

R. G. THACKRAH

TELEPHONE: CITY 3364

1 St. Paul's Churchyard, ¹⁴
London, E.C. 4

20th November, 1961

Senor D. Jesus Maria del Hijola,
Gobierno de Euzcardi,
50 Rue Singer,
Paris XVI.

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Senor Hijola,

As you do not know me personally I think I should explain who I am. I succeeded the Duchess of Atholl as Chairman of the Basque Children's Committee and have for many years worked for the interests of the Basque Community. This can be borne out by Senor Gondra whom I knew very well and with whom I worked closely. I also knew Senor Lizasso and Senor Irujo as well as your late President, Jose Antonio Aguirre.

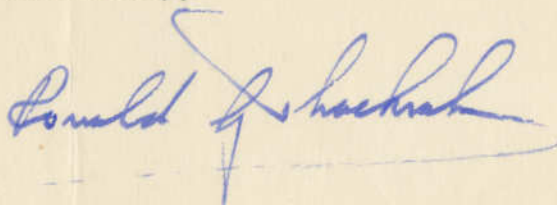
I feel it my duty to report to you the facts of an incident in which your representative in London, Mr. Hickman, is closely involved. I have had staying in my home for some time a Dr. Epifanio Ibanez who was born in San Sebastian and had the misfortune at the age of 10 to be sent to Russia with other Basque children. He is a man of outstanding intellect and integrity, and I have corresponded with him for a number of years. He took a Doctorate of Philosophy at Kiev University, was subsequently a Professor at the Academy of Sciences, Ashkhabad, and also took a Degree in Philosophy and Letters at Madrid University. As soon as it was possible for him to leave Russia he did so, and returned to Spain about five years ago. He found the lack of freedom in Spain as unbearable as it was in the U.S.S.R. and he came to England in the hope of finding work in a country where there is freedom of thought.

He met at the Central Office of Information, for which he has done some translations, a Spaniard who suggested that he should call and see Mr. Hickman at the Basque Delegation, who might be able to help him in finding employment. He accepted this invitation and saw Mr. Hickman on Wednesday 8th November. Mr. Hickman asked him a number of questions about his past and said that if he would call and see him on the following Friday, November 10th, he would invite a friend of his to meet Dr. Ibanez who might be able to help him in obtaining employment. On keeping this appointment Dr. Ibanez was cross-questioned by this man for nearly

two hours in a very unpleasant manner, and told, among other things, that if he were a Russian or a Franco spy it would be better for him to confess at once. As Dr. Ibanez is a personal friend of mine I visited Mr. Hickman on Tuesday 14th November and asked him to inform me who this man was whom he had invited to meet Dr. Ibanez and to give me the name, address, occupation and nationality of this gentleman, which he refused to do, but said that he had telephoned this man, who was at the British Foreign Office, to inform him that Dr. Ibanez was possibly a Communist spy. Dr. Ibanez is convinced that the man to whom Mr. Hickman denounced him is a policeman, and thinks that he is of Spanish nationality. If he was from the English police I would like to call on him to speak in favour of Dr. Ibanez and allay any suspicions which Mr. Hickman's denunciation may have created. If he was from the Spanish police it would be interesting to know by what right he questions a Spaniard in this country. Mr. Hickman's refusal to disclose his identity makes it impossible for me to take any steps to protect Dr. Ibanez's interests. In my opinion Mr. Hickman's action is a gross betrayal of trust on the part of the man who is supposed to look after the interests of Basques in England. Without a shred of evidence and without making any enquiries about him he denounced an innocent man as a potential spy. Such conduct may harm the honour and high reputation of the Basque Government and you may well consider whether Mr. Hickman is a suitable person to represent you in London.

I believe that Senor Brajo visits London from time to time, and I should be very pleased to discuss this matter with him in more detail during his next visit if a meeting can be arranged at my office.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Donald G. Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

R. G. THACKRAH

TELEPHONE: CITY 3364

1 St. Paul's Churchyard, 15
London, E.C.4

15th November, 1961

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

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

Dear Mr. Hickman,

Further to my call on you yesterday, I am prepared to give you twentyfour hours to inform me of the name, address, occupation and nationality of the man whom you invited to interview Dr. Ibanez in your office last Friday, November 10th. In the event of my not receiving this information from you I shall take steps which may prove unpleasant for you.

Yours faithfully,

