any action taken on this matter by your Executive Committee.

Yours fraternally,

Alec Diggos  
Secretary.



PRESIDENT SAM WILD · VICE-PRESIDENT ALAN GILCHRIST · SECRETARY ALEC DIGGES

## International Brigade Association and Friends of Republican Spain

2 PARTON STREET · LONDON · W.C.1 · PHONE HOL 2735

date as postmark

Dear Sir & Brother,

May we address an urgent appeal to the members of your Executive Committee on behalf of Manuel Robles-Arangis, former president of the Catholic Basque Federation of Workers and a member of the Spanish Cortes from 1936-39.

Prior to his election in 1936 as a Deputy, Manuel Robles-Arangis worked as a linotype operator on the Bilbao "El Liberal" and was an intimate associate of Indalecio Prieto, Spanish socialist leader.

While in exile in France in 1945, Manuel Robles-Arangis was awarded a certificate signed by General Eisenhower "expressing the gratitude of the American people for gallant service in assisting the escape of Allied soldiers".

Returning to Spain in 1952 under the illusion that Franco's proclaimed amnesty for political opponents would be honoured, he was arrested in June, 1953 and is shortly to be brought to trial by civil court at San Sebastian for alleged activities in connection with the reorganising of Basque opposition to the Franco regime.

There has been a marked increase in political trials of opponents of the Franco dictatorship. Since February last four mass trials by courts-martial of Spanish workers have taken place involving Socialist, Anarchist, Communist and Basque nationalist workers in addition to others of no particular political affiliation.

In submitting the above facts to your Executive Committee, we are confident that they will wish to further express their indignation at the continuing persecution of Spanish trade unionists and democrats by forwarding an appropriately worded resolution on behalf of Manuel Robles-Arangis to the Spanish Embassy, 24, Bolgrave Square, S.W.1.

Yours fraternally,

Alec Digges,  
Secretary.



43

## International Brigade Association and Friends of Republican Spain

2 PARTON STREET · LONDON · W.C.1 · PHONE HOL 2735

Dear

In December last an appeal was made by the International Brigade Association to Members of Parliament to help save the life of Wilson Batlle, an anti-Franco militant who had been retried and sentenced to death by a Barcelona court-martial early in 1953, sentence of death being subsequently confirmed by the Captain General of Catalonia.

We have very great pleasure in informing you that further to permission from 150 Members to add their signatures to telegrams to the Spanish Minister of Justice urging withdrawal of the death sentence against Wilson Batlle, confirmation has now been received that his sentence has been commuted to a term of imprisonment.

In the same telegrams, it was urged that pending death sentence demands should be withdrawn against Telesforo Torres, Luis Arribas, Cipriano Gonzalez and Emilio Quinones. Again we are happy to state that, despite the severity of prison sentences ranging from 20 to 15 years on these accused, death sentence demands were not finally advanced by the prosecution.

In conveying our most sincere thanks to those Members who by their action helped make possible these victories over Spanish reaction, may we advance a plea for similar action on behalf of Manuel Robles-Arangis, former President of the Catholic Basque Federation of Workers and a member of the Spanish Cortes from 1936 to 1939, who is shortly to be tried at San Sebastian.

We enclose herewith an information sheet on Manuel Robles-Arangis together with text of proposed telegrams to the Spanish Minister of Justice and stamped addressed reply cards.

With renewed and most sincere thanks for previously afforded help on similar campaigns and the hope that the present campaign on behalf of Manuel Robles-Arangis may be a further evidence of the effectiveness of intervention on behalf of persecuted Spanish trade unionists and democrats.

Yours sincerely,

Alec Digges,  
Secretary.

Manuel Robles-Arangis is a former President of the Catholic Basque Federation of Workers and was a member of the Spanish Cortes from 1936-1939.

Prior to his election as a Deputy in 1936, Manuel Robles-Arangis worked as a linotype operator on the Bilbao "El Liberal" and was an intimate associate of Indalecio Prieto, now exiled Spanish Socialist leader.

While in exile in France in 1945, Manuel Robles-Arangis was awarded a certificate signed by General (now President) Eisenhower "expressing the gratitude of the American people for gallant service in assisting the escape of Allied soldiers".

When the German occupation of France was concluded, he was nominated President of Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos.

Returning to Spain in 1952 under the illusion that Franco's proclaimed amnesty for former political opponents would be honoured, he was arrested in June 1953 and has been held since without trial.

The trial of Manuel Robles-Arangis is now known to be impending at San Sebastian.

The Congress of Industrial Organisations has already protested to President Eisenhower on behalf of this outstanding anti-Franco fighter. It is understood that the International Confederation of Christian Trades Unions are also intervening on his behalf.

In an effort to further intensify the campaign for the release of Manuel Robles-Arangis, we are appealing for signatures to clemency telegrams to the Spanish Minister of Justice in the following text:  
 BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION GRAVELY DISTURBED AT IMPENDING TRIAL OF  
 CATHOLIC BASQUE TRADE UNION LEADER MANUEL ROBLES-ARANGIS. MOST  
 STRONGLY URGE CLEMENCY.

A stamped addressed postcard is enclosed in the sincere hope that you will be kind enough to grant permission for your name to be added.

Yours sincerely,

Alec Diggos,  
 Secretary.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WHO HAVE SIGNED TELEGRAMS  
TO THE SPANISH MINISTER OF JUSTICE URGING CLEMENCY FOR  
MANUEL ROBLES-ARANGIS.

