

*North Atlantic Treaty*

section of the country to attend a meeting of protest against the persecution of Jews in Germany at that time. It was a vast rally. Present were Protestant ministers and leaders in all walks of life in the Porcupine district, including Catholic priests. When the time came for me to say a few words I said, "My friends, every Christian, every Canadian worthy of the name must of necessity deplore the persecution of Jewish people in Germany. But, to me, it goes still deeper than that; because one persecution leads to another."

This is true, because we know that even in Germany not only the Jews were persecuted. No; they were not satisfied with that. They persecuted the Lutheran church, the Catholic church, and the other Protestant churches in Germany.

Let me clarify my statement by saying that during the insurrection in Spain six thousand priests were killed by communists. There is not one Canadian man or woman who will assert that that was a right thing to do. It was a horrible thing to do. Those men were not given a chance to appear before courts of justice to account for what they had done. Then, twenty thousand churches were destroyed. Was there any danger to the communists in those churches? Yes, there was; because in the teachings of our Master there is a primary principle of charity, a principle never followed by communism—the principle of understanding and of charity.

On many occasions it was not possible to get the truth, so far as Spain was concerned. It is important in a time like this not to try to ignore that great nation, that proud people, but to give them an opportunity to come back again into the field of democracy. Eventually the people of Spain will find their equilibrium.

Let us never forget this, that that fine nation was used as a crucible by the communists, the nazis and the fascists. That fine Spanish nation lost over a million people in that conflict. During the last war, no matter what we may say, Spain was fair to our side. And hon. members need not take my word for it. During the insurrection Franco received help from the nazis and fascists, but he certainly received none from Great Britain or France.

During the last war, had Franco desired it he could easily have taken Gibraltar, for instance. Spain could easily have stabbed France in the back, just as Mussolini did when France fell by force of arms. But Franco did not do that.

Let me at this point read an article which appeared in the March 14, 1949, issue of *Life* magazine, which printed a portion of the

[Mr. Bradette.]

memoirs of Mr. Winston Churchill. No doubt, because of the marvellous work he accomplished, and his relations during the war when she was under deadly strain Mr. Churchill might to some extent be prejudiced—not against Spain, but against Franco. One must allow a certain latitude for some statements he may make in this instance. But I believe what he says will show what his sympathies were with respect to the Spanish people and even the government of Spain during the last conflict. He writes:

The attitude of Spain was of even more consequence to us than that of Vichy, with which it was so closely linked. Spain had much to give and even more to take away. We had been neutral in the sanguinary Spanish civil war. General Franco owed little or nothing to us but much—perhaps life itself—to the axis powers. Hitler and Mussolini had come to his aid. He disliked and feared Hitler. He liked and did not fear Mussolini. At the beginning of the world war Spain had declared, and since then strictly observed, neutrality.

General Franco's policy throughout the war was entirely selfish and cold-blooded. Gratitude to Hitler and Mussolini for their help never entered his head.

Nor, on the other hand, did he bear any grudge against England for the hostility of our left-wing parties. This narrow-minded tyrant only thought about keeping his blood-drained people out of another war.

His Majesty's government were quite content with this unheroic outlook. We wanted not only an unmolested Gibraltar, but the use of the anchorage of Algeciras for our ships and the use of the ground which joins the rock to the mainland for our ever-expanding air base. Nothing was easier than for the Spaniards to mount or allow to be mounted a dozen heavy guns in the hills behind Algeciras. They had the right to do so at any time, and, once mounted, they could at any moment be fired, and our naval and air bases would become unusable. The Rock might once again stand a long siege, but it would be only a rock.

I will pause there for a moment to point out the loyalty of the Spanish people in these circumstances. Let us suppose for a moment that the Spanish people had held Dover for many, many decades or centuries. What would the British people have said about a foreign power holding an integral part of the British soil? That principle applies just as forcibly to Spain because the Spanish people have shown it in the past and I know they will show it again in the future. They have been friends to the British people and to Great Britain as a whole. I continue to quote:

There was another very simple manner in which the Franco government could have struck us this destructive blow. They could have allowed Hitler's troops to traverse the peninsula, besiege and take Gibraltar for them, and meanwhile themselves occupy Morocco and French North Africa. However, as the Duke of Wellington wrote in April, 1820—

And I want hon. members to listen attentively to his words, because we can apply them to the so-called persecution of the church in Spain. I am not in favour of church persecution. This is what he had to say.