

The Anarchist revolt of Casas Viejas (Cádiz) on January 11th, 1933, ended in a bloodbath and was the first in a series of events that would force the resignation of Manuel Azaña.



Sanjurjo, as governor of Melilla, had been the responsible for the successful landing of Alfiucenas in 1927. Nicknamed el tigre del Rit (Rif's tiger), he was the most famous military man in Spain. In April 1931, while in command of the Guardia Civil, he told King Alfonso XIII that he couldn't count on military units to support the Monarchy. In due time, this would lead to the Monarch's abdication.

The Revolution of 1934 (October 5-10, 1934) was a revolutionary and insurrectional movement during the two-year radical-cedista period of the Second Spanish Republic, pitted against the constitutional government and democratic legality. The photo depicts some of the revolutionists on Barcelona's streets.



The Sanjurjada and later events at Casas Viejas – which forced Azaña to resign – leave the government damaged. Alejandro Lerroux, new chief of the executive, opts to dissolve Parliament and convene new elections, which take place in November 1933. At these elections – in which the women of Spain would vote for the first time – right wing parties grouped in the CEDA (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right) are represented, and they obtain 71% of the seats. The Socialist Party, headed by the radical Largo Caballero and the Anarchists, do not accept the result and prepare to fight it by organising armed militias.

The Two-Year Radical-CEDA Period and the October Revolution (1933-1936)
Despite being the first parliamentary political force, the CEDA is unable to form a government due to the opposition of the left. Lerroux, the leader of the Radical Party, forms a government of the centre, with the parliamentary support of the right. In the summer of 1934, the government continues to weaken, accosted by a savage strike of day-labourers and by the conflicts with the Catalan and Basque nationalist movements. The new centre-right government, formed the 3rd of October, assigns three ministers of the CEDA. This is considered a provocation by the executives of the PSOE and the UGT, who spot the opportunity to convene the revolutionary general strike that had been in the making for some time.



On the 4th, faced with the violent attitude of the miners, the government declares a state of war in Asturias. On the 5th, the revolutionaries try to storm the Presidential Palace in Madrid, but are restrained two hours later. In the Basque Country, the revolutionaries occupy the mining and industrial areas, which they keep under their control until the 12th, the Army having to intervene to suppress the rebellion. In Andalusia and Extremadura, the revolution is not supported by the day-labourers, who are exhausted by the strikes of the past months. In Barcelona during the night of October 6-7, the Government of the Generalitat, presided over by leader of ERC (Republican Left of Catalonia) Lluís Companys, proclaims the creation of the Estat Català, (The Catalan State). This provokes extending the state of war to the whole of Spain. The Army, commanded by General Domingo Batet, quickly takes control of the situation and the Catalanian autonomy is suspended by the government.

In contrast to the events in the rest of Spain, in Asturias the CNT supports the general strike, which turns into an open revolution. In conjunction with UGT and the Asturian Socialist Federation, the anarchists create the labour alliance UHP (Proletarian Brothers Unite), which other working class organisations would also join, such as the Labour Farmers Block, Communist Left, and the PCE.

In Oviedo, the Asturian miners, armed and well organised, proclaim the Asturian Socialist Republic and attack the Civil Guard stations, as well as churches and other official buildings. Ten days later, the auto-nominated Red Army already numbers around 30,000 workers, who commit all manner of outrage wherever they find any resistance. The government, surprised by the magnitude of the revolt, reacts vigorously and transports troops of the Legión and the Regular Army from Morocco, together with units from the Bilbao, Ferrol, Leon, and Lugo garrisons. These latter troops, under the joint command of General Eduardo López Ochoa and coordinated from the High Command in Madrid by Generals Manuel Goded and Francisco Franco, deploy in three columns toward the principal rebel bases. On the 18th of October, with Oviedo liberated, President of the Miners Federation Berlamino Tomás orders a cease fire and negotiates the surrender.

The Elections of 1936 and the Popular Front

The October Revolution represented a lethal blow to the Republic. Not only had it caused a thousand deaths and enormous destruction, it also encouraged the preference of armed insurrection to the results of the ballot box. Following the collapse of the Radical Party as a result of the black market scandal, the radicalisation of the political atmosphere and the refusal of President Alcalá-Zamora to appoint CEDA's José María Gil Robles as head of government made imminent the call for a general election.