45

P.L.Wells, M.P.  
James Carmichael, M.P.  
Sydney Silverman, M.P.  
Sir Frederick Messer, C.B.E., M.P.  
G.M.Thomson, M.P.  
Maurice Orbach, M.P.  
Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P.  
Capt. George Chetwynd, M.P.  
John McKay, M.P.  
Arthur Blenkinsop, M.P.  
C.W.Gibson, M.P.  
Fred Mulley, M.P.  
H. Norman Smith, M.P.  
John Parker, M.P.  
F. Elwyn-Jones, Q.C., M.P.  
Rt. Hon. J.Dugdale, M.P.  
David Griffiths, M.P.  
George Fargiter, M.P.  
Edward Evans, M.P.  
David Weitzman, M.P.  
P.L.E.Shurmer, M.P.  
J.A.Sparks, M.P.  
Ald. W.H.Oldfield, J.P., M.P.  
Percy Collick, M.P.  
Peter Freeman, M.P.  
Sir Richard Acland, M.P.  
I.R.Thomas, M.P.  
Elizabeth Braddock, M.P.  
F.H.Hayman, M.P.  
R.W.Sorenson, M.P.  
Roy Jenkins, M.P.  
Lt.-Col. Marcus Lipton, M.P.  
James Clunie, M.P.  
Arthur W.J.Lewis, M.P.

TOTAL = 34

The above have signed up to mid-day 4th May, 1954.

Information Sheet.

46

The following Members of Parliament have kindly granted permission to add their signatures to telegrams to the Spanish Minister of Justice in the following text:-  
BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION GRAVELY DISTURBED AT IMPENDING TRIAL OF CATHOLIC BASQUE TRADE UNION LEADER MANUEL ROTLES ARANGIS. MOST STRONGLY URGE CLEMENCY.

Percy Wells, M.P.	Lt. Col. Marcus Lipton, M.P.
James Carmichael, M.P.	James Clunie, M.P.
- Sydney Silverman, M.P.	Arthur W. J. Lewis, M.P.
Sir Frederick Mosser, M.P.	Chas. R. Hobson, M.P.
G. M. Thomson, M.P.	Victor Yates, M.P.
Maurice Orbach, M.P.	Douglas Houghton, M.P.
Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P.	Sir Leslie Plummer, M.P.
Capt. G. Chetwynd, M.P.	D. E. Thomas, M.P.
George McKay, M.P.	Eirene White, M.P.
Arthur Blenkinsop, M.P.	Barbara Castle, M.P.
C. W. Gibson, M.P.	H. J. Finch, M.P.
Fred Mulley, M.P.	John Paton, M.P.
H. Norman Smith, M.P.	Rt. Hon. Aneurin Bevan, M.P.
John Zarker, M.P.	J. Reeves, M.P.
F. Elwyn Jones, O.C., M.P.	W. T. Paling, M.P.
Rt. Hon. J. Dugdale, M.P.	C. Kenyon, M.P.
David Griffiths, M.P.	Capt. Mark Rowatson, M.P.
Geo. Fargiter, M.P.	H. G. McGhee, M.P.
Edward Evans, M.P.	Harold Davies, M.P.
David Weitzman, M.P.	Ness Edwards, M.P.
P. L. E. Shurmer, M.P.	Fenner Brockway, M.P.
J. A. Sparks, M.P.	Geo. Craddock, M.P.
W. H. Oldfield, M.P.	S. Scholefield Allen, M.P.
Percy Collick, M.P.	Geo. Thomas, M.P.
Peter Freeman, M.P.	W. H. Butler, M.P.
Sir Richard Acland, M.P.	John Edwards, M.P.
I. R. Thomas, M.P.	F. T. Willey, M.P.
Elizabeth Braddock, M.P.	John Rankin, M.P.
F. H. Hayman, M.P.	Barnet Stross, M.P.
Roy Jenkins, M.P.	S. P. Viant, M.P.
Walter E. Padley, M.P.	Tom Oswald, M.P.
Rt. Hon. A. Robens, M.P.	J. Silverman, M.P.
	A. M. F. Palmer, M.P.

TOTAL 65

Se repiten los de la otra lista.



PRESIDENT SAM WILD · VICE-PRESIDENT ALAN GILCHRIST · SECRETARY ALEC DIGGES

47

## International Brigade Association and Friends of Republican Spain

2 PARTON STREET · LONDON · W.C.1 · PHONE HOL 2735

22nd May, 1954.

Mr. Hickman,  
The Basque Legation,  
39, Victoria Street,  
S.W.1.

Dear Sir,

Further to my letter of the other day, I have pleasure in informing you that the National Union of Mineworkers - one of the most powerful unions in Britain - have now forwarded a protest to the Spanish Embassy on behalf of Manuel Robles-Arangis.

Mr. Walter E. Padley, M.P. informs me that he will endeavour to bring the matter to the attention of the next Executive meeting of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers with a view to obtaining a similar protest.

We are undertaking further approaches to Members of Parliament and anticipate that many more will add their signatures to protest telegrams.

We should be interested to know as to whether there is any further information available regarding possible date of trial.

You were also kind enough to promise me that copies of the Basque information bulletin would be forwarded to me.

With sincere good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

*Alec Digges*

Alec Digges  
Secretary.

AD/AD.

P.S. I enclose copy of reply from the Spanish Embassy to the Constructional Engineering Union Executive.