

2 de Diciembre de 1961

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M.^r Ian Gilmour.

Mi distinguido amigo:

Me permito enviarle estas líneas en relación con el artículo "Turning Point" que, suscrito por Don Francisco Suarez, aparece en The Spectator del día de ayer.

Creo que ha sido sorprendido usted con ese artículo que, en su conjunto, no resulta satisfactorio, aunque alguno de sus extremos sea aceptable, o al menos opinable.

Es poco elegante el afirmar que la policía española es ahora más amable con los detenidos cuando acaba de celebrarse en Madrid un juicio en cuya preparación los detenidos fueron barbaramente atormentados, juicio al cual asistieron observadores internacionales, que han hecho públicas sus observaciones. El artículo se ofrece al público como una especie de rectificación de aquellas informaciones. El que la rectificación sea lo bastante hipócrita para que no aparezca puesta como tal en texto concreto, no quita para que el lector lo aprecie así.

El hecho de silenciar las persecuciones contra los demócratas vascos cuando acaban de ser estos los singularmente perseguidos, y mencionar en cambio a comunistas y anarquistas en Cataluña, Asturias, Andalucía y Madrid como si fueran los únicos perseguidos, refleja el propósito preconcebido de orientar la opinión pública al servicio de ideales y tácticas que no son precisamente los preconizados y defendidos de manera constante por Spectator.

La forma y términos empleados para aludir al Pacto de 24 de Junio otorgado en París por republicanos, liberales, socialistas, demócratas cristianos, sindicalistas y vascos, que dio nacimiento a la "Unión de Fuerzas Democráticas", es bien expresiva. Esa actitud, por sí sola, revela el origen del artículo y el uso al que sirve su autor.

El autor del artículo sabe que miente cuando afirma que el Sr. Prieto vino de México a París en su último viaje para entrevistarse con Don Juan de Borbón, el pretendiente al trono español. Miente al servicio de su causa, que no es ciertamente la nuestra, ni la que Spectator viene defendiendo en el curso de su existencia.

Yo he leído el artículo con disgusto y pienso que lo propio habrá sucedido a los restantes demócratas que lo hayan leído. Me craso en el caso de incursarlo saber a usted. Le acompaño el texto inglés de las torturas que sufrió los últimos vascos condenados en Madrid y sus compañeros de proceso.

Y me repito suyo muy atto amigo que cordialmente le saluda

Manuel de Irujo

2 December 1961

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My dear friend,

I am addressing myself to you in connexion with the article, "Turning Point", by Mr Francisco Suarez, which appeared in yesterday's issue of the "Spectator".

It is my belief that you were taken unawares by this article. It is not, in its complete form, a very good thing, though one or another of its points may be admissible or at least disputable.

It is hardly in good taste to assert that the Spanish Police are now more tender with prisoners when a trial has just ended in Madrid in the preliminaries to which the prisoners were brutally tortured. International observers attended that trial, and their reports have been made public. The present article, it would seem, is offered to the public as a kind of correction of that information. The fact that the rectification is sufficiently hypocritical not to appear as such in plain terms, does not prevent the reader regarding it as such.

To say nothing of the persecution of Basque democrats when it is precisely they who have been so singularly persecuted while, on the other hand, mentioning Communists and Anarchists in Cataluna, Asturias, Andalucia and Madrid as if they were the only ones subjected to persecution, reflects the obvious purpose of the author, to influence public opinion in the direction of principles and tactics which are scarcely those proclaimed and consistently upheld by the "Spectator".

The manner and terms in which reference is made to the Agreement of 24 June between Republicans, Liberals, Socialists, Christian Democrats, Syndicalists and Basques, which gave birth to the "Union of Democratic Forces", is very meaningful. Such an attitude, of itself, reveals the inspiration of the article and the master whom the author serves.

The author well knows that he falsifies the facts when he states that Señor Prieto went to Paris from Mexico on his last trip to interview Don Juan, the Pretender to

the Spanish Throne. He is deliberately untruthful in the service of his cause, which is certainly not ours, nor that which the "Spectator" has been upholding throughout its existence.

I myself have read the article with disgust, and I think that all other democrats who have read it will have felt the same. I think that I should bring the fact to your notice. I attach the English text of a report on the tortures suffered by the latest batch of Basques sentenced in Madrid and by their companions in the dock on the same occasion.

I am, etc.

Manuel de Irujo

Ian Gilmour, Esq.

Turning Point

From FRANCISCO SUAREZ

MADRID

HAVING asked the ritual question of whether he liked Spain, journalists assembled for a press conference last week in Barcelona were taken aback to hear the Italian poet Salvatore Quasimodo, who had come to give a series of lectures on 'Poetry and Contemporary Man' in the Italian Institute, answer drily that he did not, but in the light of Quasimodo's political convictions this was not surprising. In the last two months alone, at least a score of Spanish Communists have been arrested in Catalonia, the Asturias, and in Andalusia, accused of illegal propaganda. Some were allowed to go home; others, brought to Madrid to be tried in due course in accordance with the decree of martial law proclaimed in the autumn of 1960. And a number of Anarchists have also been arrested.

Nevertheless it has been observed on several occasions recently that the Spanish security forces are less enthusiastic in the fulfilment of their repressive duties than they used to be. There are indications of solidarity between the police and the discontented sectors of the population; the symptoms of social pressures from below which have indeed manifested themselves in various ways since the twenty-fifth anniversary of General Franco's ascent to absolute power, which seems to have marked a turning-point in Spanish internal politics.