In line with other events in the rest of Europe, the right and the left, following current trends, strive to present individual election platforms. Gil Robles tries to form a National Front, to which Carlists and Monarchists adhered, but not the



It is estimated that in 15 days of revolution, between 1,500 and 2,000 persons died throughout Spain. Of that number, 320 were guardias civiles, soldiers, guardias de asalto, and carabineros, as well as priests. It is also thought that between 15,000 and 30,000 persons involved in the revolution were arrested and judged. The revolution was especially harsh in Asturias. In this image, members of the Guardia Civil arrest Revolutionists.



Manuel Azaña Díaz.
Spanish politician and writer;
appointed chief of the Spanish government
(1931-1933, 1936), and President of the
Second Spanish Republic (1936-1939).



El Campesino (The Peasant)
Valentín González

A miner and militant in the Spanish Communist Party. During Civil War he commanded the fifth regiment and later the 22 División 46^a. He took part in the battles of Guadalajara, Brunete, and Belchite.

A legend was forged around his name despite the fact that many accused him of brutality with his command and with prisoners, to the point that some of his superiors branded him as a coward and braggart.

Enrique Lister was one of the best Republican leaders in the Spanish Civil War. His 5^a regiment was a model for organisation compared to the rest of the militias. In the image, Lister is on the left, beside political commissar Santiago Álvarez.



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The reorganisation of the Republican Army begins with Socialist Francisco Largo Caballero's accession to government leadership. Soon after his appointment, he reforms the Upper Council of War and tirelessly works to re-establish order in the War Ministry and the high command. He also militarises the militias, subjects them to the Military Code of Justice, and provides the new Army with uniforms, insignia, and a compulsory salute as external examples of discipline. Likewise, he forbids the use of names to designate the units, and integrates them into the new mixed brigades. On the 27th of October, the prototype of the organic template for the battalion of militias is published, consisting of four companies of rifles and one of machine guns. In the new Popular Army of the Republic, the professional military men who had remained loyal to the government and to the leaders originating in the militias – Enrique Lister, Juan Modesto, and El Campesino (The Peasant) Valentín González – are integrated into the active ranks of officers and non-commissioned officers.

The Republican High Command and Central Staff

On October 6, 1936, a *Comisariado General de Guerra* (War General Committee) is created to exert social and political control on regular soldiers, militia men, and the remaining armed forces of the Republic.

A further decree on October 16 establishes a unique command over all armed forces, which is presided over by the War Minister (later Defence Minister) and is discharged by Largo Caballero, who also doubles as Prime Minister. The *Consejo Superior de Guerra* (Superior War Council) is reformed on November 9th and is composed of the Ministries of War, Air Force, Navy, Justice, Civil Works, Agriculture, and State.

The new Central Staff is issued on September 5th and comprises five traditional sections: Recruitment and Organisation, Intelligence, Operations, Services and Supplies, and Mapping. Major Manuel Estrada is appointed in charge. Most of the officers in charge of the different sections are also majors. Even though only a few come from the old staff, there were many graduates and some of them would eventually reach renown in the Republican Army, such as Segismundo Casado, Antonio Cerdón, and Vicente Rojo. The latter – whose skills had become evident – would be appointed second Chief of Staff during the reorganisation made later, on October 20th. Other changes, derived from the input of civil advisors, are then introduced to facilitate the organisation of the Army and the absorption of the militias. The Central Staff would work 'not as an executive branch of the Command but as a consultative and auxiliary corps of who wields it; that is the superior chief.' This peculiar assertion seemed to be aimed at assuring the anti-military faction that the EMC



(Estado Mayor Central or Central Staff) would not direct the war face away from the government.

The Brigadas Mixtas (Mixed Brigades)

Once the new militarisation process begins, the 'mixed brigade' is adopted as the basic large unit. The origin of this brigade is still a matter of debate. Some scholars think it derives from the traditional columns raised at the time of the Moroccan campaigns, while others suggest that it was introduced by Soviet advisors. With all probability, the Russian advisors and the PCE (Spanish Communist Party), or even the Superior War Council, worked behind the scenes to push a biased staff to adopt the mixed brigade as a unit able to absorb the militias.

The structure of the mixed brigades would change over the course of the war, but it was the most practical model for the annexation of the militia battalions. Initially, a mixed brigade comprised four infantry battalions of five companies each (four of rifles and one of machine guns), and a mortar platoon. To these, a series of units from other branches of service were added, such as a cavalry company, four batteries of light artillery of 75 mm and 105 mm guns, a sapper company, and a signal corps unit. Complementary services included an ammunition column, service corps, and health and other secondary troops, totalling 150 officers and 3,700 men.

On October 18, 1936, the order for the creation of the first six mixed brigades (and two additional international brigades) is issued under the command of: Enrique Lister (1st), Jesús Martínez de Aragón (2nd), José María Galán (3rd), Arturo Arellano (4th), Fernando Sabio (5th), and Miguel Gallo (6th). By the spring of 1937, the first 50 brigades had been organised in the central area, while the 51st to 82nd inclusive were taking shape in Levant and Andalusia with the recruitment of reservists. In May of the same year, they totalled up to 204. The last of the mixed brigades would be raised toward the end of 1938, in Calella (Barcelona), with number 246.

Alcalá de Henares, Ciudad Real, Albacete, Alcoy, Villena, and Murcia were selected as training centres by the *Estado Mayor Central* (Central Staff).



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Left: Troops form Mixed Brigades.

Above: Delivering the flag to the 31st Mixed Brigade.



Badge from the signal units. There was one of these units for each Mixed Brigade.

Left: Soldiers form the 150th Mixed Brigade.

Below: Troops form the Mixed Brigades.



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Spanienkreuz:
a Legion Condor gold cross
with swords (above)
and a silver version (right).

Von Thoma with a group of officers.



An interpreter of the Legion Condor with
the badge sported by these volunteers.

Next page:
A Legion Condor member sporting the
Spanish campaign decoration.

Schellenbaum or Legion Condor banner
as shown in a propagandistic
picture.



- *Sondersstab S/88* (Staff), comprising the staff airplanes, liaison, and transport planes, including the Fieseler Fi-156A, the Messerschmitt Bf-108, the Klemm Ki 32a XIV and the Junkers W 34.
- *Jagdgruppe J/88* (Fighter group), originating prior to the creation of the *Legión Condor*, and including five squadrons of such planes as the He-50G, the Henschel Hs 123, the Junkers JU-87 A-0, the Messerschmitt Bf-109 (models A, B, C, D, and E), and the Heinkel He-112
- *Kampfgruppe K/88* (Bomber group), deploying up to four squadrons with planes such as the Junkers 52/3 m, the Heinkel 111, the Junkers 87A & B, the Dornier 17, and the Junkers 86D-1.
- *Test Bomber Group VB.88* (Diving bombers), with planes such as the Henschel Hs 123, the Dornier 17, the Junkers JU-86 D-1, and the Heinkel He-111.
- *Aufklärungsgruppe A/88* (Reconnaissance Squadron), with patrols of airplanes such as the Dornier 17, the Heinkel 126A, the Focke-Wulf 59A, the Heinkel 46C-1, and the Heinkel 70.
- *Aufklärung Seas Gruppe AS/88* (Twin engine sea-plane squadron), with planes such as the Arado AR-95, the Heinkel He-60, and the Heinkel He-59.
- *Transport Section*, with Junkers Ju-52.
- *FlaK-Abteilung F/88*, an anti-aircraft artillery comprising seven batteries; four heavy batteries with 88 mm FlaK 18 guns, and three light batteries with 20 mm Rheinmetall Borsig ST5 guns.
- *Lucht FK/88*, a field artillery group.
- *Luftnachrichten-Abteilung LN/88*, a signal unit comprised of a radio company, a telephone company, an air communications company, and another company for signalling and related activities.
- *Gruppe Imker*, a field unit with the *Panzergruppe Drohne* of Oberstleutnant Von Thoma, including two Panzer Kw I tank battalions with three companies each, as well as signal and repairment units.
- *B/88*, an ammunition group.
- *B/88*, military Police and traffic control units.
- *Luftzeuggruppe und Luftpark P/88*, a maintenance unit dealing with spare parts for tanks, guns, and airplanes.
- *Sanitäts-Abteilung SAN/88*, a health unit.

The *Legión Condor* paid a heavy price during the 30 battles it fought in Spain, resulting in 130 casualties and 96 fighters lost. On the other hand, the *Legión* accounted for 296 Republican planes killed (235 of them while aloft). The *Legión Condor*'s first ace was Adolf Galland, who flew more than three hundred missions in his Me 109, but there were other outstanding pilots, such as Lieutenant Mölders (with more than 14 victories), Lieutenants Schellman, Harder, Bodden, Oesau, Ebbighausen and Tietzen, and the NCO Ihlefeld.