Much was made in the Spanish press of the general amnesty in connection with the anniversary, by which all prisoners having served twenty years or more of their sentence were to be released forthwith. Those whose sentence did not exceed two years were to serve no more than half their time; all other terms were reduced by one-fifth. But the decree contains a number of booby-traps, especially for political prisoners. It does not apply, for example, to those who have been affected by a previous amnesty (granted upon the death of Pope Pius XII); and it may be denied to those whose behaviour has not been perfect in the eyes of the prison authorities—which means that prisoners may depend upon a more or less arbitrary decision of the officials in charge of the prison.

Among those who will benefit, though, will surely be Federico Monsalve Flores, a former high official of the Institute of Foreign Currency, condemned last November to eighteen years and payment of about £300,000 in costs and indemnity to the Spanish State. The foreign currency scandal broke loose about two years ago, when it came to light that enormous fortunes were being smuggled abroad, transactions which had attained such proportion that the authorities were finally obliged to step in, although this meant involving some pillars of the regime. Eventually Monsalve was chosen to be the scapegoat; though he certainly was not the only guilty party, his name alone was published in the press.

While radio and television have not yet tired of glorifying the twenty-fifth anniversary of the present regime, the opposition is busy and divided as always. In Toulouse a number of

parties, including the Socialists, signed a joint anti-Franquist, but at the same time anti-Communist, manifesto. Indalecio Prieto, former Minister of the Republic and leader of the exiled Spanish Socialists in Mexico, travelled to Paris for the special purpose of meeting Don Juan, Pretender to the Spanish throne. Following the advice of his councillors, Don Juan cancelled the meeting at the last moment.

Meanwhile Jose-Maria Gil Robles, leader of the Christian Democrats and resident in Madrid, is fulminating against one Mauricio Karl (real

6 name Carlevilla, but he likes to sound German), the author of such masterpieces as *The Sexual and Political Biography of Stalin*. In his introduction to a recent edition of *The Private Correspondence of Largo Caballero*, which has since been banned and withdrawn, Karl insisted that Caballero was right in saying that Gil Robles could very well have staged a rightist *coup d'état* in 1934, if he had insisted on being Minister of War and had appointed General Franco to be Chief of Staff. Robles seems to find it most embarrassing to be accused by a Falangist of having delayed the Fascist victory by two years; he has immediately written an open letter to General Franco, declaring that he (the Caudillo) knew that such a possibility had never existed; and he is suing Karl for libel.

Westminster Commentary

Principles of Conservatism

By JULIAN CRITCHLEY, MP

THERE cannot be a Young Conservative branch in the country that has not, at one time or another, asked for a speaker from Central Office to address them on the 'Principles of Conservatism.' I find this rather disturbing, for it would seem to imply that there are such things as Conservative principles, and if that be so, that no one knows what they are. The truth is, of course, that Conservatives do not have political principles. They have prejudices guided by fact. It has been this freedom from doctrine that has enabled it to survive.

There is great advantage in not having to apply the touchstone of a mystical 'Conservatism' to situations as they arise. (The Labour Party is for ever asking itself, 'Is this Socialism?') Not only does it facilitate government, but the flexibility that it gives allows for a wide range of differing opinion within the party itself. Amongst Tories, in the absence of doctrine, compromise has been substituted for principle. For compromise is regarded both as good form and sound politics. It is the belief that the most important thing in politics is the continuance of Conservative government, and that compromise is the means whereby this aim may be achieved, that makes the Tory Party so formidable. Thus the nature of Conservatism has not changed. The party is recognisably the party of Disraeli, and of Baldwin. Nor indeed have the people who vote Conservative. There is still the traditional alliance between those who have climbed the ladder of inequality and those who would aspire to do so, a state of affairs that has benefited from a century of rising living standards. It is the composition of the Tory parliamentary party that has altered, particularly since 1945.

The best example of the empirical approach is the Government's decision to seek entry into the Common Market. It was, on the one hand, a complete reversal of the Government's policy; on the other, no more than the consummation of a process of decline and adjustment that has been forced upon us since the war. It is the empirical nature of Conservatism that has

allowed the second factor to outweigh the first.

There are some people who say that the Government should have done what it is now doing several years ago; that many opportunities have been missed. Sir Winston Churchill raised the hopes of Europeans at Zurich in 1946; only to disappoint them at Westminster in 1951. Then, there was the refusal to give our support to the European Army in 1954, and the failure to persuade the Europeans to adopt a Free Trade Area before the Treaty of Rome. All this is true; but to believe that a Prime Minister could have taken Britain into Europe during the Fifties is to ignore the hallowed cliché that politics is the art of the possible. There would seem to be no time during the past decade when the Cabinet could have calculated that its Members of Parliament, let alone anyone else, would have been sufficiently aware of the reality of our declining power for them to agree to such a far-reaching change of policy. It was not, in all probability, until the late spring of 1960 that the Cabinet itself made up its mind. The breakdown of the Paris Summit, and all it meant in terms of prestige to the Prime Minister, was the culmination of a series of political defeats that may finally have forced reassessment upon the Government—notably Suez, where both France and Britain discovered that it was impossible to carry out policies that did not have American (or Russian) support; and Blue Streak, which meant the end of an attempt to possess a purely independent nuclear deterrent.

The collapse of the Free Trade Area showed that we could not dictate the pattern of integration to a resurgent Europe; the 'wind of change' accelerated the process of imperial withdrawal; and the vulnerability of our economy throughout this period, reducing our influence in relation to other more prosperous countries, forced the Government to see the Common Market as an opportunity whereby our political decline might be halted, and conditions achieved whereby our economy might be permanently strengthened. If, in the face of such evidence, it took as long as it did for the Cabinet to come to a conclusion, how

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